ATTRIBUTES, BARRIERS, AND CONTEXTS FOR EMPLOYMENT AND

RESILIENCE ENGAGEMENT FOR INDIVIDUALS

WITH DISABILITIES

Doctoral Dissertation Research

Submitted to the
Faculty of Argosy University, Washington, DC
College of Business

in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

by

Elizabeth M. Small

August, 2014

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Dissertation Committee Approval:

Michael J. Piellusch   _August 27, 2014_
Michael J. Piellusch, DBA   Date

_____   _Grace Klinefelter_
Willette O. Wright, EdD   Grace Klinefelter, DBA, SPHR

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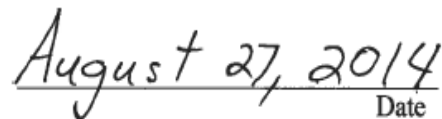
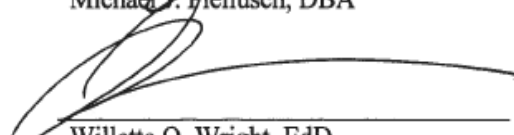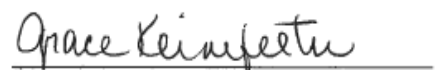Doctor of Education

by

Elizabeth M. Small

Argosy University

August, 2014

Michael J. Piellusch, DBA

Willette O. Wright, EdD

Department: College of Business

ABSTRACT

This interpretive qualitative grounded theory study served to explore whether barriers still exist that impede employment for individuals with disabilities (IWD), and ascertain whether hidden factors impact employee engagement for IWD. This study includes a description of key terms related to this research in addition to other definitions of employee engagement to show the array of meanings associated with employee engagement. The literature review chapter includes a review of literature concerning barriers to employment for IWD, and employment engagement. However, a lack of literature exists that examines employee engagement for IWD. Additionally, the literature review chapter discusses the role of leadership concerning employee engagement, and the significant role of generational differences in the 21st century workforce. The data collection open-ended interview process and analysis focused on learning the meaning that the 33 participants held about employee engagement. The chapter on findings includes a discussion of the emerging grounded theory of resilience engagement in addition to the barriers to employment and factors to ensure employee engagement for IWD. The summary, conclusions, and recommendations chapter includes a description of implications and makes recommendations for further research. Finally, this dissertation shows that law makers and employers still have to ensure all members of society are treated equally and are able to live a prosperous life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to God and my husband! In addition to the many individuals with disabilities who continue to be resiliently engaged regardless of the barriers they face.

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CHAPTER ONE: THE PROBLEM

Problem Background

This study examined employee engagement and the barriers to employment for individuals with disabilities (IWD). Based on Charmaz's (2006) interpretive qualitative grounded theory inquiry (addressed in greater detail in chapter three), this study explored the disability challenges experienced by 33 participants. Creswell (2009) noted that a constructivist believes that individuals seek understanding from their surroundings. Crotty (1998) stated that according to constructivism, "we do not create meaning, we construct meaning" (pp. 43–44). In this study, the researcher chose grounded theory to help understand the meaning of the phenomenon at hand.

The United States has approximately 50 million individuals labeled as disabled, and they continue to fight for equal rights (Disability Law Center, 2012; Hirsch, 2012; Iezzoni, 2009). Research indicates that IWD are more likely not to live a prosperous life (i.e., lower levels of education, lower rates of employment, and partial healthcare). Okitikpi and Aymer (2010) noted that people with disabilities have come a long way in the 21st century; however, there is still progress that must be made to ensure that people with disabilities are provided with the same work opportunities as people without disabilities. Laws have opened up opportunities for IWD; nevertheless, the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP, 2014a) reported that the workforce in the United States is comprised of 68.9% non-disabled and 20.8% disabled workers. The percentage disparity is due to the fact that these numbers do not include 10.3% of people who are currently unemployed or seeking employment. Moreover, the unemployment rate for the disabled is 11.7%, and the unemployment rate for the non-disabled is 7.5% (ODEP, 2014a).

Similarly, the unemployment rate for *veterans* with a disability is 6.2% whereas the disability rate for veterans with no disability is .4% higher (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013). A veteran is an individual who served in the United States Armed Forces as an active duty member. The ODEP Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) percentage rates support those of Smits (2004), which indicated that one half of the non-disabled community is in the labor force. To assist in eliminating barriers for IWD and Veterans with a disability, President Obama signed an executive order to help mitigate the barriers (Affirmative Action and Nondiscrimination Obligations of Contractors and Subcontractors Regarding Veterans, 2013). From 2010 – 2012 employment of IWD including Veterans has increase. However, it is not about numbers only, according to the Secretary of the Department of labor, Mr. Perez, but about a change in attitude. The Secretary also echoes President's Obama sentiment that the federal government must lead the way as the model employer. This is being done by the implementation of the Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act 1973, and The Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act (VEVRAA) regulations.

Additionally, to help eliminate the employment disparity for IWD and veterans with a disability, on September 24, 2013, the Department of Labor's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs released the Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act regulations that establishes for government contractors, "A nationwide 7 percent utilization goal for qualified IWDs and benchmarks for veterans with a disability" (Affirmative Action and Non-Discrimination Obligations, 2013, p. 58745). The purpose of the goal is to help reduce employment

barriers for IWDs. The House Committee on Education (2013) noted the following at a

Congressional hearing:

> People with disabilities, who have an enormous contribution to make to our
> economy, are still disproportionately represented among the unemployed and
> those out of the workforce entirely. Meanwhile, post-9/11 Veterans, who have
> risked life and limb on our behalf, are more likely to be unemployed than non-
> Veterans. Updating these regulations to increase their chances of finding
> meaningful work is critical to fulfilling what Vice President Biden called our
> "sacred obligation" to our returning Veterans, and especially Veterans with
> disabilities, who have sacrificed so much for our country. (p. 4)

As the largest employer in America, the federal government has been a leading

organization in this endeavor to become a model employer for IWD (Burns, Barton &

Kerby, 2012). President Obama's Executive Order 13548 provided federal agencies

leadership with practices and strategies to assist agencies in their diversity and inclusion

of persons with disabilities. The practices include (a) lead by adopting and creating a

culture of inclusion; (b) hire the best for their abilities; (c) ensure productivity by

accommodating all employees; (d) organize the events that reach out to the disabled

community; (e) communicate with external and internal stakeholders the policies and

practices of outreach, recruitment, and inclusion; (f) be technologically savvy by ensuring

that accessible technology is used to access documents; and (g) grow success which will

get reported to leadership to measure results and shortfalls (White House Office of Press

Secretary, 2011). The ODEP (2014b) offered federal agencies a strategy for ensuring

diversity and inclusion in addition to additional resources and research to ensure success

if agencies within the federal government collaborate.

The groundbreaking research by Hernandez and McDonald (2007) indicated that

turnover, absenteeism, and attrition were low for IWD and people with disabilities from

different industries are just as responsible as their non-disabled counterparts. While

approximately 80 percent of persons with disabilities are not in the workforce, Hernandez and McDonald found that people with disabilities are working in professional fields, such as pharmacy and nursing. The researchers compared work-related variables of 95 employees with disabilities and 291 employees without disabilities and found that participating employees with disabilities had similar evaluations as employees without disabilities (Hernandez & McDonald, 2007). In addition, Hernandez and McDonald found that oversight for IWD and individuals without disabilities is the same, and noted that for some industries, IWD remained on the job longer than their co-workers. In short, Hernandez and McDonald mentioned that "employers from the healthcare and hospitality sectors reported very few accommodations for employees with disabilities, with an average cost of $313" (p. 4). Moreover, flexibility was intertwined with employees day-to-day to ensure employees' success.

In conclusion, Gilbride, Stensrud, Ehlers, Evans, and Peterson (2000) noted that employers want to hire IWD; however, employers are cautious and not willing to hire people with all types of disabilities. Pfeiffer (2002) noted that society plays a significant part for the exclusion of IWD in the workforce. Conversely, Smith, Austin, Kennedy, Lee, and Hutchinson (2011) pointed out that leadership has the responsibility of ensuring inclusion of IWD within the workforce. To assist, the ODEP (2012) provided a business approach to what is needed to ensure inclusion of IWD workforce.

Engagement

According to Macey and Schneider (2008), human resources (HR) firms as well as academic researchers believe employee engagement is essential to an organization's success. The authors further explained that there are numerous viewpoints on how to

understand employee engagement; nonetheless, HR firms and academic researchers agree that employee engagement affects organizational outcomes (Macey & Schneider, 2008). Gallup Consulting (2010) suggested that engaged employees are more productive employees, and transcend an HR initiative (McLean & Company, 2012; Schaufenbuel, 2013). With the myriad definitions that are related to employee engagement, it is imperative for HR departments to keep abreast of the meaning. Engaged employees care about the future of the company and are willing to invest the discretionary effort— exceeding duty's call (McLean & Company, 2012; Seijts & Crim, 2006).

Blackshear (2004) noted that achieving excellent organizational performance is critical in the 21st century, and that this will only occur if organizations develop and maintain a high-functioning workforce. Understanding that leadership plays a critical role in influencing levels of employee engagement, leaders must value the employee, have open communication, create trust, coach employee careers, provide feedback, and ensure that employees have input (Rosas-Gaddi, 2010). If an organization plans to be a high-functioning organization, employee engagement must be at the forefront of the organization.

In conclusion, laws and policies are still needed to help the disabled community seek employment. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968, and Sections 503, 504, and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are laws put in place to eradicate discrimination for persons with disabilities (U.S. Department of Justice, 2009). As previously noted, the laws are in place in the United States; however, there are still barriers that prevent persons with disabilities from living a meaningful and prosperous life. The most obvious barriers for IWD to living a

meaningful and prosperous life are obtaining and possibly retaining employment, coupled with accommodation, accessibility, and healthcare (Vick & Lightman, 2010). Nevertheless, Soltani, Sham, Awang, and Yaman (2012) noted that accessibility for persons with disabilities is a barrier that impedes the disabled from getting employment. Soltani et al. agreed that progress is still needed to ensure that IWD have access to all forms of transportation because convenient transportation can increase the quality of life for IWD.

Engagement for an individual with a disability should not look any different than engagement for the non-disabled. In 2014, the ADA celebrated 24 years of existence; however, IWD are not celebrating equality in the workforce in America (Martinez, 2012). Taylor, Krane, and Orkis (2010) noted that gaps in many areas such as employment, education, socialization, and others still exist and the government, employers, leadership and organizations must become proactive in the fight for equality for the disability community despite the fact that the ADA exists. Lemaire and Mallik (2008) noted that individuals with developmental disabilities are less likely to have the same financial opportunity as individuals without developmental disabilities, which causes a large number of IWD to live in poverty. Officer and Groce (2009) noted that if one lives long enough, she or he is bound to experience temporary or permanent disability ("Disability: Workforce Trends," 2014). Finally, leadership plays a significant role in ensuring employee engagement for the organization. This research represents a search to better understand the barriers to employment that continues to plague the disability community and the factors to engagement for IWD once employed by an organization.

Purpose of the Study

This qualitative grounded theory research served to explore barriers to employment that impact IWD, and factors that impact employee engagement for IWD to determine whether they are able to thrive within an organization. For this grounded theory study, the researcher defined employee engagement as a "heightened emotional and intellectual connection that employees have for their jobs, organization, managers, or co-workers that, in turn, influences them to apply additional discretionary effort to their work" (Schneider et al., 2009, p. 2). Although laws have been enacted for IWD, the unemployment rate for IWD is still disproportionately high. The participants for this research included IWD who are employed by a lease-to-hire organization. The researcher interviewed 33 individuals with a disability to understand if the constructs of barriers and factors impedes employment for IWD. In addition to ensuring that individuals with a disability are welcomed within their organizational culture and that they are able to develop and thrive as a part of the organization.

Research Questions

The research questions that served to guide the study were as follows:

1. What are the barriers to employment that impact individuals with disabilities?

2. What are the factors that impact employee engagement for individuals with disabilities?

The researcher explored the research questions using a qualitative grounded theory inquiry at a consulting company in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania that employs lease-to-hire individuals with disabilities.

Limitations

For qualitative studies, researchers face several issues of appropriateness regarding their research design, methodology, data collection, interpretation of the data, as well as credibility of the research and of the researcher themselves. Whether a researcher decides to embark upon a qualitative or quantitative study, he or she is steered by a set standard of guiding principles that is expected to be adhered to and which will determine whether the research will be considered reliable, trustworthy, and valid by the researcher's contemporaries and others who may take interest and review the work.

One of the limitations to this research is that some private information was observed that cannot be reported. In addition, the researcher interviewed the participants, observing the participants' behaviors, reviewed all of the data, made sense of the data, organized the data into categories, collaborated with the participants, and interpreted the data all of which may have caused some bias. The final limitation was the consulting company identified the volunteers to participate in the study to ensure that all of the participants have a disability. Additionally, distinguishing between individuals who were born with a disability versus individuals who became disabled due to an accident or age posed a limitation, since the sentiments for each of the previously mentioned groups are different. Researchers are bound by a code of ethical rules and principles that govern scholarly research in all disciplines (Creswell, 2009).

Delimitations

In the United States, approximately 50 million individuals are labeled as disabled, and they continue to fight for equal rights (Disability Law Center, 2012). The focus of this study did not allow for the researcher to ascertain how IWD supervise individuals

without disabilities and to determine their engagement level. Additionally, the consulting company utilized for this research study has been hired to assist the Federal Government in their goal to hire 100,000 individuals with disabilities by the year 2015, and all of the participants in this study have higher education, which prevented the researcher from interviewing IWD without higher education. Another delimiting factor to this research was that the researcher could not control for one specific disability type in addition to who would participate in the research since all the participants responded to the email sent by the consulting company. The final delimitation encounter by the researcher was to conduct face-to-face interviews. However, due to the location of many of the participants (e.g., United Kingdom) as well as certain disabilities (e.g., deaf), telephonic interviews were conducted. Additionally, an email containing the interview questions, the consent form, and the demographic form was sent to two participants, because the participants did not have translation services.

<div align="center">**Definitions of Terms**</div>

The purpose of this research was to explore barriers to employment that impact IWD, as well as the factors that impact employee engagement for IWD. The definitions in this section are related to this research; however, other definitions of employee engagement are included to show the array of meanings associated with employee engagement.

Accessible: Accessible, according to Job Accommodation Network (2013), "Refers to a site, facility, work environment, service, or program that is easy to approach, enter, operate, participate in, and/or use safely and with dignity by a person with a disability" (para. 2).

Disability: Disability is defined by the ADA as "A person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity. The ADA's definition of disability is a legal term rather than a medical one" (ADA National Network, 2014, para. 1).

Employee engagement: Employee engagement is defined as a "heightened emotional and intellectual connection" that encompasses all aspects of the employees' place of employment that subsequently influences if employees "apply additional discretionary effort" to his or her work (Schneider et al., 2009, p. 2).

Inclusion: Inclusion is "a culture that connects each employee to the organization; encourages collaboration, flexibility, and fairness; and leverages diversity throughout the organization so that all individuals are able to participate and contribute to their full potential" (Office of Personnel Management, Office of Diversity and Inclusion [OPM], 2011, p.5).

Job satisfaction: Job satisfaction encompasses employees' happiness at their workplace. Spector (1997) stated, "It is the extent to which people like (satisfaction) or dislike (dissatisfaction) their jobs" (p. 2).

Mentorship: Mentorship is a supportive and helpful relationship that encourages individuals with a disability to overcome their adversity. Metros and Yang (2006) defined "A mentoring relationship as helping and supporting people to 'manage their own learning in order to maximize their professional potential, develop their skills, improve their performance, and become the person they want to be'" (p. 5.1).

Reasonable accommodation: Reasonable accommodation is "Any change or adjustment

to a job or work environment that permits a qualified applicant or employee with

a disability to participate in the job application process, to perform the essential

functions of a job, or to enjoy benefits and privileges of employment equal to

those enjoyed by employees without disabilities" (Equal Employment

Opportunity Commission, 2012a).

Resilience: Resilience is "The mental, physical, emotional and behavioral ability to face

and cope with adversity, adapt to change, recover, learn and grow from setbacks"

(Secretary of the Army, 2013, Enclosure. 4).

Resilience engagement: Resilience engagement is the transformation of an adversity into

self-engagement that was developed and learned through support, values, and

relationships. Resiliently engaged individuals are self-efficacious, meaning that

their discretionary effort is internal; not contingent on a reciprocal relationship

with an organization.

Significance of the Study

This researcher sought out which factors are important for individuals with

disabilities in creating, developing, and maintaining an engaged workplace, in order to

help others understand how various entities, agencies, and organizations can create a

meaningful, successful, and welcoming workplace environment where IWD will thrive.

This study is significant because the disabled employment rate is still disproportionately

low, and researchers mentioned that it may be due to fear or ignorance (Disability Law

Center, 2012; Soylu & Jackson, 2013). Stiker and Sayers (1999) suggested that people

with disabilities have been set apart and discriminated against throughout history. In

addition, Friske (2010) found that seven of twelve disabled veterans interviewed would likely say that they are not fully included within their workplace culture.

Macey, Schneider, Barbera, and Young (2009) noted that "engagement is an individual's sense of purpose and focused energy, evident to others in the display of personal initiative, adaptability, effort, and persistence directed toward organizational goals" (p. 7). Engaged employees are likely to enjoy their jobs (Kahn, 1990). Finally, employee engagement is critical to business outcomes and it is a force that drives those outcomes (Macey & Schneider, 2008), in addition to opening the way for peers, supervisors, and leaders to understand how IWD perceive and understand their workplaces.

Summary

According to the ODEP (2012), IWD represent one of the biggest groups in America. The number of IWD is bigger than those of the last two generations (Generation X and Generation Y.) Additionally, as supported by this research, IWDs are resiliently engaged and able to bounce back from their adversities with the support of family and friends. Finally, IWD want to work if provided with the opportunity, and their skills and talents will be needed as the baby boomers retire. It will be vital to leaders and managers to understand society's structure. Currently, the workforce has four generations with different values impacting the organization's bottom line, and IWD are a part of each of the four generations that will be discussed in the following chapters.

This introductory chapter included a discussion of the purpose for conducting a qualitative study to explore barriers to employment that impact IWD, and factors that impact employee engagement for IWD. This chapter also served to address the purpose

of the study and define employee engagement, as well as the significance of the study. The research questions served as a guide to further understand the employment barriers and employee engagement for IWD. The chapter included definitions of terms to help the reader understand the subject and terminology associated with this grounded theory qualitative study.

The literature review in chapter two, is a discussion of the barriers to employment that are prevalent within the disability community, employee engagement, and few types of engagement that are likely to ensure employee engagement for any organization. However, there is a lack of literature that specifically examines employee engagement for IWD. The methodology discussion in chapter three includes the qualitative grounded theory methodology used for this study, the researcher's philosophical worldview, the history of grounded theory, data collection and analysis, and qualitative credibility.

Chapter four includes a discussion of the grounded theory findings for barriers to employment and factors to engagement in addition to the emerging grounded theory of resilience engagement. Finally, chapter five is a summary for each chapter, a conclusion of the details of the study findings, as well as the implications and recommendations for further studies.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter includes discussion of disability employment, the barriers to employment that impact individuals with disabilities (IWD), internal and external barriers to employment identified in the latest research, and types of employee engagement. As noted in the previous chapter, there is a lack of literature concerning employee engagement for IWD. Nonetheless, this chapter contains discussion of the success and failure factors to ensuring employee engagement for IWD, which ultimately begins with leadership and management, with the help of the employees (West & Dawson (2012). This chapter includes discussion of the role that leadership has for ensuring employee engagement for skilled and talented workers regardless of race, age, gender, or disability status into their organization, in addition to understanding that generational differences play a significant role for leaders in understanding the 21st century workforce. Finally, this chapter mentions the emerging grounded theory finding of resilience engagement, which is discussed in more detail in chapters four and five.

Defining the term disability has become increasingly difficult due to multiple definitions (Barnow, 2008). Barnes (2010) noted that defining the term disability has been made arduous since the mid-20th century by the government. Furthermore, Barnes (2010) mentioned that the government attempts to define the term disability led researchers to define disability as a medical term that relates to

> mental and physical normality, and it conserves the notion of impairment as abnormality in function, disability as not being able to perform an activity considered normal for a human being, and a disability as the inability to perform a normal social role. (p. 29)

IWD are diagnosed with different forms of disabilities, including physical, mental, or cognitive disabilities. However, in the ADA, disability is defined as "A physical or

mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities" (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2012b). Schur, Kruse, and Blanck (2005) declared that defining the term disability should not be the concern; what should be of concern is that the unemployment rate for IWD is disproportionally low. Martinez (2012), Assistance Secretary of Labor for Disability and Employment Policy, noted in her blog that the term disability not only meant physical or noticeable disabilities, but it includes all Americans that will in all probability need accommodations as they age. Moreover, Martinez pointed out that employers must take heed to understanding an inclusive workforce, because inclusion is beneficial to organization's success. Additionally, in "Disability: Workforce Trends" (2014), disability is defined as "A condition that makes it difficult for an individual to function or participate in some activity in the home, workplace or other setting" (para. 1; see also Von Schrader, Bruyere, Malzer, & Erickson, 2013).

The ADA of 1990 made it unlawful to discriminate in employment against a qualified individual with a disability (Kaplan, 1999). In addition, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, and the Department of Justice promulgated that it is unlawful to discriminate in employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities (Feldblum, 2000). In addition, the laws also specified that it is unlawful to discriminate in public accommodations, transportation, and telecommunications. Finally, Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act states that technology within the Federal Government should be accessible to all Federal employees in the format needed to do their jobs (Dale, Field, & VanRoekel, 2012).

Legal Issues of Persons with Disabilities

In the United States, approximately 50 million individuals are labeled as disabled, and they continue to fight for equal rights (Disability Law Center, 2012). Laws have opened up opportunities for the disabled; nevertheless, the labor force participation rate for people with disabilities is 21.5% while the labor force participation rate for people without disabilities is 69.5% (ODEP, 2012). Okitikpi and Aymer (2010) noted that people with disabilities have come a long way in the 20th century; however, progress is still needed to ensure that the people with disabilities are provided with the same work opportunities as people without disabilities. To help combat the unemployment issue in the United States, in 1998 President Clinton deployed a committee to keep statistics on the employment of persons with disabilities. The committee guidelines are found in Executive Order 13078. One arduous undertaking for the committee was defining disability, and the committee settled on the ADA definition previously mentioned.

September 25, 2008, the ADA was renamed Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) due to the expansion of the definition to include an adult with a disability. Allbright (2011) mentioned that courts have caused inconsistency in the interpretation of the laws that protect discrimination against IWD. Furthermore, Allbright provided employers with an understanding of what employers and insurers are saying and doing to comply with the new ADAAA of 2008. Additionally, United States citizens are aware of the ADA and ADAAA; however, the Office of Disability Employment Policy (2013) stated that the Rehabilitation Act, the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act, and the Civil Service Reform Act are of equal importance and are a resource for citizens and employers.

In summary, Smits (2004) pointed out that the ADA was enacted to ensure that an individual with a disability can thrive and that the ADA requires reasonable accommodations must be provided to employees. In 1979, U.S. Senator Birch Bayh stated,

> the right to work is one of the most basic of all our cherished rights, and work gives an individual not only economic self-sufficiency, but also a sense of dignity, self-worth, and the satisfaction of making a contribution to society. (as cited in Smits, 2004, p. 650)

Moreover, Hirsch (2012) mentioned that large and publicly owned companies are more likely to accommodate IWD. Conversely, Jasper and Waldhart (2013) noted that the ADA has not fully opened doors for IWD, and larger organizations are more apt to comply and smaller organizations consider "people with disabilities as unqualified" (p. 581). Furthermore, Jasper and Waldhart noted, "Employer attitudes about the ability and acceptance of prospective employees with disabilities may also vary by employer size" (p. 581). Block, Balcazar, and Keys (2010) mentioned that disability rights activists argue that society must change and barriers must be eliminated to stop discrimination against people with disabilities. Finally, Von Schrader, Malzer, Erickson, and Bruyere (2011) surveyed 598 participants and found that over half of the participants surveyed claimed that accommodations, supportive leadership, and a disability-friendly workplace helps one to assimilate within the organizational culture.

Barriers

During the 20th and 21st centuries, laws, policies, and programs have been created in an attempt to remove employment barriers and equalize the playing field for IWD to obtain employment. Nonetheless, research and statistics show that barriers to employment are still prevalent (Taylor et al., 2010). The research analysis identified the

following barriers to employment opportunity, fear, attitude, trust, money, employment, opportunity, communication, lack of education, lack of awareness, lack of policy inclusion, and transportation. The first three words are internal barriers to employment and the following words are external barriers to employment. The internal and external barriers will not be discussed in any particular order. An additional discussion of the barriers is found in chapter four.

Officer and Groce (2009) pointed out that disabled individuals are among the poor, and barriers exist that stop them from getting an "education and work, to marry and raise a family, to participate in community life, and indeed the right to life itself" (p. 1795). Additionally, the researchers asserted that the previous barriers, in addition to accessibility and medical services barriers, have stopped individuals with disabilities from receiving their civil rights (Officer & Groce, 2009). Iezzoni (2009) found that despite the laws put in place, barriers regarding employment, education, and healthcare still plague the disability community in the United States, and the low employment rate for persons with disabilities can stem from negative attitudes.

Furthermore, barriers for employment may stem from Supplemental Security Income and Social Security disability insurance benefits (Diament, 2011; Iezzoni, 2009; Lemaire & Mallik, 2008). Linkow, Barrington, Bruyere, Figueroa, and Wright (2013) noted that many IWD are fearful of surrendering their social security benefits due to the transportation and educational barriers. In addition, doctors' discriminatory attitudes are also a barrier that is affecting the type of treatment a person with a disability receives; while women may receive less preventive healthcare than men. For example, IWD may not be weighed, and women with disabilities may not receive obstetric and gynecological

care. Lemaire and Mallik (2008) studied individuals with developmental disabilities and found that the cost for acquiring and sustaining employment for individuals with developmental disabilities is low if the culture is supportive.

Another barrier to employment for IWD is education; this especially holds true for individuals with mental disorders (Cook, 2006). Individuals with mental disorders are usually diagnosed during early childhood years when education is important (Cook, 2006). Jan, Stoddard, and Kraus (2004) defined mental disorder as a "health condition characterized by alterations in thinking, mood, or behavior (or some combination thereof) associated with distress and/or impaired functioning" (p. 51).

Another barrier to employment is employers' perception in the leisure and hospitality industry toward IWD. In addition, Jasper and Waldhart noted that individuals with disabilities' accommodations are usually "inexpensive" (p. 582). Jasper and Waldhart's data shows that the leisure and hospitality industry needs more federal government regulations, outreach, and awareness to ascertain equal opportunity for the disability community. Finally, Lalive, Wuellrich, and Zweimüller (2013) noted that harm to organizations for hiring an IWD is minimal.

In Turkey, IWD face unemployment problems as well, and research is being done to see how this community can be employed. To help with this endeavor, the United Nations' definition of an individual with a disability is approximately the same as the ADA definition, which does include impairment (Aytac et al., 2012). Aytac et al. also pointed out how technology has allowed IWD to work in many capacities such as teleworking and part-time, which bring about a sense of self-worth. To mitigate unemployment for the disability community in Turkey, an employer trained 10

individuals with a disability to work from home (Kocak & Kavi, 2011). Using

information and communication technology the employer accomplished its mission,

which was to show that if IWD are given the opportunity, they are able to become

productive citizens to society. IWD no longer want to depend on others to support them;

they are looking to become a part of the labor force if provided with the opportunity and

accommodations.

 Aytac et al. (2012) further noted that employment builds up confidence in IWD

and provides them with self-efficacy and a way out of poverty. To decrease the

unemployment issue for the disability community, employers can allow individuals with

disabilities to work from their homes using their assistive technology devices, since

technology is leading the way of the future and also is about change.   Technology cannot

be ignored; it is the way of the future and technology can provide IWD with jobs and

eliminate hiring barriers to employment. The disability community unemployment is

high in Turkey, and employment is the way out of poverty. Laws and statutes are in

place to allow IWD a way to contribute to society; however, exclusionary attitudes

continue to keep IWD unemployed. Politicians must work to stop discrimination against

a defenseless group of people who are willing to provide their knowledge and skills to

society (Hernandez & McDonald, 2007).

 Not to dismiss the progress that has been made; President Obama saw that stiffer

measures were needed to ensure that the skills and talents of the disability community do

not remain dormant due to lack of opportunity and discrimination. To ensure that the

federal government becomes a model employer to combat employment barriers for

individuals with disabilities, the President held federal agencies accountable for hiring IWD.

Schur et al. (2005) mentioned that understanding how IWD assimilate within organizations has only been studied over the past two decades, and that qualitative inquiry is feasible for studying disability concerns, such as barriers to employment. In addition to understanding the factors for engagement that will be discussed in chapters four and five. Schur et al. believed that corporate culture is imperative to the employment of IWD; to understand how corporate culture affects the employment of the disabled, one may conduct qualitative research which is applicable to understanding "disability issues" (p. 7). Denison (1984) noted that many would concur that "corporate culture refers to the set of values, beliefs, and behavior patterns that form the core identity of an organization" (p. 5). The barriers mentioned above must be addressed by the government and discriminating practices toward IWD must end.

In conclusion, as noted earlier in this researcher study, employee engagement is vital to organizational outcomes, and the idea of employee engagement has been endorsed by HR firms over the years. However, there is a lack of literature that specifically examines employee engagement for IWD, and this research fills in some of the gaps to understanding the lived experiences for engagement of individuals with disabilities. Finally, leadership has the ultimate responsibility of ensuring that the organization's culture is diverse and inclusive of IWD. Currently, America has four generations in the workforce and many of Generation X and Millennial IWD are educated and want to work and be independent (Harkins, 2012). For example, 29 of the 33 participants in this current research belong to the previously mentioned generations.

Officer and Groce (2009) explained that if a person lives long enough, he or she will face some sort of disability, and further mentioned that some believe that IWD do not have the same rights as people without a disability. If lawmakers are serious about removing barriers to employment and equality for all, then the current research provides a model of the talents that IWD embodies.

Diversity

Stiker and Sayers (1999) traced disabilities back to "the Talmud and Old Testament" (p. ix), and implied that a historical analysis of the Western era shows that persons with disabilities have been made to assimilate without the help needed to thrive. Davis (2011) pointed out that although two decades have passed and higher education is making progress, people with disabilities are not included in brochures that depict diversity. Davis further noted that many people believe diversity exists with an exclusion of the disabled.

Smits (2004) recommended that there be a cohesive effort to resolve the disability employment crisis. Hirsch (2012) implied that individuals with disabilities want to know they are being hired because of their skills and abilities, not for sympathy. Consequently, the OPM (2011) implementation of the Executive Order 13583, Government-Wide Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan 2011, requires diversity and justice within the workplace, and requires executive departments and agencies to seek out ways to implement best practices to ensure diversity within the federal government. Cooperrider, Whitney, and Stavros (2003) Appreciative Inquiry is a positive approach to encouraging understanding of best practices in organizations, which allows leaders to maintain organizational change. Appreciative Inquiry can be used as a process to maintaining

positive change within an organization, and can continually bring new members into the culture. That being case, President Obama's Executive Order 13583 stated that "While organizations may have diversity in their midst, employees may not perceive that their social identities are appreciated and included in the workplace; building inclusive workplaces ensures that all employees feel included, connected, and engaged" (p. 4). OPM's (2011) diversity and inclusion strategic plan has three goals: (a) workforce diversity, (b) workplace inclusion, and (c) sustainability. Workforce diversity means that the federal government will recruit from a wide range of people to ensure all segments of America are represented. Workplace inclusion encompasses cultivating an environment that seeks justice, so that all individuals are able to reach their full potential; said another way, so that all individuals are able to thrive. Sustainability requires leaders to implement strategies that will measure the results of the inclusive and diverse workforce.

According to Daft (2008), leaders must understand the value of diversity. Today's labor force is diverse and it is imperative that employers and leaders understand the challenges associated with including IWD within their workforce. To overcome the challenges that are integrated within diversity, leaders must open communication and educate their organizations. Organizations should look like society, which is comprised of many cultures, religions, and socio-economic statuses as well as the disabled community, and those of different ages. For leadership to ensure an understanding of the value of diversity, Swanson and Holton (2009) noted that human resource development (HRD) professionals can assist leaders in education, training, and change. One of HRD professionals' primary tasks is to help organizations adopt change.

Yeo (2006) noted that leadership and HRD professionals should be strategically working together to ensure leaders' development as well as followers' development are aligned with 21st century thinking. Similarly, HRD professionals and leadership should be concerned with empowering individuals about the change process. Understanding that change is inevitable, leaders must ensure that IWD are able to assimilate within the organizational culture. Organizations can strategize with their stakeholders to implement Lewin's (1951) change theory; and for large organizations, Kotter and Cohen's (2002) eight steps for a successful large scale change can be implemented.

Lewin's change theory is practical and easy to inculcate (Schein, 1995). The theory consists of three steps: (a) unfreezing, (b) movement (change), and (c) refreezing. Simply put, unfreezing means to let go of the past, while change means diversity. Finally, refreezing requires awareness of what caused the changes, and to keep it at the forefront. If leaders collaborate with HRD professionals and incorporate Lewin's change theory, the organization is destined to be a high-performing organization. Kotter and Cohen's (2002) eight steps are as follows:

1. Emphasize incredible urgency—start spreading the word that change needs to happen to remain relevant.

2. Build a guiding team—an optimistic group to accomplish the change.

3. Get the vision right—the group of team members agrees upon a vision and strategy for the change effort.

4. Communicate for buy-in—gather the staff together to articulate the vision and strategy with enthusiasm.

5. Empower action—keep staff informed and solicit input.

6. Create short-term wins—celebrate success.

7. Do not let up—keep the momentum and enthusiasm.

8. Make change stick—transform hearts of change.

Kotter and Schlesinger (2008) asserted that leadership can help followers resist change if followers are educated concerning the change process, are a part of the decision-making strategy, empathy is felt, training is provided, and leaders are willing to negotiate. The aforementioned will assist employees in coping and buying into the change process of ensuring that IWD are assimilated into the organizational culture, and understanding that IWD are people and need employment to survive and feed their families.

In summary, Daft (2008) noted that society is being forced to change their attitudes about diversity, and diversity includes IWD. The implication for not being proactive concerning diversity and inclusion in the 21st century can have a negative impact on America's economy (Burns et al., 2012). Burns et al. noted that society must be willing to tap into the skills and talent of all Americans, because it will take the talents of people of color, race, age, sexual orientation, and IWD to ensure that America's economy continues to grow. The ODEP (2012) noted that it is imperative that businesses realize that IWD are the "Third largest market segment in the United States and [the disability community] surpasses Hispanics, African Americans and Asian Americans, as well as Generation X and teens" (p. 2). To assist in the endeavor of diversity, inclusion, and change, transformational leaders have the characteristics needed for today's society. Northouse (2007) noted that transformation as a leadership style surfaced toward the end of the 20th century. Some key characteristics of this leadership style are the ability to (a) motivate people during arduous times, (b) have concern for social justice, (c) appeal to emotional needs, (d) value followers' input, and (e) maintain ethics.

Motivation

Change and motivation should be occurring simultaneously. Gagne and Deci (2005) noted that intrinsic motivation and integrated extrinsic motivation are linked to job satisfaction. Intrinsic motivation is related to followers' competencies of task enjoyment and integrated extrinsic motivation is related to followers' abilities to become autonomous. Autonomy is linked to followers' values; therefore, verbal rewards will enhance intrinsic motivation, which will enhance extrinsic motivation. Macey et al. (2009) pointed out that employees' values are linked to engagement, and to employees' intrinsic motivation. The enhancements of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation will assist in receiving buy-in for the change strategy which is needed to eliminate barriers to employment. Gagne and Deci stated that "Autonomous support is the most important social-contextual factor for predicting identification and integration, and thus autonomous behavior" (p. 338).

Gagne and Deci (2005) further noted that a participative approach to leadership is suited for motivating followers and the fulfillment of followers' psychological needs. Northouse (2007) suggested that participative leaders encourage subordinates' participation in the decision-making process, realize the importance of subordinates for buy-in, seek subordinates' creativity and suggestions, and ensures that the internal stakeholders' suggestions are integrated into the organization operation/decision plan. Additionally, Gagne and Deci pointed out that leaders should ensure that management is trained to communicate the change to build trust with followers. Trust during change increases job satisfaction. Keyton and Smith (2009) noted that trust is the foundation of effective communication and relationships. Kidder (2003) promulgated that "Without

trust there is no way for any sort of human relations to be sustained" (p. 65). Kouzes and Posner (2007) noted that leaders' behaviors set the tone for open communication by modeling the way. Open communication allows leadership, groups, and followers to bond, which will increase followers' performance and engagement.

Employee Engagement

This section will discuss employee engagement and the factors for engagement for individuals with disabilities (IWD) that emerged for the research data. The researcher has separated the factors into success factors and failure factors. The success factors are creativity, active recruitment and retention, electronic hiring, career advancement, mentorship, and management and leadership support. The latter two success factors (mentorship and management and leadership support) are critical to employee engagement for individuals with disabilities (IWD). The failure factors are fair treatment, inclusion, and accommodation. The factors will not be discussed in a particular order.

Quantum Workplace (2010) noted that employee engagement is not job satisfaction or employee commitment: "Engagement can vary greatly from one organization to the next. And what leadership actions have a positive impact for one may not be so effective for another" (p. 7). Macey et al. (2009) noted that job satisfaction satisfies the employee, whereas employee engagement regards the additional effort put forth by the employee to ensure that the organization's objectives are met. Macey et al. noted that engaged employees will (a) think and work proactively, (b) anticipate opportunities to take action, (c) find ways to expand their own skills, (d) are persistent, and (e) adapt to change.

Although employee satisfaction is not the same as employee engagement, Madlock (2008) linked leadership and employee satisfaction, and noted that employee satisfaction has been an area examined by many because satisfaction has been related to job performance. Madlock further suggested that if supervisors' communication, competence, and leadership styles are perceived by employees as positive, the employees' job satisfaction will increase. Madlock also recommended that organizations establish training programs to enhance managers' and leaders' skills, which will positively affect the return on investment for the organization. Heslin and Latham (2004) stated that the primary purpose of performance management is to instill in people the motivation to improve their performance; an upward feedback that can build employees' self-efficacy, which will improve job satisfaction for the employee and engagement for the organization's bottom-line.

As noted previously, HR firms and academic researchers are now slowly joining the debate; both parties are saddled with competing and inconsistent interpretations of the meaning of employee engagement (Macey & Schneider, 2008). HR firms believe that engaged employees are involved, satisfied, and enthused concerning their work (Gallup Consulting, 2010); engaged employees have the capability and willingness to help the company succeed (Towers Perrin, 2008). Employee engagement is defined as a "heightened emotional and intellectual connection" that encompasses all aspects of the employees' place of employment that subsequently influences whether employees "apply additional discretionary effort" to their work (Schneider et al., 2009, p. 2); and engaged employees value, enjoy, and believe in what they do (Wellins, Bernthal, & Phelps, 2005). In addition, Towers Perrin Global Workforce Study (2008) defined engagement as,

employees' willingness and ability to contribute to a company's success. Put another way, engagement is the extent to which employees "go the extra mile" and put discretionary effort into their work—contributing more of their energy, creativity, and passion on the job (p. 3).

As previously noted, many definitions exist concerning employment engagement; however, the common denominator is the employees' commitment to putting extra effort into getting the job done (West & Dawson, 2012).

Bakker, Albrecht, and Leiter (2011) noted that in today's workforce, organizations must recruit talented people who are optimistic, energetic, and psychologically connected. Bakker et al. further noted that scientific studies have been conducted over the past decade concerning engagement, and research has shown that engagement is linked to employers' bottom line. Employee engagement is critical to business outcomes because it is a force that drives business outcomes; engaged employees are more productive employees, and employee engagement transcends human resources initiatives (Gallup Consulting, 2010). Engaged employees care about the future of the company and are willing to invest the discretionary effort—exceeding duty's call—and companies that engage their employees outperform their competition (Seijts & Crim, 2006). Employee engagement is a direct link to return on investment, as regards absenteeism, high or low turnover, safety, productivity, and profitability (Gallup Consulting, 2010).

Towers Perrin (2008) reported that only one-fifth of employees in today's workforce give "full discretionary effort on the job," and the other four-fifths of employees can critically impact organizations' financial assets (p. 2). Kim and Mauborgne (2005) believed engagement communicates management's respect for individuals and their ideas. This sharpens everybody's thinking and builds better

collective wisdom. The researchers found that to ensure that engagement is implemented in an organization, leaders and managers must have a plan that is measured (Kim & Mauborgne, 2005). Kim and Mauborgne saw engagement as a strategic process, which is different from employees' attitudes and behaviors. Engagement involves treating all employees the same, with explanations and clarity of expectations. Based on Kim and Mauborgne's findings, employees care about the justice of the process as much as they do the outcome itself. Macey et al. (2009) provided a survey that allows organizations to measure engagement.

Quantum Workplace (2010) listed trends to assist organizations or help organizations measure employee engagement: (a) alignment with goals, (b) benefits, (c) feeling valued, (d) individual contribution, (e) job satisfaction, (f) manager effectiveness, (g) retention risk, (h) teamwork, (i) trust in senior leaders, and (j) trust with coworkers. Many of the trends are self-explanatory; however, the current researcher will discuss leaders, team/teamwork, and trust for a better understanding of how the aforementioned helps create engaged employees. McLean & Company (2012) discussed "Overall engagement" (p. 10), which is shown in Figure 1.
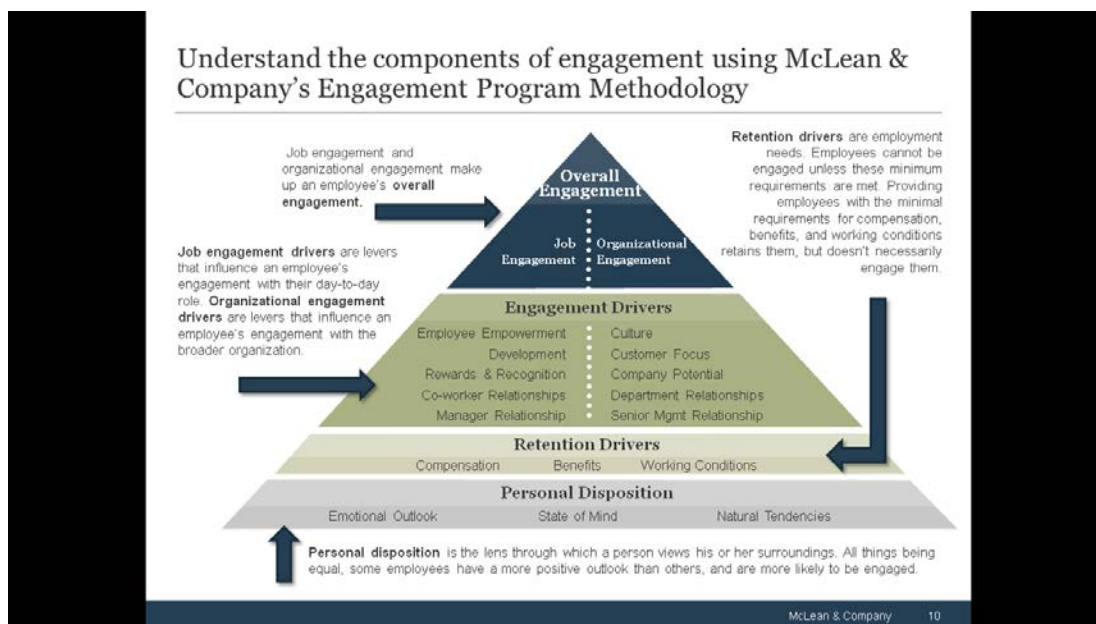
Figure 1. Components of engagement. Reprinted with permission by McLean & Company, granted on January 20, 2014.

Types of Engagement

This section includes definitions of the following types of engagement: (a) employee engagement, (b) personal engagement, (c) active engagement, (d) attitudinal engagement, (e) behavioral engagement, (f) active disengagement, and (g) work engagement. Macey et al. (2009) emphasized that engaged employees are internally connected to their jobs which, in turn, influences them to apply additional discretionary effort to their work. Kahn (1990) defined personal engagement as an "expression of a person's preferred self in task behaviors that promote connections to work and to others, personal presence (physical, cognitive, and emotional), and active, full role performance" (p. 700). Dvir, Eden, Avolio, and Shamir (2002) defined active engagement behaviorally as a "high level of activity, initiative, and responsibility" (p. 737).

Colbert, Mount, Harter, Witt, and Barrick (2004) defined engagement attitudinally as a "high internal motivation state" (p. 603). Wellin and Concelman (2006)

defined engagement behaviorally, and suggested that engagement is about "passion, commitment, and extra effort" toward work habits, and the identical words can be a source of demotivation to work habits (p. 2). Wellin and Concelman broke the idea of engagement into a number of individual elements: (a) focused work (with strategy and empowerment), (b) individual value (support and recognition), and (c) interpersonal support (teamwork and collaboration). Gallup Consulting (2010) noted that actively disengaged employees "erode an organization's bottom line, while breaking the spirits of colleagues in the process" (p. 1).

Gallup Consulting's (2009) 12-question survey identified strong feelings of employee engagement, which can be used to segment employees into the following three categories:

1. Engaged employees' work with passion. Because they feel a strong connection to the organization, they work hard to innovate and improve.

2. Not-engaged employees do the work expected of them, but do not put in extra effort.

3. Actively disengaged employees aren't just unhappy, but are spreading their unhappiness to other staff. (p. 1)

Gallup Consulting noted that, on average, "engaged employees made up 33 percent of the work force globally, not-engaged employees made up 49 percent, and actively disengaged made up 18 percent" (p. 1). Bakker et al. (2011) defined work engagement as "a positive, fulfilling, work related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption" (p. 5; also see Table 1). An engaged employee frame of mind includes the characteristics of vigor, dedication and absorption which are constructs of work engagement. According to Gonzalez-Roma, Schaufeli, Bakker, and Lloret (2006)

"Vigor is characterized by high levels of energy and mental resilience while working, the willingness to invest effort in one's work, and persistence even in the face of difficulties. Dedication is characterized by a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride and challenge. Absorption is characterized by fully concentrating on and being deeply engrossed in one's work, where time passes quickly and one has difficulty detaching oneself from work" (p. 166).

Seijts and Crim (2006) noted that only 29 percent of employees are actively engaged in their jobs, and 54 percent are not engaged; therefore, these employees have essentially "checked out" (p. 1). West and Dawson (2012) noted that "burnout is a consequence of poor engagement" (p. 9). Gallup Consulting (2010) noted that organizations must have a plan to improve employee engagement. West and Dawson pointed out that successful organizations are more likely to ensure that they receive input from employees before making decisions. Gallup Consulting noticed that successful organizations make employees their priority by focusing on (a) strategy, (b) accountability and performance, (c) communication, and (d) development.

Grawitch, Ledford, Ballard, and Barber (2009) noted that in addition to organizations, it is imperative that HR practitioners keep up with new technology, and create an environment that retains the best talent. HR practitioners are responsible for creating a workplace where both the organization and the employees can succeed. Grawitch et al. also noted that disgruntled and dissatisfied employees are likely to be absent more often and leave the organization, which also affects the organization's bottom line. Further, each organization must learn what works within its workplace because "a one-size-fits-all mindset does not appear to be an effective approach to creating a healthy workplace" (Grawitch et al., 2009, p. 123). Macey et al. (2009) agreed that a healthy workplace is associated with employee engagement, whereas engaged employees apply "discretionary effort" to their work (p. 15).

Table 1

Measurement of Work Engagement

Measurement of Work Engagement vs. Burnout	
Engaged	**Burnout**
Vigor	Exhaustion
Dedication	Cynicism
Absorption	

Note. Adapted from "Burnout and Work Engagement: Independent Factors or Opposite Poles?" by V. González-Romá, W. B. Schaufeli, A. B. Bakker, and S. Lloret, (2006), *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *68*(1), 165-174.

In summary, Bakker et al. (2011) noted that a plethora of research exists concerning work engagement, but there is still a lot to learn. As shown throughout this chapter, defining engagement is still ongoing. In addition, Bakker et al. acknowledged that there are still unanswered questions concerning employee/work engagement and offered 10 key questions that are not known about work engagement:

(a) how should we conceptualize engagement, (b) how should we best measure engagement, see table below(c) are there fluctuations in engagement across the working week, (d) what is a "climate for engagement," (e) can leaders influence follower engagement, (f) is engagement contagious, (g) do engaged employees conserve their own work engagement, (h) is there a dark side of engagement, (i) is engagement related to health, and (j) what are effective interventions for engagement.

[Finally, Bakker et al. noted that] Research has revealed that engaged employees are highly energetic, self-efficacious individuals who exercise influence over events that affect their lives. (p. 5)

In today's society, organizations must empower leaders to focus on the followers' needs to ensure organizational success. Employee engagement can be assessed by utilizing Stroh's (2000) causal loop diagram that helps leaders understand the data and develop a target action plan. Causal loop diagramming is associated with systems thinking. Systems thinking and causal loop diagrams help to translate complex data into

simple, compelling explanations of why issues in an organization occur. Stroh further noted that once leaders realize that there is one mission and many objectives that must be accomplished by the team, then everyone will be apt to work together and change. The results of systems theory will allow leadership and employees to understand what it would take for the organization to perform holistically in ensuring engagement of all employees, including IWD. Davis and Davis (2009) noted that systems thinking leaders will ensure that their followers have the tools needed to be engaged.

Daft (2008) noted that there are five components to an innovative organization: (a) alignment, (b) creative values, (c) unofficial activity, (d) diverse stimuli, and (e) within-company communication. If a leader understands the five components, she or he will have followers that are committed, energized, self-assured, open-minded, and sociable. McLean & Company (2012) noted that engaged employees bring "optimal performance" to an organization, meaning the employees are "energized" (p. 5). In addition, Dyer, Dyer, and Dyer (2007) noted that team building should be thought of as an ongoing process, not as a single event. Moreover, Dyer et al. noted that a leader must take the four "Cs" into account when building a performance team. The four Cs are (a) context, (b) composition, (c) competencies, and (d) change management (Dyer et al., 2007).

A team's ability to monitor its performance and make changes will ensure that the team can overcome obstacles moving forward. Leaders must ensure that the four Cs are operational for a team to perform as a high-functioning team, able to persevere when faced with challenges. For a team to be highly functional, self-managed, motivated, and focused on organizational goals, the team must be committed to a common purpose and set of related performance goals for which the group holds itself jointly accountable

(Katzenbach & Smith, 2003). The team will be required to have the needed skills to function when there are challenges. Additionally, the team must respect each other, hold each other mutually accountable, and have fun. A good team will be required to spend a lot of time together. That being the case, a high-performance team leader is similar to a transformational leader, who has the ability to influence team performance through building empowered team environments and facilitating functional team conflict (Dionne, Yammarino, Atwater, and Spangler, 2004). Moreover, building an effective team is a balancing act—a balance between rules and creativity, one's own needs and the needs of the group, and between direction from the top and decision-making on the front-lines (Jackson & Madsen, 2005).

Engagement Factors

The researcher data analysis identified success factors and failure factors that will plausibly ensure employee engagement for IWD. The success factors are (a) active recruitment and retention, (b) career advancement, (c) creativity, (d) electronic hiring, (e) management and leadership, (d) and mentorship. The failure factors are (a) accommodation, (b) fair treatment, and (c) inclusion. The engagement factors for IWD are likely to benefit the organization collectively. Mentorship for IWD is one of the factors identified by the researcher, and mentorship can help decrease the unemployment rate for this community. Thus, mentorship plays a significant role for career advancement, creativity, and recruitment and retention for IWD. The American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD, 2014) hosts an annual Disability Mentoring Day (DMD); the yearly event is sponsored by large organizations and has helped thousands of IWD obtain employment. AAPD pointed out that this event has a

lasting impact on IWD careers and the event connects IWD with mentors that offer

valuable lessons and career advice.

The term mentorship does not have a global definition. Barondess (1995) noted

that the term *mentor* can be traced back to the late 16th century, and the term *mentor*

takes on many meanings relating to encouraging, caring, helping, and the like. McCarthy

(2013) noted that at times, coaching and mentoring are used interchangeably. The key to

mentoring is a positive relationship. Assigned mentor and mentee relationships do not

always have a positive effect or positive connection. McCarthy noted that "informal

mentoring was more effective than formal" (p. 1), Additionally, for mentoring to work,

the purpose and mission of the mentoring must be understood. Cuthbertson (2006)

introduced the term "Power Mentoring" which is "Showing you how to actively develop

and improve your relationships with others and, in doing so, gain all of the career

outcomes that you have always imagined" (p. 2). The authors further noted that different

types of mentoring exist today; for example, "traditional mentoring, electronic or e-

mentoring, reverse mentoring, peer mentoring, etcetera" (p. 2). Cuthbertson noted that

the different types of mentoring can build relationships that last forever. On the other

hand, if incompatibility exists between the mentor and mentee, the relationship is likely

to terminate.

Technology (electronic hiring, active recruitment and retention) is the way of the

future and collaboration with other technological ventures will enhance opportunity for

IWD (Bierema & Merriam, 2002; Fiorenza, 2014). Technology allows IWD the benefit

of e-mentoring or tele-mentoring, due to the fact that IWD will not have to leave their

homes (Bierema & Merriam, 2002). E-mentoring is defined as "A computer mediated,

mutually beneficial relationship between a mentor and a protégé which provides learning, advising, encouraging, promoting, and modeling, that is often boundary less, egalitarian, and qualitatively different than traditional face-to-face mentoring" (Bierema & Merriam, 2002, p. 214). Although concerns exist around e-mentoring, for example, it is imperative that both parties are cognizant of the purpose of the e-mentoring relationship and a suitable timeframe is established to forge a positive relationship. If the purpose and mission of the e-mentoring relationship is not established, it is likely to collapse.

The factors identified by the researcher must first be acknowledged by senior leaders and a strategy should be put in place to evaluate if all employees are engaged within any organization. If the employees are engaged, accountability measures should be put in place for ongoing training and awareness of diversity and inclusion. According to Padilla, Hogan, and Kaiser (2007), it is imperative that organizations have checks and balances to ensure employee engagement.

If leadership and management want their employees to be engaged, then there needs to be a strategy in place to ensure engagement. In addition, employees must be committed to ensuring their own engagement. However, Mackey and Sisodia (2014) would most likely agree that the ultimate burden to employee engagement is linked to leadership. Due to the fact that leadership must guarantee that employee engagement is a part of the organization's mission and objectives. The employees are the gauge to validating employee engagement. Additionally, if the success factors are adhered to, it will be present in a company's bottom-line. However, if the factors are ignored, the organization will plausibly not succeed.

Leadership

Today's leaders must know how to motivate followers, build teams, balance work and family for employees, communicate across generations, and manage conflict (Yuksel, 2006). Bar-Tal (2000) noted that leaders play an important role in the conflict process. Followers mimic their leaders' attitudes and look for openness in leaders in resolving conflict. The followers are watching to see if the leaders' actions are speaking louder than words, and the leaders' support and promotion of reconciliation. Yüksel (2006) noted, "The role of 'value' leadership in preventing or reducing identity group conflicts across differences and challenges of exclusive group identities demands building trust, reflexivity and empathy through constructive vision and commitment in such a vision within and between groups" (p. 1). The author further discussed how conflict transformation and leadership have common characteristics because they both target change, learning, and de-biasing. Additionally, Yüksel mentions that conflict transformation is about how relationship and leadership targets contextual factors.

Research conducted over the past decade shows that engagement is linked to every facet of the organization; therefore 21st century leaders must be flexible, be required to have an array of skills to manage employees, and look forward to meeting the mission and goals of organizations (Bakker et al., 2011). That being the case, the demographics of the workforce are changing globally (Haynes, 2011). Today's financial issues and concerns are the backdrop for how organizations conduct business. Haynes (2011) stated that it is imperative for organizations to connect change and human capital demands. Haynes noted that "Corporate real estate (CRE) managers need to establish the different needs for the different generations, and create an environment where all

generations can… (p. 98). Haynes noted that leaders and organizations must learn how to

work with multiple generations. Each generation has its own needs, values, and

expectations. Hammill (2005) noted that never in America's history has four generations

ever co-existed in an organization, and the power of the four generations is requiring

leaders and organizations to change. Haynes (2011) categorized the four generations

within organizations as the following:

1. Veterans, also known as seniors or traditionalist, were born between 1922 and 1945.

2. Baby Boomers were born between 1946 and 1964.

3. Generation X, also known as Gen Xers, was born between 1965 and 1980.

4. Generation Y, also known as Gen Y, Millennials, or Echo Boomers were born between 1981 and 2000.

The work characteristics are different within each of the generations. For example,

veterans follow authority and prefer formal communication; baby boomers enjoy working

in teams and prefer face-to-face communication; Generation Xers work independently,

are resilient, and probably prefer to communicate constantly with leaders; and Generation

Yers enjoy work life balance and collaboration is the preferred means of communication.

Leaders must identify where they are within the generations to understand their

worldview. One can assume that Yeo (2006) would agree that leaders need to identify

their worldview on life. The author explained that a worldview "Is a cluster of values

and a pervasive orientation to the world and to people" (p. 64). As a result of this

discussion, 21st century leaders must be flexible.

Today's leaders are expected to adapt and be skilled in generational differences.

The leaders must know how to motivate followers, build teams, balance work and family

for employees, communicate across generations, and manage conflict. Yeo (2006) stated

that 21st century leadership and human resource professionals are faced with challenges.

The author further noted that today's leaders must know how to (a) balance their power,

because it can motivate or demotivate followers; (b) understand how to and when to be

assertive; (c) be willing to get involved; (d) understand the power of communication; (e)

be a strategic planner, and (f) manage change. To accomplish the multitude of

requirements for today's leaders, Yeo offered an integrative framework for leadership

development encompassing these requirements.

Khasawneh (2011) noted that vertical leadership thinking is not suitable for the

21st century leaders. Transformation is required for leaders and organizations, and

transformation occurs by strategically planning to become an organization that creates

flexibility and shared leadership. Shared leadership is horizontal and vertical, forming

autonomy, which allows followers to assist in the decision making process, build

teamwork, and collaborate for the success of the organization. The above discussion is

also linked to organizational citizenship behavior which is defined as "an individual

behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward

system, and in the aggregate promotes the efficient and effective function of the

organization" (Khasawneh, 2011, p. 622).

Kouzes and Posner (2007) emphasized that there are five practices of exemplary

leadership that get outstanding things to happen in organizations and create relationships.

Kouzes and Posner connoted that leaders (a) model the way, (b) inspire a shared vision,

(c) challenge the process, (d) enable others to act, and (f) encourage the heart. Leaders

who model the way know what values they hold and realize if they want to accomplish

the organizations' goals, they must set a good example. Leaders who inspire a shared vision see the future of the organization holistically, and everyone is valued for their contribution. Leaders who challenge the process must be willing to change and take risks. Leaders that enable others act collaboratively, and realize the importance of trust. Leaders who encourage the heart can motivate individuals during challenging times or during a recession (Haynes, 2011). Thus, the making of an exemplary leader is challenging and complex (Haynes, 2011). Kouzes and Posner (2007) believed that the five practices of exemplary leadership can be learned which is likely to ensure employee engagement for all employees.

In conclusion, Yeo (2006) stated that 21st century leadership and HR professionals are faced with challenges, and noted that today's leader must know how to (a) balance their power, because it can motivate or demotivate followers; (b) understand how and when to be assertive; (c) be willing to get involved; (d) understand the power of communication; (e) be a strategic planner, and (f) manage change. To accomplish the multitude of skills for today's leaders, Harland, Harrison, Jones, and Reiter-Palmam (2005) mentioned that transformational leaders are more apt to turn chaos into an adversity that one must bounce back from. The researcher emerging finding is resilience engagement, and Harland et al. noted that a connection exists between leadership and resilience. Harland et al. found that leaders' behaviors can determine the reaction of their employees. As a result, if the behavior of the leader is positive during the change process, it is likely that the employees will be positive concerning the change and vice versa. Employees are able to bounce back and become resilient concerning the change process if kept informed (Kotter & Schlesinger, 2008).

Resilience

Ballenger-Browning and Johnson (2010) noted that a definition for resilience continues to evolve and pointed out that there is "one significant barrier in resilience research, which is the assumption that a lack of disease constitutes resilience" (p. 4). Researchers have implied that self-efficacy is germane to resilience (Bandura, 1993; Hamill, 2003). Hamill noted that "self-efficacy is a trait present when facing adversity" (p. 124). Tugade and Fredrickson (2004) linked emotional intelligence to resiliency and inferred that positive, emotionally intelligent individuals are apt to overcome adversity. Positive emotion intelligence thinking refutes negative thinking, allowing one to begin overcoming adversity. Everyone is bound to experience adversity; however, how the person handles adversity will define their outcome. The participants in the current study did not let their setbacks in life define their future, many of the participants noted that it does not matter how they are treated, they are still motivated to do their best at work. The Army trains and develops their soldiers to be resilient. In preparation for pre-deployment and post-deployment the Army has inculcated resilience training into every soldier's life. The Army's Memorandum stated that resilient soldiers are able to overcome adversity in challenging times. To ensure resilience training throughout the Army, there is a strategic plan in place that is implemented by leadership, from the top down, on how to introduce change to soldiers, their family members, and Department of the Army civilians. The Army inculcates a holistic approach to understanding resilience. The Army has established a resilience training program to assist service members in coping with everyday life. The program is inculcated at the onset of a service member's career (Secretary of the Army, 2013). Ballenger-Browning and Johnson (2010) noted

that resilience is an attribute that precedes a significant emotional event. For example, military members with posttraumatic stress disorder are known to surpass resilience by reflecting on the event to construct an optimistic attitude regarding their future (Ballenger-Browning & Johnson, 2010).

Moreover, the Army stated that "resilience is the mental, physical, emotional and behavioral ability to face and cope with adversity, adapt to change, recover, learn and grow from setbacks" (Secretary of the Army, 2013, Enclosure 4). The Army has expanded resilience training to military personnel, their family members, and to individuals who work for the Army. The program is comprised of 12 resilience training skills, and the names of the resilience training skills are self-explanatory and include "(a) hunt the good stuff, (b) identify strength in self and others, (c) problem solving, and (d) strengths in challenges" (Enclosure 4, p. 2). The few resilience training skills mentioned here are related to the findings of this study, and the characteristics displayed in the data finding for many of the participants in this study.

Galli and Vealey (2008) showed that disabled individuals who have accepted and internally embraced their disabilities or adversities through support and relationship have a greater chance of "bouncing back," (p. 316) and moving on with their lives. Galli and Vealey created a resilience model that refers to the disability or adversity as a "disruption," but with support and relationships one is "resiliently reintegrated" back into society (p. 319). Resilience is a learned behavior that can be developed with the right relationships. Finally, research shows that resilience is connected to employee engagement and human emotions. De Baca (2010) mentioned that if individuals are

taught to develop resilience, they are more apt to be successful in life, because positive thinking is linked to resilience (De Baca, 2010; Tugade & Fredickson, 2004).

In conclusion, the literature review served to address laws related to IWD, diversity and disabilities, employee engagement, and types of engagement. The major issue is ensuring that IWD are highly energetic, self-efficacious individuals who display a discretionary effort to their work (Bakker et al., 2010; Schneider et al., 2009). The current research is important so that employees, managers, and leaders will understand the factors that impact engagement for individuals with disabilities.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Creswell (2009) noted that a researcher's epistemology and philosophical worldview shape the type of research one will conduct. For instance, if a researcher is interested in statistical measurements using an instrument to obtain data to analyze and test, the researcher will embrace quantitative research. In contrast, if a researcher is interested in exploring and understanding a phenomenon, the researcher will embrace qualitative inquiry (Creswell, 2009). The research questions for this study were, "What are the barriers that impact employment for individuals with disabilities?" and "What factors impact employee engagement for individuals with disabilities?" The researcher explored these questions using qualitative inquiry because it allows the researcher to better understand and interpret the meaning of the phenomenon at hand. Corbin and Strauss (2008) defined qualitative research as "any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification" (p. 17). Creswell (2007) mentioned that another reason for conducting a qualitative study is that it is exploratory. Merriam (2009) noted that a basic qualitative study focuses on meaning and understanding, and that qualitative inquiry includes purposeful samples, data analysis that is inductive and comparative, and findings that are richly descriptive.

Creswell (2007) discussed five qualitative approaches of inquiry: (a) narrative research, (b) phenomenology, (c) grounded theory, (d) ethnography, and (e) case study. Although all five strategies have similarities initially, they differ during the analysis. For instance, narrative research, ethnography, and case study most often are used to study one

individual or event, while phenomenology and grounded theory usually are applied to the study of numerous individuals who have commonality (Creswell, 2007).

Winfield (2011) mentioned that phenomenology allows researchers to take what is known about a phenomenon and further explore the phenomenon for greater understanding. In addition, Hunter, Murphy, Grealish, Casey, and Keady (2011) noted that grounded theory is applicable for research when there is a lack of information or understanding of a phenomenon. The current researcher chose grounded theory to explore the two research questions for this study, because grounded theory "can be thought of as a theory that is derived from or 'grounded' in everyday experiences" (Byrne, 2001, p. 1155). There is a plethora of qualitative research in the area of employee engagement; however, as noted in chapter two, there is a lack of literature that specifically examines employee engagement to determine what factors will ensure that IWD are able to thrive within the workplace. As a result, grounded theory was the preferred method to better understand and explore the barriers that impede employment for IWD, and the factors that impact employee engagement for IWD.

Grounded Theory

Creswell (2007) noted that qualitative grounded theory design is rooted in sociology and surfaced in the latter 1960s through Glaser and Strauss, who initially set out to provide a way for researchers to use informal data collected to substantiate quantitative research and place meaning to the data or discovery of a theory by a "general method of comparative analysis" (p. 1). Corbin and Strauss (2008) stated that "grounded theory is for the purpose of building theory from data and to denote theoretical constructs derived from qualitative analysis data" (p. 1). Charmaz (2006) noted that "grounded

theory methods consist of systematic, yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analyzing qualitative data to construct theories 'grounded' in the data themselves"(p. 2). Charmaz also noted that grounded theory research strategies allow one to interpret the data categories and seek unanswered questions until theoretical saturation occurs. Saturation occurs when data categories are blended together through constant comparison and the "categories become more theoretical because the researcher engages in successive levels of analysis" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 3). In addition, Creswell (2007) noted that it could take approximately 20 to 30 interviews to saturate a category.

Thomas and James (2006) pointed out that for 20 years, Charmaz looked for ways to make grounded theory comprehensible and transparent, but Charmaz pointed out that Glaser and Strauss's "core principles of grounded theory" are fundamental (p. 27). Charmaz (2006), a student of both Glaser and Strauss, did not agree with their classical perspective of grounded theory, and believed that grounded theory is interpretive. Strauss and Corbin (1998) would probably agree with Charmaz that grounded theory is more directed toward interpreting the participants' experiences, than in discovering a theory. Thomas and James asserted that grounded theory is "a resolution of different epistemological positions and a solution to a broader problem about perceptions of the status of qualitatively based knowledge in the social science" (p. 2). In addition, Bitsch (2005) acknowledged that grounded theory includes "systematic data gathering, which includes data collection and analysis, interpretation, and theory development" (p. 77). Miller and Frederick (1999) believed that qualitative inquiry is focused on interpretation, and grounded theory is an offshoot of qualitative inquiry. Hallberg (2006) provided the fundamental characteristics of grounded theory:

(a) data collection and analysis; (b) interviewing of participants to be studied with a set of questions; (c) open sampling that coincides with data collection and analysis, and is followed by theoretical sampling which provide the researcher with direction in order to saturate a concept/category; (d) hierarchical coding processes: line-by-line coding, axial or theoretical coding that identifies themes that are categorized into relationships, and selective and conceptual coding identifies particular themes relating to the study; (e) categories/concepts and their properties—every category must earn its way into analysis—must be grounded in data; (f) constant comparison of data to forge relationships; (g) the merging of core categories are the key to grounded theory and help authenticate the study; (h) memo-writing from the outset of data collection until saturation. (pp. 143–144)

Grounded theory methodology continues to gain status within the social sciences, and researchers in the social sciences continue to choose qualitative methodology over quantitative methodology (Babchuk, 2011; Thomas & James, 2006). As noted earlier, grounded theory was introduced by Glaser and Strauss during the latter part of the 1960s, but grounded theory methodology continues to be expanded by other researchers. Today, there are many ways of conducting grounded theory; however, when a researcher decides to use this form of qualitative inquiry, he or she should understand the nuances between other qualitative inquiries. Moreover, a researcher should know which grounded theory approach to use. For example, a researcher should choose between Glaser and Strauss's classical positivist grounded theory, Strauss and Corbin's post-positivist grounded theory, or the Charmaz interpretive grounded theory (Rey, 2012).

Design of Study

The researcher explored the research questions through the lens of an interpretive worldview. Hallberg (2006) noted that "in an interpretive grounded theory, it is stressed that data is constructed through an on-going interaction between researcher and participants" (p. 146.) Hallberg further discussed that "[interpretivists] believe that there is more than one interpretation of the same meaning that an object's conscience interacts with" (p. 130). Thomas and James (2006) noted qualitative inquiry is about human

understanding. Moreover, Thomas and James stated that "interpretations are built, in other words, out of what it is to be human" (p. 16); and interaction with the objects (people) brings about constructed meaning and interpretation, which only comes from the interaction which is true to the object and their interaction with their conscience. Mills, Bonner, and Francis (2006) pointed to Charmaz's belief that constructivist grounded theory starts with data gathering, and again, Charmaz adopted the classical form of grounded theory strategies. Nevertheless, Charmaz rejected the classical grounded theory methodology that meaning is deciphered by the participants, and a theory emerges from the data. Mills et al. inferred that Charmaz believed that the data from participants are interpreted and understood in the context of the participants' surroundings. Finally, Charmaz (2006) noted that "Grounded theory methods as a set of principles and practices, not as prescriptions or packages", and Charmaz emphasized "flexible guidelines, not methodological rules, recipes, or requirements" (p. 9).

Data Collection

Bitsch (2005) mentioned that grounded theory emerges from the ground up, and consists of phases that serve to assist the researcher in developing a theory. The phases begin with a research problem, research question(s), data collection, coding and analyzing data; and finally, theory development. During the data collection process, theories concerning the relationships between categories are merged and verified. In preparation of an emergent grounded theory, the data are studied, checked, and rechecked until theoretical saturation occurs. The emergent theory is not developed from the raw data, but from the concepts and categories that arise from the raw data (Bitsch, 2005).

Charmaz's (2006) premise was that grounded theory research helps the researcher understand the participants being studied, and theories are created by the researcher to understand participants. As previously mentioned, Charmaz disagreed with Glaser and Strauss, the founders of classical grounded theory, that theories emerge from data, and noted that theories emerge by "interactions with people, perspectives, and research practices" (p. 10). Put another way, Charmaz believed that theories are constructed by the participants' worldviews. Moreover, Charmaz thought that grounded theory "leads us back to the world for a further look and deeper reflection-again and again" (p. 149).

Grounded theory is an interpretation and understanding of the world in which the participants live. Creswell (2009) suggested the following ways to collect data: (a) the setting, or where the research will take place; (b) the actors who will be interviewed; and (c) the events, or what the actors will be observed doing. In the present study, before and after the data collection process, the researcher focused on learning the meaning that the participants held about employee engagement. The face-to-face, one-on-one interviews took place at the consulting company that identified approximately 25 disabled volunteers to be interviewed for this research. Each interview took approximately 1 or 2 hours.

Prior to the interviews, the researcher provided participants with a consent form and the interview questions. In addition, at the time of the study, the consulting company was employed by the federal government to ensure that IWD are qualified for employment and to place their names in a database to be considered for federal government positions throughout the United States by the Office of Personnel Management. The federal government is just one of many entities that depend on this

consulting company to have qualified professionals within their database and working for the company. The consulting company also has an alumni program that allows IWD who are hired by their partners to continue to build their careers by providing network events and skill-building resources for future employment.

Data Analysis Methods

Patton (2002) suggested that qualitative analysis categories should be judged by internal similarity and external variety. Internal similarity is defined as how data coalesce in a category to make meaning, whereas external variety is defined as the differences within the data collected. The researcher used data within the two criteria to validate the classification system, verify the significance and accuracy of the categories, and assign data into categories. Bitsch (2005) noted, "the analytic procedures in data coding and analysis are based on the method of constant comparison" (p. 79). Constant comparison allows the researcher to discover and clarify patterns and nuances. Thomas and James (2006) noted that the constant comparison method of grounded theory assists in data validation. During the data collection process, the researcher constantly verified relationships between categories. Bitsch explained that concepts and categories arise from the raw data; therefore, this researcher studied, checked, and rechecked the concepts and categories until saturation was achieved.

Creswell (2009) noted that there are three phases to coding in grounded theory: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. Open coding allows the researcher to listen to each participant being interviewed for the study in order to identify categories and subcategories; axial coding identifies the relationship between categories and subcategories; and selective coding involves integrating categories and subcategories.

Charmaz (2006) noted that grounded theory coding should begin with "line-by-line" coding to assist researchers with "conceptualizing their ideas," and "focused coding, which permits the researcher to separate, sort and synthesize large amounts of data" (p. 11). Patton (2002) referred to these as "indigenous categories" and contrasted them with "analyst-constructed typologies" (pp. 457–458). Corbin and Strauss (2008) discussed in vivo coding, which is "taking concepts using the actual words of research participants rather than being named by the analyst" (p. 65).

Ryan and Bernard (2003) suggested another way to find themes is to look for local terms that may sound unfamiliar or are used in unfamiliar ways. Ryan and Bernard emphasized that it is imperative that the researcher remain focused while comparing data collected from the participants. In addition, Ryan and Bernard found that to remain focused and understand the participants, a "grounded theorist" must examine each line independently to understand what is being said, and the grounded theorist should ask, "how is it similar to or different from the preceding or following statements" (p. 91).

Strauss and Corbin (1998) pointed out that a researcher must be able to differentiate between what is relevant and have the "capacity to understand and give meaning to data" (p. 42). Bitsch (2005) noted that "a key concept to grounded theory is theoretical sensitivity" (p. 79), by which the researcher listens with a conscientious ear in order to filter out the information that is being articulated by the participants. Mills et al. (2006) believed that Strauss and Corbin would agree that the participants' voice is imperative to theoretical sensitivity. Patton (2002) stated that the origins of theoretical sensitivity begin with a classification system that identifies patterns that have been articulated throughout the study. Patton (2002) pointed out that there is no one way of

classifying data, coding data, or determining themes and patterns. Nevertheless, it is imperative that a scholar is able to interpret data after he or she has collected it. Patton noted that analyzing data is not an easy task; one must become a critical thinker, digging deep for innovative themes and patterns.

Qualitative Credibility

The quality of one's qualitative research will be judged for authenticity and credibility. The words *integrity*, *triangulation*, *transferability*, and *trustworthiness* are terms by which qualitative approaches will be judged for substantive significance and credibility (Patton, 2002). Primarily, terms associated with quantitative research are *internal validity*, *external validity*, *reliability*, and *objectivity*, which are used to validate a study's authenticity (Hoepfl, 1997). As noted previously, not all researchers agree with qualitative inquiry. Qualitative researchers must show how the terms can be utilized to ensure that their studies are credible. Using triangulation during the data analysis phase of the research provides true value to the study. Triangulation requires the researcher to use reflexive questioning. Patton (2002) noted that reflexivity "entered the qualitative lexicon as a way of emphasizing the importance of self-awareness, political/cultural consciousness, and ownership of one's perspective" (p. 64).

Bitsch (2005) discussed that a qualitative study requires the researcher to be honest during data analysis, because the researcher is the instrument that will be examined. Finally, researchers should promulgate their biases to ensure neutrality within the research. To assist in promulgating the researcher's feelings, thoughts, and emotions in the current study, the researcher used a reflexive journal for triangulation to add value by increasing confidence in whatever conclusions are drawn. Triangulation occurs when

researchers use different methods to understand the research. Patton (2002) noted that the "logic of triangulation is based on the premise that no single method ever adequately solves the problem of rival explanations" (p. 555). To ensure transferability, the current researcher compared the data until it reached saturation. Transferability, external validity, and generalizability (quantitative terms) are paralleled; yielding the same results. When qualitative approaches yield results that can be used with other participants or in another situation, it in turn, is equal to the quantitative terms mentioned previously (Bitsch, 2005).

Transferability is accomplished through rigorous details regarding the research context, decisions, procedures, and analysis, as well as sufficient information about the researcher's theoretical worldview and the researcher's interactions with participants (Patton, 2002). Trustworthiness is obtained when interviews, observations, triangulation, and other techniques are aimed at creating high-quality qualitative data that is credible and authentic. Lincoln and Guba (1985) pointed out that the researcher's livelihood depends upon the credibility and integrity of the researcher.

In short, Bitsch (2005) implied that whether researchers decide to embark upon a qualitative or quantitative study, they are steered by a set standard of guiding principles that are expected to be adhered to. These principles will determine whether their research will be considered reliable, trustworthy, and valid by their contemporaries and others who may take interest in and review their work. For qualitative studies, the researcher faces several issues of appropriateness regarding the research design, methodology, data collection, interpretation of the data, and credibility of the research and even of the

researcher. Creswell (2009) argued that all researchers are bound by a code of ethics and principles that govern scholarly research in all disciplines.

Limitations to Methodology

According to Patton (2002), limitations to qualitative methodology can begin at the interviewing stage. The researcher must listen and watch during the interview, while remaining cognizant of the interviewees' sentiments toward the subject. To combat this limitation, in the current study, the researcher attempted to apply the appropriate creditability procedures mentioned earlier. In addition, grounded theory research cannot be ascertained as generalizable, but the researcher again attempted to ensure that transferability was applied to this study. One of the limitations to this research is that some private information may be observed that the researcher cannot report. In addition, there may have been some bias because only the researcher interviewed participants, observed the participants' behaviors, reviewed all of the data, made sense of the data, organized the data into categories, collected participant meanings, collaborated with the participants, and interpreted the data. The final limitation of this study was that the consulting company identified the volunteers to participate in the study to ensure that all of the participants have a disability.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

The aim of this study was to examine factors that impact employee engagement and the barriers to employment for individuals with disabilities, using Charmaz's (2006) interpretivist qualitative grounded theory inquiry. The study began with eight research questions; however, as the data emerged, the researcher added three additional questions. Through memo writing, line-by-line coding, sifting and combing through the transcripts, the Excel worksheets, and NVivo output sheets the research questions were saturated. The saturation of the questions promulgated the barriers to employment for individuals with disabilities (IWD), and the factors to employee engagement for IWD. The research findings show an aggregate of the participants' responses to each research question, in addition to how the data emerged that made known the barriers to employment, and the factors for employee engagement for IWD (see Figures 10 and 11). Additionally, the chapter includes discussion of how resilience engagement emerged through constant comparison.

The original categories that emerged were (a) barriers, (b) engagement, (c) factors, (d) motivation, (e) obstacles, and (f) work. Using NVivo, a qualitative tool designed by QSR International, a word frequency showed that the word *work* was used most by the participants. As noted in chapter three, Creswell (2007) stated that it could take approximately 20 to 30 interviews to saturate a category. The researcher conducted 33 interviews to saturate the categories for this research. Charmaz (2006) noted that grounded theory research strategies allow one to interpret the data categories and seek unanswered questions until saturation occurs. Saturation occurs when data categories are blended together through constant comparison and the "categories become more

theoretical because the researcher engages in successive levels of analysis" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 3). The final level of analysis required the researcher to delve into the categories, because there was a void. Therefore, the researcher reexamined and continued reading about the factors to employee engagement. The constant comparison of the data findings revealed that the participants were internally engaged by their supportive relationships. At that time, based on the constant comparison of the data, the word *resilient* became prominent. After reading literature about resilience, the researcher sent four additional questions to the participants to verify that resilience was an appropriate interpretation. After receiving the responses from the participants, an examination of the data depicted that researcher interpretation was accurate. As a result, the researcher concluded that the participants are resiliently engaged.

The researcher provided an email to the consulting company that was sent to approximately 75 to 100 ambassadors. An ambassador is an individual who has gained employment with the assistance of a consulting organization. The email included the researcher's contact information. Once the participants made contact, an interview was scheduled either face-to-face, telephonic, or email. To obtain the data, the researcher's original intent was to conduct face-to-face interviews. However, due to the location of many of the ambassadors (e.g., United Kingdom) as well as certain disabilities (e.g., deaf), telephonic interviews and/or emails with the interview questions, the consent form, and the demographic form were sent to participants. Additionally, the telephonic and face-to-face participants did not receive the questions in advance, which allowed for unpremeditated responses.

The researcher provided each interviewee with a participant consent form and a participant demographic form prior to the interview, and collected both forms before the interviews that ranged from 20 to 60 minutes each. The researcher recorded each interviewee using a Livescribe Echo Smartpen. The Smartpen is a recording device that saved the recording for future use. The saved recordings were uploaded to a password protected database that belonged to a confidential transcription company that transcribed each recording and returned the recording in the same manner. The transcripts were analysis line-by-line and used side by side with the memo writing acquired during the interviews and the Nvivo output sheets.

Demographics

Figure 2 depicts the breakdown of the 33 interviews by gender (23 males and 10 females) and the type of interview. The x-axis represents the gender of the participants and the y-axis represents the number of interview types. There were 22 telephonic interviews (seventeen males and five females), nine face-to-face interviews (five males and four females), and two email interviews (one male and one female).
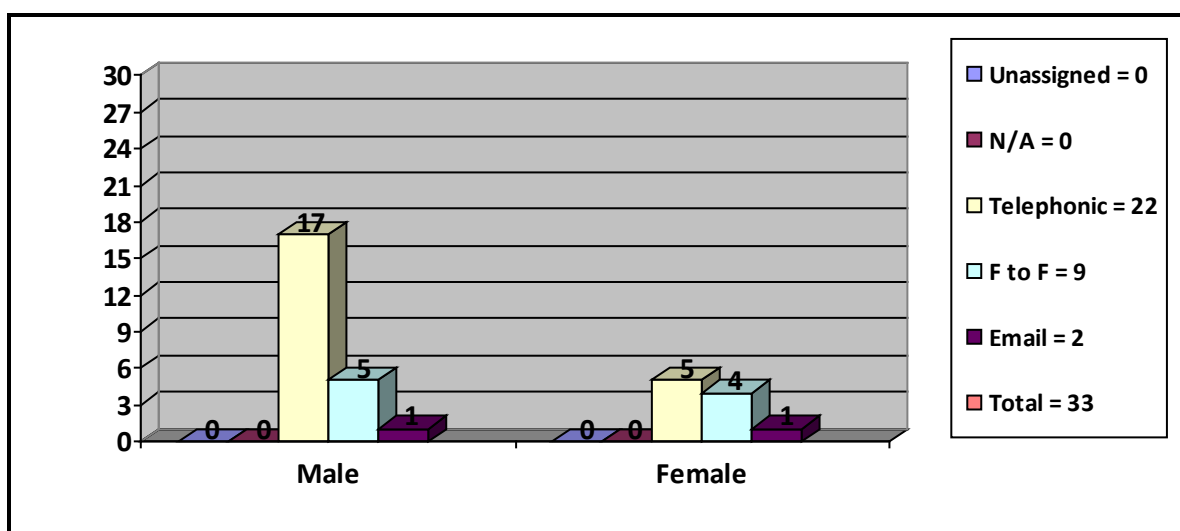
Figure 2. Participants' gender versus interview type: Nodes by attribute value.

Figure 3 depicts the breakdown of the 33 interviews by gender (23 males and 10 females) and disability type. The x-axis represents the gender of the participants and the y-axis represents participant's disability type (visible, invisible, or not disclosed). Eighteen participants have a visible disability, 10 participants have an invisible disability, and five participants did not disclose their disability or disability type.
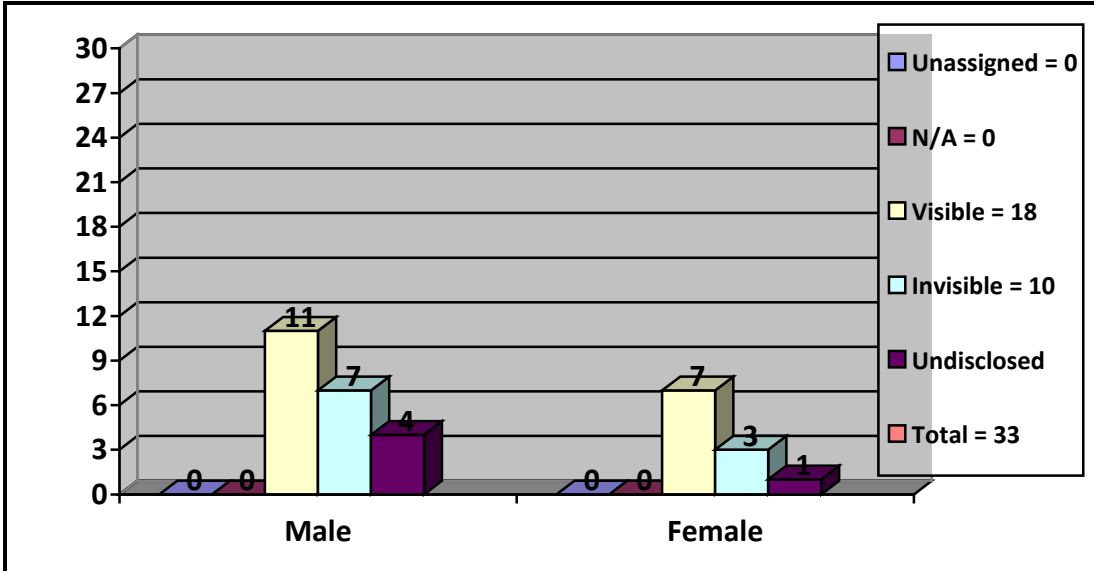
Figure 3. Participants' gender versus disability type: Nodes by attribute value.

Figure 4 depicts the breakdown of the 33 interviews by gender (23 males and 10 females) and age. The x-axis represents the age of the participants and the y-axis represents the gender. There were 20 males and eight females in the 22–49 age group, and three males and two females in the over-50 age group.
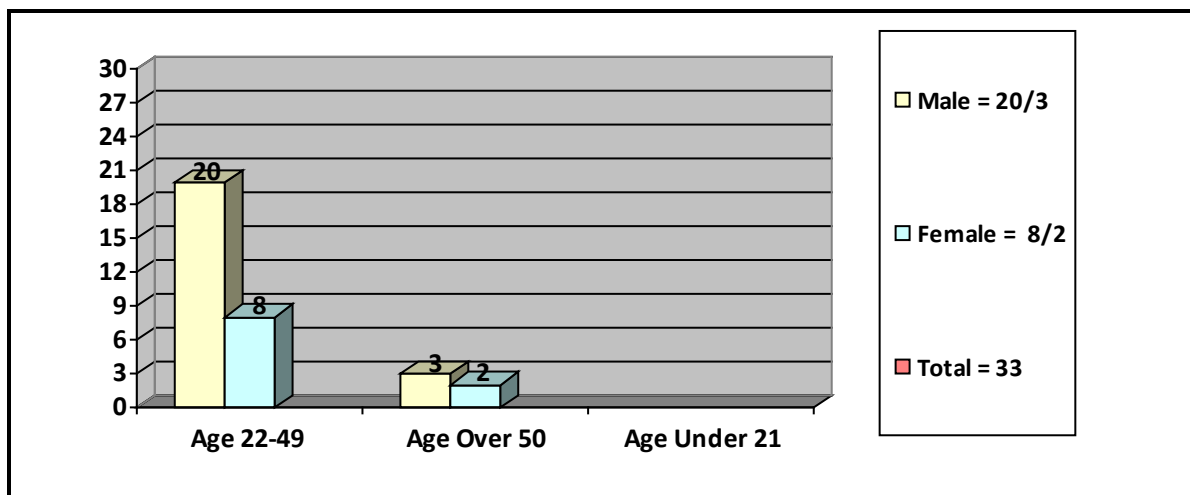
Figure 4. Participant's' age versus gender: Nodes by attribute value.

Figure 5 represents the three age categories of the participants (21 and under, 22–

49, or over 50) and the disability type (visible, invisible, or not disclosed) in this study.

As indicated, 28 of the participants were 22–49, and five participants were over 50 years

of age.

Figure 5. Participants' age versus disability type: Nodes by attribute value.

Figure 6 is a representation of the participants' ages and participants' tenure (less than 2 years, 2 to 5 years, or over 5 years) collected for this study. Approximately 70% of the participants have been with their organizations for over 5 years.
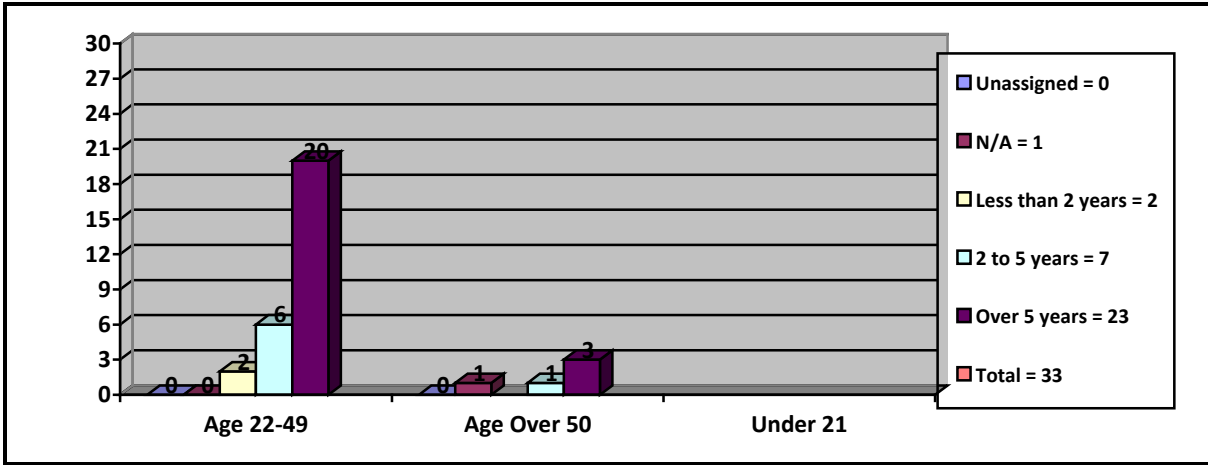
Figure 6. Participants' age versus tenure: Nodes by attribute value.

Figure 7 is a representation of the participants' ages and participants' positions (full-time or part-time) collected for this study. Thirty-one of the thirty-three participants are full-time employees, one participant is part-time, and one participant is looking for employment. In the age group of 22–29, 27 participants are full-time and one part-time. In the age group of over 50, one is looking for employment and four work full-time.

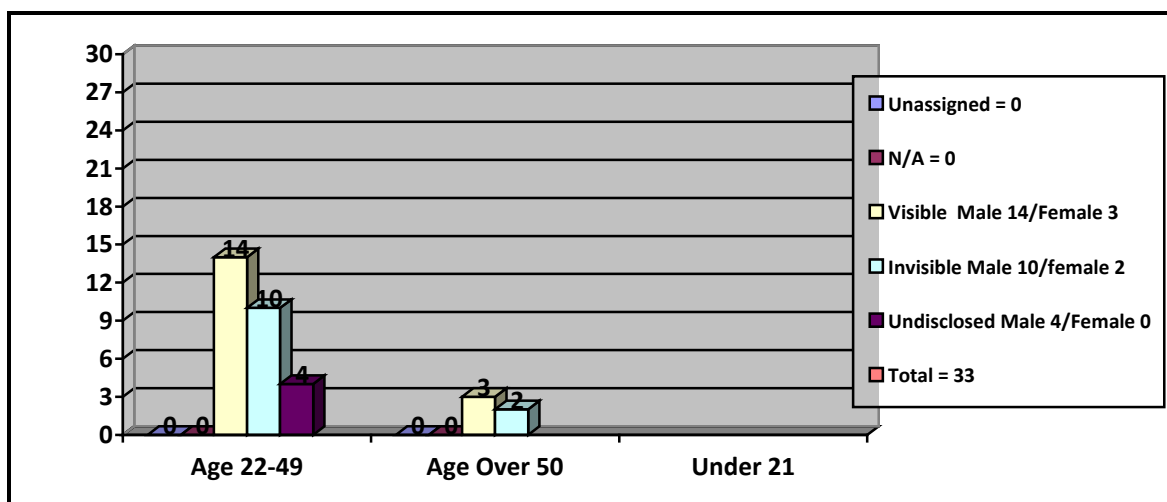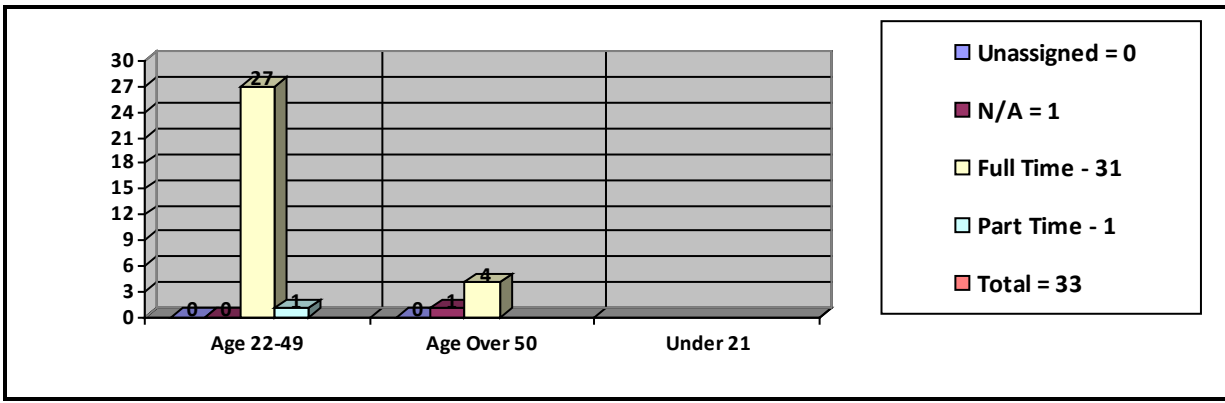*Figure 7*. Participants' age versus position: Nodes by attribute value.

Figure 8 is a representation of the participants' tenure and title collected for this study. This figure clearly shows that over half of the participants work for the information and technology industry.

	Less than 2	2 to 5 years	Over 5 Year
■ Manager			3
■ Information Tech	1	2	14
■ Administration	1	1	3
□ Other		4	4
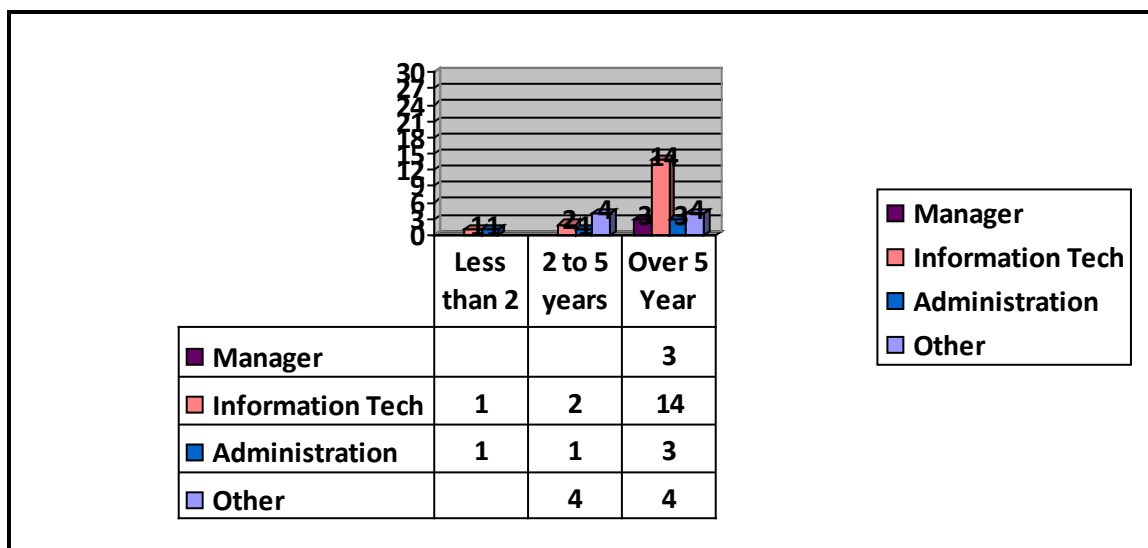
Figure 8. Participants' tenure versus position title: Nodes by attribute value.

Table 2 shows the demographics for the study participants, including disability type, age, and position title.

Table 2

Demographics of Participants

Type of disability	Age	Position title
Behavior	22–49	Admin
Blind	22–49	Admin
Brain injury	50-over	Information technology
Burns	22–49	Information technology
Cerebral palsy	22–49	Other
Cerebral palsy	22–49	Information technology
Deaf	50-over	Information technology

(continued)

Table 2 *Demographics of Participants* (continued)

Type of disability	Age	Position title
Deaf	22–49	Information technology
Deaf	22–49	information technology
Deaf	22–49	Other
Deafness	22–49	Other
Dexterity (brachial plexis)	22–49	Manager
Epilepsy	22–49	Information technology
Epilepsy	22–49	Information technology
Epilepsy & learning	22–49	Admin
Epilepsy/dyspraxia	22–49	Other
Hearing Impairment	22–49	Admin
Invisible	22–49	Information technology
Mobility invisible complex regional pain syndrome (CRPS)	22–49	Manager
Motion dysfunction/severe hyperactivity	50-over	N/A
Nerve damage (back/ legs)	22–49	Information technology
Undisclosed	22–49	Information technology
Undisclosed	22–49	Other
Undisclosed	22–49	Information technology
Undisclosed	22–49	Information technology
Quadriplegic	22-49	Admin
Service-connected	22–49	Information technology
Severe bilateral hearing loss/mild cerebral palsy	22–49	Information technology
Spinal cord injury	22–49	Manager
Speech impediment (stutter)	22–49	Other
Temporal lobe	22–49	Information technology
Type 1 diabetes	22–49	Information technology
Undisclosed	22–49	Information technology
Vision	50-over	Manager

In summary, Figures 2 through 8 represent the demographics of the study. Although there were 21 different types of disabilities represented in this study, Table 2 depicts that more than half of the participants work for the information and technology industry. In addition, over two thirds have worked for over 5 years. This could be an indicator that the information and technology industry can provide the disability community with economic stability. However, five of the participants did not disclose their disability or disability type (visible or invisible), and one of the participants did not disclose tenure, position title (administration, information technology, manager, or other), or position (full-time or part-time). The demographic section is followed by the findings of the study.

Research Findings

The researcher created an Excel spreadsheet to independently analyze the participants' responses. Each question was extracted from the transcripts that were provided by the transcription company, and placed in an independent worksheet. Then the researcher imported each question into NVivo, which allowed for further analysis. As stated previously, there were eight original research questions; however, after the sixth interview, the memo writing prompted the researcher to notice that society's definition of disability did not coincide with the participants' definition of disability. At this point, the researcher added question nine to the study: How do you define disability? Many of the participants would concur that a disability is an alternative life style, a different way of accomplishing tasks, and a different way of doing things that get the same results with accommodations. Table 3 depicts the Americans with Disabilities Act

(ADA) definition, the participants' definition of a disability, and a few examples to

support their definitions.

Table 3

Comparison of Definitions of Disability

ADA of 1990 (amended): definition of disability	Participants' definition of disability	Participants' examples
The ADA defines a person with a disability as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity. This includes people who have a record of such an impairment, even if they do not currently have a disability. It also includes individuals who do not have a disability but are regarded as having a disability.	• Someone who has a condition that impairs life's major functions and not being able to handle things the same way someone that doesn't have a disability would handle them. • Someone who needs assistance to perform those normal life functions that I a person who otherwise wouldn't have a disability wouldn't need. • Someone who has some form of anything that prevents them from living their life as you were accustomed to prior to any such disability or anything that is an encumbrance for you, again maintaining lifestyle or anything that you have been accustomed to in the past. • It is any hurdle that needs to be overcome for more than a short term period. • A condition that hinders somebody to do something that abled-bodied people can do. • A situation that causes someone to need some type of assistance to function more normally in society. • A lack of capacity in either a mental or physical form of impairment or condition that causes such inconvenience, humiliation and degradation of oneself that prevents a person from living a normal life and holding a gainful and competitive job.	• I'm deaf, and that's my disability, and I just can't hear. And that doesn't mean that I can't do normal things, like other hearing people. That doesn't mean that at all. I can do those things. Just the one thing I can't do is hear. That's it. So, I mean I can do a variety of different things just like other hearing people can." • A person that needs assistance to perform normal life functions. For example: Someone who may need an interpreter when speaking to an audience as opposed to just talk to the audience on their own, someone who may need to use some kind of keyboard because they don't have full function of both of their arms. • Function with the least amount of disruption or attention to the particular challenge that the individual might have. • I think it depends—I think it's a way for people to see a limitation. People on the outside to see a limitation. • I mean everybody has a certain standard they're used to thinking about, but when you're unable to do certain things, it becomes a disability.

ADA of 1990 (amended): definition of disability	Participants' definition of disability	Participants' examples
	• A physical defect in the human body, whether it is visible or invisible, that would prevent someone from doing a specific task, not necessarily all tasks.	• There's just certain things I cannot do that other people might take for granted.
	• The inability to achieve certain paths that are normal or normal for the majority of everyone else to achieve it.	
	• A physical or mental impairment that has a negative effect on the ability to do "normal" daily activities	
	• Anything that would prevent you from doing what able-bodied/normal bodied people would do.	
	• Any impairment that requires alternative methods and/or accommodations to accomplish tasks.	
	• Someone who may need special tools to do their job.	
	• Something that you just have to overcome.	
	• The inability to perform certain tasks, based on physical or mental traits.	
	• A condition that a person has that doesn't fit into how society works today.	
	• Something that physically makes it tougher for you to live your life like people would expect it. In addition, something a person cannot do that normal, average humans can do.	

The original eight research questions are included in Appendix A. At the end of each interview, the researcher asked the participants if they had any comments, questions, or feedback for the researcher. After the fifth interview, the researcher conducted an

assessment of the participants' comments, questions, and feedback. From the

assessment, the researcher added three additional questions to the research:

1. How do you define disability?

2. Do you know of any factor(s) that will support employee engagement for individuals with disabilities?

3. Do you know of any barriers that preclude you from being an engaged employee or have you experienced any barriers to employment in the past or presently? If yes, please share.

Using the three questions also allowed additional information to fill in the gaps to assist

with determining saturation for the research study. The next section is a discussion of the

questions, the participants' aggregate responses, and the research findings.

Motivation

Interview question number one was as follows: What do you feel motivates you to

do your job? This question was answered by 24 participants. The participants' responses

are ingrained in self-motivation, productive citizen, family values, money, community,

pride, demonstrating to others, and a successful life. Figure 9 below are the dominant

responses from many of the participants that the researcher categorized as either external

or internal motivators to the participants doing their jobs.

What externally and internally motivates IWD to do their jobs…?	
External	**Internal**
Getting compensated for my efforts	I want to be successful in life
How I'm treated at work	I don't want to let my family down
I get paid for it	Self-value, it makes me feel worthwhile
I need my job	To reach the goals in my life
Making friends and having a routine	A sense of pride
To show people that I can work	Being appreciated and valued
To support my family and gainfully employed	I don't like to fail
Work allows me to be relatively independent	The fact that I've been told that I shouldn't be working
A manager that listens to me and gives genuine specific feedback that will motivate me	I realized I was representing another group outside and larger than myself
I'm a professional regardless of how my employer treats me	

Figure 9. Participants' external or internal motivators to doing their jobs.

This question reached saturation when the researcher repeatedly heard the participants discussing what motivated them to do their jobs. Specifically, the data and the statements revealed that the participants are self-motivated to do their jobs as a result of wanting to provide for themselves and their families. In addition, Figure E1-E4 (located in Appendix E) shows a few of the participants' responses as well.

Leader Motivation

Interview question number two was as follows: How does your leader motivate employee engagement? This question was answered by 33 participants, who indicated that either their leader did or did not motivate them. However, 10 participants indicated that their leaders motivate employee engagement. The overall response to this question was positive; however, there were a few negative responses. The following examples from the participants will help show how some leaders motivate individuals with disabilities. A participant said, "My employer provided a sign language class to teach some of the employees how to sign; from the class, five people learned how to communicate through the sign language interpreter which provides me with more equality." Another participant stated,

> Our leader motivates us by providing free food, providing feedback, give rewards for a job well done, and our leaders ensure that we receive accommodations. [In addition], my organization has a motivational program for groups to earn points and at the end of each year the points are tallied.

Another participant said

> During sequestration they provided training and said you have done a good job. Also, they put people together who have the ability to work together as a team, and have those leadership abilities to get the project done. And, I think that this is something that illustrates employee engagement.

> My leader has a meeting every week and sits down with a person who does a great job and takes a look at their work. I just finished a very large project and had a meeting last week, and they looked at the work and they said there were a lot of good things in the work. And that is motivation for me.

Additionally, 12 participants indicated that their leaders do not motivate employee engagement. One participant stated "My direct boss does not motivate employee engagement. He is very detached." Another participant said,

He is very laid back. He has a very hands-off approach and just kind of lets us do our work, where we had another boss who motivated us to work as a team, speak up for ourselves, and that boss figured out what was going on with the clients.

In summary, this question reached saturation when many of the participants emphasized that their leaders motivate employee engagement by providing training as well as positions them to be successful, promotes inclusion of all people, encourages team projects, and values employees. On the other end of the spectrum, participants mentioned that leaders are "far removed," "do not motivate inclusion," "need to educate people," and are "very hands-off." One participant stated it this way:

It is not easy to answer the above question in a Corporate America's context, because most corporate managers do not view themselves as 'leaders.' That observation notwithstanding, my leadership has put in place an Employee Engagement initiative intended to help us become actively engaged. This initiative is built upon features, a Strong employee development program. This program helps employees grow, by offering a well-designed career development path.

Another aspect of our engagement program is that management takes the steps to allow us some reasonable flexibility so that we can achieve a balance between our work and family.

Figure E5 (located in Appendix E) depicts a word frequency query using NVivo software related to question number two.

Interview question number three was as follows: How do you define employee engagement? The question was answered by 31 participants, whose responses were consistent with how many researchers define employee engagement. This question reached saturation when the researcher repeatedly heard the participants mention that employee engagement is reflective of a synergetic relationship between the employer and employee. The following statements were articulated by the participants:

- Employee engagement is a relationship between the employee and the employer.

- Employee engagement is your employer is aware of what you do, and acknowledge your contributions.

- Employee engagement is the emotional commitment the employee has to the organization and its goals.

- Employee engagement is more emotional than financial or material.

- Employee engagement is when employees are fully involved in their various job functions in an enthusiastic and productive manner.

- Employee engagement is expectations are consistently met or exceeded between the employees and their leadership.

- Employee engagement is a high degree of trust in leadership.

- Employee engagement is to make sure that everybody feels like they're a part of the organization.

- Employee engagement is what motivates employees to truly connect themselves with their job and colleagues.

- Employee engagement is what drives employees to do their jobs to the best of their ability.

- Employee engagement is an employee's desire and overall sense of pride in what they're doing.

- Employee engagement is the employee shows up every day and is willing to put getting their work done ahead of, watching the clock.

According to McGarvey (2012), there is little research concerning engagement for individuals with disabilities. However, McGarvey depicted that negative attitudes still prevail in the workplace toward individuals with disabilities and some companies are still lagging behind. Figure E6 (located in Appendix E) depicts a word frequency query using NVivo software related to question number three.

Supported by Peers and Supervisors

The researcher combined interview questions four and five after interview number five, considering the participants would associate the questions as one. Interview

question four was, Tell me about a time when you felt supported by your peers, and interview question five was, Tell me about a time when you felt supported by your supervisor. The researcher rephrased the question to ask the participants, Do you have an example that you can share where you felt supported by your peers and or your supervisor? The questions were answered by 25 participants, of whom 15 participants have a visible disability and 10 have an invisible disability, meaning their peers and/or supervisors may not be aware of their disability. Out of the 15 participants with a visible disability, 11 participants noted that they were supported by their peers, and seven participants noted that they were supported by their supervisors. The numbers will not add up, due to the fact that some of the participants noted that they were supported by both their peers and their supervisors. One participant stated that the organization required their employees "to take a deaf awareness class prior to their start date." In addition, four participants noted that they were not supported by their supervisor. One participant noted, "The way that management looks at it is we're all replaceable widgets." Additionally, four participants with a visible disability did not participate in this question.

Out of the 10 participants with an invisible disability, eight participants stated that they were supported by their peers and six participants noted that they were supported by their supervisors. In addition, two participants stated that they were not supported by their supervisors. Two participants did not participate in this question. The following quotation is an excellent example of how a participant was supported by her peers and leadership during her pregnancy.

> [My] mobility condition got a lot worse during the pregnancy, to the point where I was bedridden for about 3 or 4 months, and I could no longer even use my

wheelchair. The supportive attitude of my peers enabled me to continue working all the way through to the start of my maternity leave. In particular, the lady who I was handing over my role to for the duration of my maternity leave was able and willing to come to my house to do the handover, which made it a lot easier for me. I also went "above and beyond" my commitments to the company, doing things like fetching me drinks and making sure I was physically comfortable. I was also provided with a laptop and plenty of support from my entire team, which enabled me to keep going with enthusiasm. It would have been difficult to work that enthusiastically while bedridden without the support of my peers.

Figure E7 (located in Appendix E) depicts a word frequency query using NVivo software related to question number four and five.

Disability Talk

Interview question number six was as follows: Tell me how you talk about your disability to your co-workers. This question was answered by 23 participants, of whom 15 participants have a visible disability and eight participants have an invisible disability, meaning their peers and/or supervisors may not be aware of their disability. Participants with visible disabilities noted that they speak openly when asked, share information concerning their disability, and are comfortable providing knowledge. Additionally, some participants noted that they do not discuss their disability. For example, a participant noted that "You're not going to get what I have if you rub up against me." Participants with an invisible disability noted that they share about their disability if their colleagues are aware. However, participants with invisible disabilities are not apt to sharing details concerning their disabilities. Many keep quiet, trying not to bring attention to their disability, and are fearful of anyone knowing they have a disability. For example, one participant noted, "Unfortunately some people can still be very judgmental." Another participant noted that "They hired me anyway and then made my

life miserable while I was trying to learn my job." Figure E8 (located in Appendix E) depicts a word frequency query using NVivo software related to question number two.

Co-Workers React

Interview question number seven was as follows: How do your co-workers react to you? This question was answered by 23 participants, of whom 15 participants have a visible disability, and eight have an invisible disability, meaning their peers and/or supervisors may not be aware of their disability. Participants noted that individuals react differently depending on the disability. Some participants mentioned that they are respected, receive great support, and everyone is understanding and accommodating. Another participant stated, "My coworkers have been good to me; however, it is unfortunate that they are not when individuals see a physical disability." In addition, one participant noted that he receives many "blank stares and confused looks on people's faces." A participant with a hearing impairment mentioned, "People accentuate their lips and try to mouth the words really big and obnoxious…just speak normally or write back and forth." The previous statement was reiterated by many of the hearing impaired and deaf participants. Finally, a few of the participants felt that baby boomers have a different reaction. Specifically, a participant stated that a baby boomer was "shocked" to learn that the participant works and functions on her own. The same participant stated that she told the baby boomer, "I can do things just like you can, but I just do things differently." Figure E9 (located in Appendix E) depicts a word frequency query using NVivo software related to question number two.

Obstacles to Success

Interview question number eight was as follows: What do you think are the biggest obstacles to your professional success? This question was answered by 33 participants. Many of the participants felt this question was thought-provoking and many of the participants said that they have never thought of any obstacles to their success. There seems to be a different sentiment concerning obstacles from individuals with visible disabilities versus individuals with invisible disabilities. For instance, individuals with visible disabilities made reference to how humans' attitudes play a significant role in their success, whereas individuals with invisible disabilities mentioned that people do not take their disabilities seriously or that people feel they want sympathy. Surprisingly, one of the participants with an invisible disability stated, "When people see someone in a wheelchair—I almost wish I was in a wheelchair because someone would understand my disability."

A participant noted that one of the primary factors is an attitude of humanity:

The human factor and barrier are so omnipresent and so pervasive it negates and/or denies our economic freedom. For an unforeseeable future—or until we have achieved the same level of economic freedom that the rest of Americans enjoy—it will continue to be very difficult for people with disabilities in general and deaf people and those with epilepsy in particular to access decent employment without the consulting company assistance. This is as true for private organizations as it is for the federal and state governments.

Another participant mentioned that the obstacles to professional success are both internal and external. In addition, a participant mentioned, "there are also things that you can't control such as how your employer views you or somebody saying you didn't do the best job on something even though you know you did." Finally, a participant with a visible disability noted the following:

> There is a certain level of confidence that even the greatest leaders have. And I like to think I have that, but there's also a certain thing with a disability with no matter how comfortable you get with it, I do think there's always that little bit of thing in the back of your head that is always a reminder.

Here are two examples of what participants with invisible disabilities said: "Once people find out that a person has a disability, they are sometimes treated differently." The other participant stated the following:

> I have a tendency to not hide what happened to me, and even though I'm not asking for anything forward, I had a manager say to me once, "You don't need to share that because..."—the manager didn't finish the sentence. If I have to surmise, the statement had to do with the fact that if you think I'm defective or you think you're only talking to half a person, okay, then that can interfere with my ability to be successful with you—not in what I'm producing, but how you deal with me and how you perceive me.

> In conclusion, as noted, the participants in this study are resilient. They have

overcome their personal barriers and obstacles in their lives. All 33 participants have

obtained bachelor degrees, master's degrees, and/or doctorates. The skills, knowledge,

and abilities of the participants are self-evident. One participant put it this way, "I'm a

person with a disability. I'm not a disabled person. Remember, I'm a person too."

Another participant said, "The biggest challenge for anybody without a disability is the

lack of knowledge, the lack of sensitivity, and the lack of exposure of individuals with

disabilities." However, despite the many obstacles and adversities that the participants of

this study have faced, they show the signs of resilience (Tugade & Fredrickson, 2004).

They have overcome human obstacles, environmental obstacles, and internal obstacles.

In addition, Figure E10 (located in Appendix E) shows a few of the participants'

responses as well.

Factors and Barriers

During the first interview, the participant highlighted barriers to employment. Therefore, the researcher added an additional question: Have you experienced any barriers to employment in the past or presently? Or, do you know of any barrier(s) that precludes you from being an engaged employee, or have you experienced any barriers to employment in the past or presently? If yes, please share. This series of questions were answered by 20 participants. Each of the participants' responses was analyzed and the results of the analysis are show in Figures 10 and 11. Figure 10 depicts the barriers that are still present for IWD. The figure categorizes the barriers as internal and external barriers. Internal barriers can be applied to both the employers and IWD. However, the external barriers are either preventing IWD from living a prosperous life or affect their relationships at work. The barriers to employment must be eliminated, because as shown in chapter 2, IWD will be able to fill in the gap when baby boomers retire in 2020 (McLean & Company, 2012).

Figure 11 is labeled as success factors or failure factors. Success factors will decrease the unemployment rate for IWD. For example, if electronic hiring is put in place, it would plausibly prevent discrimination. Weinkauf (2010) noted that face-to-face interviews are perceived as detrimental for IWD, and described face-to-face interviews as the onset of "negative attitudes towards people with disabilities" (p. 73). The failure factor of accommodation is a barrier to employment and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 states that it is unlawful. The failure factors of fair treatment and inclusion prevent an individual with a disability and employee without a disability from trusting the

organization as noted in chapter two. Trust is the primary key to employee engagement

(Macey et al., 2009).

Barriers to Employment
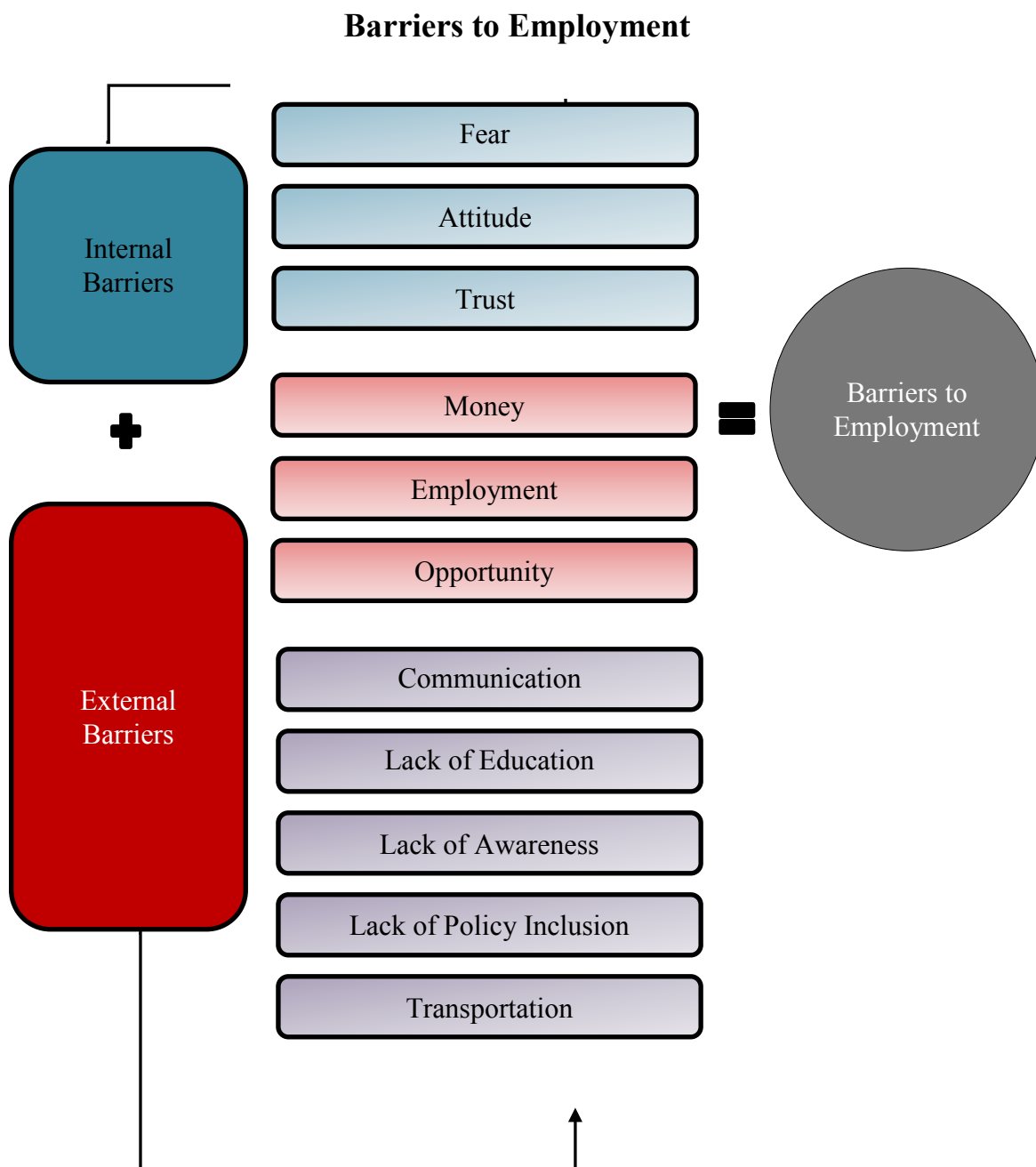
Figure 10. Differences in the effects of the identified barriers to employment gradually increase for individuals with disabilities.

Factors for Engagement

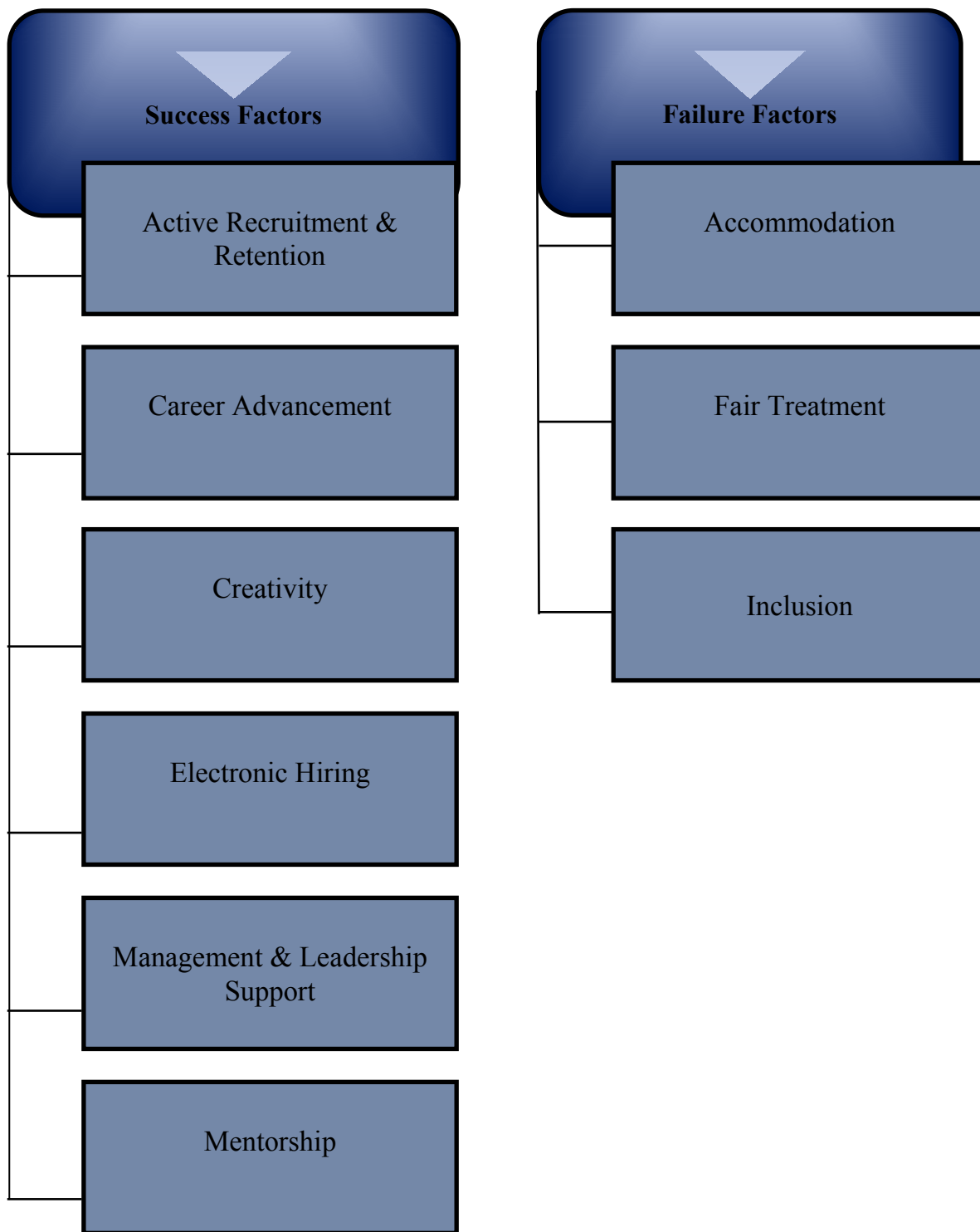| Success Factors	Failure Factors
Active Recruitment & Retention	Accommodation
Career Advancement	Fair Treatment
Creativity	Inclusion
Electronic Hiring	
Management & Leadership Support	
Mentorship	

Figure 11. Factors for employee engagement of IWD.

Data Analysis and Results

Many of the participants in this study stated that they are engaged. However, the data shows that the participants have resilience engagement. They either have a visible or an invisible disability or, better stated, the participants have some sort of adversity that they had to overcome. As noted in the demographics, the 33 participants are professional and their adversity did not stop them from obtaining their education, and getting employment to provide for themselves and their families. To validate the data findings that the participants are resiliently engaged, the researcher sent out four additional questions to the participants. The questions to the participants and their responses follow.

The researcher sent two separate emails containing four questions to the 33 participants. Only 12 of 33 participants responded to the email questions. Question number one was as follows: Do you consider yourself to be (1) an engaged employee, (2) not-engaged employee, or (3) disengaged employee? Please choose one. Eleven participants stated that they are an engaged employee, and one participant stated that he or she is not an engaged employee. In question number two, the researcher asked the participants to rank the following: "1. family values, 2. being successful, and 3. money. Please feel free to explain." Eight participants ranked family first, being successful second, and money third. One participant ranked family first, money second, and being successful third. Another participant ranked being successful first, family second, and money third. Finally, one participant ranked being successful first, money second, and family third. Question number three was as follows: Do you consider yourself to be resilient (1.) Yes or (2.) No? Please feel free to explain. Ten participants stated that they were resilient, one participant stated he or she was not resilient, and one participant stated, "Not sure, depends on the situation." Question number four was as follows: What

role did family, friends, and/or relationships play in your success? Table 4 shows the

participants' responses.

Table 4

Participants' Responses to (Additional) Question Four

Participants	Participant responses to question 4: What role did family, friends, and/or relationships play in your success?
1	My wife and mother have been the driving forces to my success. Regardless of the decisions I made, they back me 100%; crazy ideas or not.
2	My family plays an important role in my success. Without my wife, and my kids, I would not have much passion and energy into my work, education, and life.
3	I don't think this would have been possible without the support of friends and family.
4	Family and friends provided constant support as I worked to overcome my disability. They reminded me that I still had the potential to do anything I set my mind to. Ultimately, I wanted to do all I can to make them proud of me and prove them right. Existing relationships with friends also opened doors for me in the career field I have chosen.
5	The support of family and friends played an important role in my success in life.
6	My family is my main source of strength.
7	Family and spouse are an excellent support system.
8	Family played a role by supporting me during college and summer college classes as well.
9	My family is very supportive.
10	My family, friends, and relationship encouraged a positive outlook and perseverance.
11	I can start with my parents that push me a lot for getting a good public school education and a college degree. My wife helped me a lot with my career decisions and pushed and encouraged me to keep going.

The responses to the four questions validated that the participants are resiliently engaged,

meaning the participants' adversities allow them to transcend the organization's attitudes

and behaviors. In addition, the participants can likely be placed in any of the three types

of engagement as shown in Figure 12. The participants' resilience engagement is not

contingent upon the employer. The data analysis shows that the participants are

internally engaged, and the internal engagement is credited to the support and

relationships of family and friends.

Figure 9 is a representation of the three types of engagement and a depiction of resilience

engagement for the professional IWD of this research. In addition, the researcher defines

resilience engagement for the participants of this study as a transformation of an

adversity into self-engagement that was developed and learned through support, values,

and relationships. Resiliently engaged individuals are self-efficacious, meaning that their

discretionary effort is internal; not contingent on a reciprocal relationship with an

organization.

Figure 10. A representation of the three types of employee engagement and professional
IWD resilience engagement outcome.

Benard (2007) noted that at birth we have resilience, but it must be developed so

one can conquer the adversities in life. The support and relationships of family and

friends helped the participants to work with the cards dealt to them and overcome whatever adversities they were born with or acquired.

Conclusion

Chapter four includes a discussion of the grounded theory findings of this research. The grounded theory findings delineate the barriers to employment and the factors to engagement in addition to the emerging grounded theory of resilience engagement. The data analysis section shows how the participants overcame their disability and are resiliently engaged. The researcher defined resilient engagement for this study as the condition of those who have faced adversity and bounded back to becoming productive citizens who are thriving in their current organizations. The researcher labeled the participants in this study as resilient, because with a support system, they were motivated and committed to overcoming their adversities. Many of the participants do not need managers and leaders to engage them. The discretionary effort is deeply rooted because their self-efficacy is in their values and relationships, and has been instilled throughout their lives. Some of the participants in the research noted how their organizations ensure that everyone is engaged because inclusion, fairness, and justice are infiltrated throughout their organizations (DeBaca, 2010).

Bureau of Labor Statistics (2013) noted that IWD who have furthered their education are more likely to promulgate the barrier to employment and IWD are sometimes their own barrier to employment. IWD who are employed reported work life balance and teleworking will reduce stress and allow for employee engagement. To ensure employee engagement, organizations must have leaders to help IWD overcome

their barriers. As shown throughout this research, leadership and policy makers can change the attitudes of the organization by education and awareness.

Some researchers point out that transformational leaders inculcate change in employees, so a transformational support system can change an adversity into success. Resilience and transformation are constructs that breed success. As discussed in chapter two, transformation and resilience are both linked to change. Resilience is internal and developed over time (Benard, 2007). Resilience and relationship are the two "Rs" to overcoming adversity. Resilience encompasses a change in attitude that allows IWD to thrive. Resilience and change are two-fold, and begin with changing one's thinking that diversity is a must that allows all Americans to live the American dream.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter includes discussion of the first four chapters of this research. As noted in chapter one, literature pertaining to employee engagement for individuals with disabilities is limited. Nevertheless, literature discussing barriers to employment does exist. The two research questions in the study were as follows:

1. What are the barriers to employment that impact individuals with disabilities?

2. What are the factors that impact employee engagement for individuals with disabilities?

To obtain the answers to the research questions, the researcher explored the research questions using a qualitative grounded theory inquiry to better understand and explore if barriers still exist that impede employment for IWD, and ascertain if there are factors that impact employee engagement for IWD. The research was conducted at a consulting company in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania that employs lease-to-hire individuals with disabilities.

In chapter two, the researcher presented a review of the literature to discuss the barriers to employment that impact IWD, the role of leadership to ensure employee engagement, and effects of resilience when bouncing back from an adversity. Chapter three, included the qualitative grounded theory methodology used for this research, the researcher's philosophical worldview, the history of grounded theory, how the researcher conducted data collection and analysis, and a discussion about qualitative credibility. Chapter four presents the research data findings, the demographics of the participants, and the questions and responses by the participants. Finally, the rest of chapter five consists of a conclusion section with a detail discussion of the study findings, as well as the implications and recommendations for further studies.

Summary

This research served to identify barriers to employment in addition to the factors that affect employee engagement for IWD using an interpretive qualitative grounded theory inquiry. The introductory chapter included a discussion of the purpose for conducting a qualitative study to explore barriers to employment that impact IWD, and factors that impact employee engagement for IWD. The introductory chapter also addressed the purpose of the study, defined employee engagement, as well as the significance of the research. The research questions served to further understand the barriers and factors to employee engagement for IWD.

Chapter two, the literature review, included a discussion of the barriers to employment for IWD and to determine if there are still employment barriers that hinder IWD from living prosperous and productive lives. Additionally, the literature review chapter addressed the laws related to IWD, diversity and disabilities, employee engagement, types of engagement, the role of leaders, and the construct of resilience in its relationship to the participants' adversity. The major issue is ensuring that IWD are highly energetic, self-efficacious individuals who display a discretionary effort to their work (Bakker et al., 2010; Schneider et al., 2009). This research is important for policy makers, leaders, managers, employees, managers, and society, because the research promulgates to society that the employment barriers identified in this research are the same employment barriers since the implementation of the America with Disability Act. However, if the engagement factors identified in this research are implemented and a strategy is put in place by leaders, individuals with disabilities, and individuals without disabilities than IWD will have the opportunity to thrive and be engaged employees.

As noted in chapter one, the United States has approximately 50 million individuals labeled as disabled, and they continue to fight for equal rights (Disability Law Center, 2012; Hirsch, 2012; Iezzoni, 2009). Research indicates that IWD are more likely not to live prosperous lives (due to lower levels of education, lower rates of employment, and partial healthcare). Okitikpi and Aymer (2010) noted that people with disabilities have come a long way in the 21st century; however, there is still progress that must be made to ensure that people with disabilities are provided with the same work opportunities as people without disabilities.

Laws have opened up opportunities for IWD; nonetheless, the ODEP (2014b) reported that the workforce in the United States for individuals without a disability is 68.7% and the workforce of individuals with a disability, including Veterans with a disability, is 19.5%. The percentage disparity is due to the fact that these numbers do not include 11.8% of people who are currently unemployed or seeking employment. Moreover, the unemployment rate for the disabled is 14.5%, and the unemployment rate for the non-disabled is 6.5% (ODEP, 2014a). The ODEP percentage rates support those of Smits (2004), which indicated that one half of the non-disabled community is in the labor force.

To assist in eliminating barriers for individuals with disabilities, President Obama has signed Executive Order 13548 to help mitigate the barriers to employment of individuals with disabilities (Affirmative Action and Nondiscrimination Obligations of Contractors and Subcontractors IWD, 2013. Additionally, on March 24, 2014, the Department of Labor's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) released an updated regulation for Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that instituted for

government contractors, "A nationwide 7 percent utilization goal for qualified IWDs" (Affirmative Action and Non-Discrimination Obligations IWD, 2013, 58683). The Section 503 rule coincides with Executive Order 13548, President Obama's commitment to hiring individuals with a disability by 2015. The purpose of the goal is to help mitigate employment barriers for IWDs. As the largest employer in the United States, the federal government has been a leading force in this endeavor to become a model employer for individuals with disabilities (Burns, Barton & Kerby, 2012.)

In short, the OFCCP Section 503 and VEVRAA regulations are hopeful; it sets a hiring utilization goal to assist federal contractors in eliminating the employment barrier for individuals with disabilities. The ADA of 1990, the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968, and Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are laws put in place to eradicate discrimination for persons with disabilities. As previously noted, the laws are in place in the United States; however, there are still barriers that prevent persons with disabilities from living a meaningful and prosperous life.

Barriers

According to this research finding the barriers to employment that still exist are fear, attitude, trust, money, employment, opportunity, communication, lack of education, lack of awareness, lack of policy inclusion, and transportation. The barriers will be discussed later in the paper. Soltani et al. (2012) noted that accessibility for persons with disabilities is another barrier that impedes the disabled from getting employment. Soltani et al. agreed that progress has been made, but there is still work needed to ensure that IWD have access to all forms of transportation because convenient transportation can increase the quality of life for IWD. The most obvious barriers for IWD to living a

meaningful and prosperous life are obtaining and possibly retaining employment, coupled with accommodation, accessibility, and healthcare (Vick & Lightman, 2010). Officer and Groce (2009) noted that if one lives long enough, one is bound to experience temporary or permanent disability ("Disability: Workforce Trends," 2014).

In conclusion, the data findings for barriers to employment and the factors to ensuring employee engagement for IWD that was discussed in chapter two and chapter four adds weight to the argument that barriers to employment still exist in America although laws are in place to mitigate employment discrimination for individuals with disabilities.

Engagement

Engagement for an individual with a disability should not look any different than engagement for individuals without a disability. According to Macey and Schneider (2008), HR firms as well as academic researchers believe employee engagement is essential to an organization's success. The authors further explained that there are numerous viewpoints on how to understand employee engagement; nonetheless, HR firms and academic researchers agree that employee engagement affects organizational outcomes (Macey & Schneider, 2008). Gallup Consulting (2010) suggested that engaged employees are more productive employees, and transcend a human resources initiative. Moreover, engaged employees care about the future of the company and are willing to invest the discretionary effort—exceeding duty's call (Seijts & Crim, 2006). As the findings showed, IWD are resiliently engaged and it is imperative that leaders and managers tap into the skills and talents of the disability community. This being said,

IWD are resiliently engaged and are bound to effect the bottom line of organizations in the near future.

Grounded Theory

Grounded theory research allows researchers the ability to understand and interpret the meaning of a phenomenon firsthand. Creswell (2007) noted that qualitative grounded theory design is rooted in sociology and surfaced in the latter 1960s through Glaser and Strauss, who initially set out to provide a way for researchers to use informal data collected to substantiate quantitative research and place meaning to the data or discovery of a theory by a "general method of comparative analysis" (p. 1). Strauss and Corbin (2008) stated that "Grounded theory is for the purpose of building theory from data and to denote theoretical constructs derived from qualitative analysis data" (p. 1). Charmaz (2006) noted that "Grounded theory methods consist of systematic, yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analyzing qualitative data to construct theories 'grounded' in the data themselves"(p. 2). Charmaz also noted that grounded theory research strategies allow one to interpret the data categories and seek unanswered questions until theoretical saturation occurs. Saturation occurs when data categories are blended together through constant comparison and the "categories become more theoretical because the researcher engages in successive levels of analysis" (p. 3). Creswell noted that it could take approximately 20 to 30 interviews to saturate a category. The researcher conducted 33 interviews, which consisted of 22 telephonic interviews (seventeen males and five females), nine face-to-face interviews (five males and four females), and two email interviews (one male and one female) to saturate the 11 questions through constant comparison of the data categories. Additionally, the research

solidified the findings by sending four additional questions to the participants. In summary, this section discussed each of the previous chapters, and providing a brief discussion about the barriers and engagement concerning IWD, and the methodology utilized for this research.

Discussion

The disability community is the largest of all minority groups (Smith, Austin, Kennedy, Lee, & Hutchison, 2011, p.); still, there is a large employment gap that keeps the group impoverished and treated unfairly (Jasper & Waldhart, 2013; Mizunoya & Mitra, 2013). The findings of this research showed that the participants in this research were either born with a disability or acquired a disability. However, the participants' responses and data analysis showed how the participants overcame their disability and are resiliently engaged as discussed in chapter four. The researcher defined resilient engagement for this study as the condition of those who have faced adversity and bounded back to becoming productive citizens who are thriving in their current organizations. The researcher labeled the participants in this study as resilient because through constant comparison the data showed that with a support system, IWD were motivated and committed to overcoming their adversities, and once employed many of the participants noted that they do not need managers and leaders to engage them. Their engagement (discretionary effort) is deeply rooted in self-efficacy that was instilled from their values and relationships during their lives.

Many employment barriers prevent IWD from entering the workplace (Chan, Strauser, Gervey, & Lee, 2010). For example, the perception of some employers is IWD are uneducated, some people feel that invisible disabilities do not qualify as a legitimate

disability, and many are fearful of having a conversation or relationship with IWD. People with disabilities cannot change their conditions; they were either born with a disability or acquired a disability due to an accident, age, and so forth. Nevertheless, IWD have to live with their adversities and the participants in this research have overcome their adversities and are considered resiliently engaged. Some of the participants in the research noted that their organizations ensure employees are engaged, by including in the mission and vision of the company (a) inclusion, (b) fairness, and (c) justice (DeBaca, 2010). As noted above, Vilchinsky and Findler (2004) noted that attitudes, stereotypes, perceptions, and awareness or the lack thereof are key barriers to employment for the disability community. Additionally, research shows that IWD can put barriers in place for themselves, which also mitigates employment opportunity (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013). According to Von Schrader et al. (2011), the fear of disclosure still persists within the disability community.

Devine and Dattilo (2000) conducted research on social acceptance and leisure lifestyles of people with disabilities under the auspices of the social construction theory and inferred that negative behaviors, thoughts, and feelings concerning IWD are taught by society. Devine and Dattilo further noted that the same attitudes spill over into the workforce, and cause barriers to employment and a lack of engagement for IWD in organizations. In addition, Kocak and Kavi (2011) mentioned that the employment gap is linked to social exclusion for the disability community. Vilchinsky and Findler (2004) stated that the lack of social acceptance of persons with disabilities can be eliminated by training and awareness (Kocak & Kavi, 2011). Hastings (2011) further noted that reducing and eliminating barriers for IWD are beneficial to society, due to the fact that

everyone is more likely to join this group. Additionally, many of the participants in the study stated that there have been obstacles to obtaining employment in the past.

Resilience is about bouncing back from a setback in one's life ("This Emotional Life," 2014). As previously noted resilience is a learned behavior that anyone can adapt to with resources and support. One participant mentioned that although she has a disability, her family's support and values gave her the strength needed to do whatever she put her mind to. Research shows that if the factors in the following list are inculcated within one's life, one is bound to defeat adversities:

- Close relationships with family and friends.

- Seeking help and resources.

- Helping others.

- A positive view of yourself and confidence in your strengths and abilities.

- The ability to manage strong feelings and impulses.

- Good problem-solving and communication skills.

- Feeling in control.

- Seeing yourself as resilient (rather than as a victim).

- Coping with stress in healthy ways and avoiding harmful ways and avoiding harmful coping strategies, such as substance abuse.

- Finding positive meaning in your life despite difficult or traumatic events (Secretary of the Army, 2013; "This Emotional Life," 2014).

Resilience and self-efficacy are constructs that are related to overcoming barriers and adversity (Speight, 2009). Speight noted that adolescents' academic achievement coincided with their resilience and found that if one is provided with support he/she is likely to overcome adversity. Speight also noted that with self-efficacy, resilience is

changeable according to the situation. Many of the adolescents in Speight's study faced similar challenges to those faced by IWD. Speight further noted that negative factors plague the African American community, and few African Americans succeed and overcome the negative factors that lead to poverty and incarceration. However, Speight also noted that if adolescents' internal resilience is developed, he or she will mostly escape incarceration. The African American urban adolescents have many barriers to defeat. Likewise, for the disability community, there are many barriers that still exist, such as societal behaviors and attitudes, transportation, and the lack of inclusion. Society must narrow the employment gap for IWD by providing training and awareness to society, employees, and employers. Amazingly, "Disability: Workforce Trends" (2014) noted that there is no discrimination in the disability community: "Anyone can join during any point of life regardless of race, class, gender, religion, or education level" (para 2).

In the current study, the resilience shown by many of the participants was phenomenal. One participant noted that after being diagnosed with HIV/AIDs, he did not want to receive disability. Consequently, the participant returned to school, completed a degree, and entered a new job field. The participant said, "In 10 years of working, I have never met a single person who has done anything remotely like this." The previous statement is an example of resilience that many IWD bounce back from. Furthermore, Connor and Davidson (2003) developed a resilience scale with 25 questions to help validate one's level of resilience, and would likely concur that "Self-efficacy, adaptability to change, optimism, faith, tolerance of negative affect having choices, and engaging the support of others are attributes of resilience" (p. 77).

In brief, resilience and relationships are the two "R's" to overcoming adversity. Resilience is internal and can be developed over time (Benard, 2007), and resilience is about a change in attitude that allows IWD or anyone to thrive. As noted previously, researchers have pointed out that leaders with transformational characteristics inculcate change in employees, so a transformational leader is more likely to help bring about awareness to society to mitigate the unemployment rate for IWD (Macey et al., 2009). Finally, resilience and change are two-fold, and begin with changing one's thinking that diversity is a must that allows organizations to succeed and every American the opportunity to live the American dream.

Conclusions

The data finding showed that the following factors will increase employee engagement for IWD: inclusion, career advancement, management and leadership support, accommodations creativity, fair treatment, active recruitment and retention, electronic hiring, and mentorship. In addition, the barriers that preclude engagement are: people's attitudes, employment opportunities, internal and external fear (employee and employer), lack of awareness, education, policy inclusion, money, communication, and trust.

A participant noted "A deaf person who is educated and dedicated can never expect to be promoted to management and being engaged can be nearly impossible." Another participant said that "People do not think that a deaf person can lead hearing people." These participants' sentiments can be changed through organization awareness and training programs, in addition to ensuring that IWD are in leadership and management positions.

Albrecht (1976) stated that a physical disability is a tremendous barrier to overcome, but the participants in this current study have bounced back from their visible and invisible disability barriers by getting an education and becoming productive citizens. A participant noted that "There are days that I do not care, but I care about the quality of work that I produce, and I give 110%." Another participant noted that

> Employment opportunities have come my way and had I been an able-bodied individual I would have accepted many jobs. However, after I researched how I would get to work I had to turn the job down, because I have chosen the path of least resistance.

In addition, the participant mentioned that their disability did not stop her from getting a Ph.D.

Jasper and Waldhart (2013) inferred that the ADA has not fully opened doors for the disability community, and that societal barriers are an impediment to employment for persons with disabilities. Furthermore, Jasper and Waldhart noted that employers are still not adhering to requirements to provide accommodations for the disability community. For example, the leisure and hospitality industry is reluctant to hire IWD, due to negative connotations by society toward IWD. Jasper and Waldhart also noted that other industries have had positive results for the hiring and inclusivity of IWD. Finally, Jasper and Waldhart noted that the ADA negatively impacts small companies due to the fact that small companies have limited funds and are unable to afford accommodation for IWD. Conversely, the Small Business Administration noted that employers are provided with a tax credit for hiring individuals with disabilities, and that large organizations are more acceptable of IWD, whereas small organizations have the misconception that IWD are incompetent (Hering, 2005). IBM (2009) noted that India is leading the way in technology that assists IWD. Additionally, the United States Department of Labor is

providing monies to employers for the creation of an Accessible Technology Action Center. The Center focal point is to provide an understanding and awareness of what it takes to ensure equal opportunities for the disability community.

In short, the disproportionately high unemployment rate is still plague America. As suggested earlier, law makers, employers, and disability advocate groups must get together to educate society of the barriers that impedes the culture and the factors to employee engagement for IWD.

Implications

Today's financial issues and concerns are the backdrop for how organizations conduct business. The demographics of the workforce are changing globally, and it is imperative for organizations to connect change and human capital demands (Haynes, 2011). Hammill (2005) noted that never in America's history have four generations (i.e., Veterans, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y) ever co-existed in an organization, and the power of the four generations is requiring leaders and organizations to change. Haynes (2011) noted that leaders and organizations must learn how to work with multiple generations, since each generation has its own needs, values, and expectations. Moreover, Haynes mentioned that "Corporate real estate managers need to establish the different needs for the different generations, and create an environment where all generations can…thrive" (p. 98). IWD live among the generations, and it is imperative that today's leaders understand how to inculcate change that includes IWD. Additionally, Taylor et al. (2010) found that IWD who are a part of Generation Y are more likely to enjoy life.

"Incorporating Disability into Diversity Plans" (2014) noted that it is important for employers to include people with disabilities in the outreach and recruiting effort, due to the fact that people with disabilities are the "largest minority group in America" (p. 1). Ignoring such a large group of people could affect the bottom line in the future as Baby Boomers will be retiring in droves. The work characteristics are different within each of the generations. For example, Veterans follow authority and prefer formal communication; Baby Boomers enjoy working in teams and prefer face-to-face communication; Generation X works independently due to the fact that Gen X members were the first generation to be left home alone, and technology is probably the preferred way of communication with leaders; and Generation Yers enjoy work–life balance and collaboration is the preferred means of communication (Weston, 2006). Transformation leaders as well as servant leaders have the characteristics needed to manage today's workforce.

Leaders must understand that diversity includes working with all four generations and people with disabilities. In addition, leaders must identify where they are within the generations to understand their worldview and how to communicate with their employees (Yeo, 2006). To help facilitate the change needed to ensure engagement for IWD, research shows that servant leaders and charismatic leaders have the skills needed to be a change agent. Servant leadership surfaced during the late part of the 20th century, and is a spinoff of stewardship (Daft, 2008). Servant leadership has some characteristics of transformational leadership such as inspiring and caring for others (Bass, 2000; Stone & Patterson, 2005). Servant leaders put others first and includes the belief that followers' development and growth should be an organization's primary concern. Additionally,

Stone and Patterson (2005) found leaders need to be trained on the characteristics of a servant leader's behaviors, such as healing, performing ethically, and empowering. Stone and Patterson's research had limitations; however their findings still suggested that servant leadership behaviors will yield positive results for today's followers.

Northouse (2007) noted that charismatic leadership surfaced around the same time as transformational leadership in the late 20th century. Initially, the word charisma was associated with people that had special talents. House's (1977) theory of charismatic leadership suggested that leaders with special talents have an effect on followers. House noted that charismatic leaders are dominant, have a desire to influence, are confident, have strong values, and followers trust their leadership. Furthermore, Brown and Trevino (2009) explored the relationship between socialized charismatic leadership and values between leaders and followers; they defined values as "desirable, trans-situational goals, varying in importance, that serve as guiding principles in people's lives" (p. 478). Brown and Trevino stated that the literature indicates socialized charismatic leaders appeal to the value system of followers. However, additional research promulgates that values are related to followers' occupations and are difficult to change. Pederson (2006) stated that "values are useful both for learning about oneself as a starting point for learning about culturally different alternatives" (p. 652). Additionally, Pederson mentioned values are taught and can be changed with openness to learning.

Gurchiek (2013) noted that telework is an option to reduce cost to employers for hiring IWD. In addition, Gurchiek suggested that employers engage in "virtual job fairs" to eliminate the perception of discrimination toward the disability community, and also that IWD who have furthered their education are more likely to mention that there is a

barrier to employment. IWD who are employed reported work–life balance and teleworking will reduce stress and allow for employee engagement. Diament (2011) noted that perceptions by employers are a barrier to employment for the disability community. Additionally, a few participants noted that they were their own barrier to employment. As one participant noted, "I did not have any motivation to work initially, but I realized it was not about me." What a person brings to an organization determines engagement, according to one participant: "Some individuals with disabilities get the job and if leadership and management do not engage the individual they sit and collect a check. However, I took the initiative to stay late and asked for additional work."

In conclusion, Barnes (2003) inferred that disability research brings about awareness that can enable a community to be free and receive equal rights. Furthermore, Barnes (2003) noted that freedom comes through "emancipatory disability research which is about the empowerment of disability community through the transformation of the material and social relations of research production" and the research is connected to "social model thinking" or, better said, a way of understanding (p. 6).

The implication for not including IWD can impact the workforce in the next decade (McLean & Company, 2012). Leaders must be committed to employee engagement for IWD. The factors identified in this research for IWD engagement are critical to an organization's bottom-line. If a company rejects or avoids the factors and barriers mentioned in the research, the company is likely to fail. The onus of employee engagement is reciprocal. Mackey and Sisodia (2014) would likely concur that happy employees's attitudes will spill over to the customers.

Limitations

This study was an exploration of the barriers to employment and what factors affect employee engagement for IWD. A tremendous amount of research has been conducted concerning individuals with disabilities employment; however, there has been limited research on the subject of engagement of IWD. One of the limitations to this research was that the researcher conducted the interviews with all of the participants, observed the participants' behaviors, and reviewed and analyzed the data, which might have caused some bias. However, the data findings can be generalized with other groups such as Veterans with disabilities, African Americans, and the like, if the groups are provided with support. In addition, mentorship is a tool that can be utilized to provide support to the above mentioned groups as well as to continue in the endeavor of hiring IWD to decrease the unemployment rate for the disability community. The researcher is able to empathize with the participants, since society has continued to ostracize this group of people the same way society attempts to ostracize African Americans; lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgenders (LGBT), and immigrants.

Another limitation was the researcher used the consulting company to identify the volunteers to participate in the study, so the researcher was unable to focus on one type of disability. Another limitation for this research included both invisible disabilities and visible disabilities. To further understand the phenomenon of resilience engagement, a longitudinal study can be conducted for children that have a disability to determine whether supportive relationships build resilience. Distinguishing between individuals who were born with a disability versus individuals who became disabled due to an accident or age posed a limitation. Finally, further research could be conducted to

understand the resiliency of persons who acquired a disability due to an accident or illness.

Recommendations

A similar study should be conducted with leaders and managers of IWD to ascertain the leaders' and managers' views concerning supervision of IWD. A pilot study could be conducted to determine if the factors influence employee engagement for all groups that are facing barriers to employment, such as LGBT individuals. The study could be replicated using a different population (i.e., educational level, one disability type, or position title). Additionally, a case study could be conducted to determine the nuances between the non-disabled and the disabled engagement levels.

Further research is needed for the vast array of disability types in order to provide a better picture for how employee engagement and employment barriers impact each disability type (Hernandez & McDonald, 2007). Finally, future research is needed to determine if individuals with a psychiatric disability—which was not included in the current study—experience barriers to employment once their disability is disclosed, and if they are engaged employees. Individuals with psychiatric disabilities were not included in the current study. Hastings (2011) pointed out that "A chief misapprehension about the employment of people with psychiatric disabilities is a fear that they are violent" (p. 1). This invisible disability type can be further researched to eliminate misconceptions and open doors for discussions. The data findings show that the participants in this study are resiliently engaged.

In conclusion, Bell (2013) pointed out that individuals with disabilities do not give up. They want to live a productive life and do not let their adversities prevent them

from seeking employment. According to Bell, the unemployment rate for individuals

with disabilities has dropped, which indicates that employers are opening their doors to

IWD. All 33 participants in this study have obtained bachelor degrees, master's degrees,

and/or doctoral degrees. The skills, knowledge, and abilities of individuals with

disabilities are self-evident. A participant put it this way: "I'm a person with a disability.

I'm not a disabled person. Remember, I'm a person too." Another participant said, "The

biggest challenge for anybody without a disability is the lack of knowledge, the lack of

sensitivity, and the lack of exposure of individuals with disabilities." However, despite

the many obstacles and adversities that the participants of this study have faced, they

show the signs of resilience (Tugade & Fredrickson, 2004). According to Hahn (1985),

environmental barriers impeded employment for IWD. However, the participants in this

research have overcome human obstacles, environmental obstacles, and internal

obstacles. IWD would say they are normal and have learned to work with their visible or

invisible disabilities.

Smit (2004) expressed the importance of best practices to advance the workforce

for people with disabilities, and further noted, "Persons with disabilities continue to be

grossly under-represented in employment" (p. 660). Erickson, Lee, and Von Schrader

(2012) surveyed employers and the results showed that employers are still lagging

behind, due to the lack of knowledge and awareness concerning IWD. However,

employers that are diversified report employee engagement and happiness throughout

their organizations. The optimal organization reaches the top of an organization's

pyramid when "Employee job engagement" and "employee organization engagement"

are leveled (McLean & Company, 2012, p. 10). If the two employee engagement types

are the primary mission of an organization, the organization is more likely to see a positive return on investment. Finally, although this research cannot be generalized across a broad spectrum, this research can be transferred with like subjects with like education. As a result, the research provides insight into the understanding of what constitute employee engagement for IWD which has not been research previously.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Interview Questions

APPENDIX A: Interview Questions

Using Charmaz's (2006) flexible guidelines, this research requires a qualitative exploration utilizing open-ended questions, observations, and face-to-face, one-on-one interviews that allow the participants to share their experiences. The original interview research questions below will be used during the interview to obtain data for this research.

1. What do you feel motivates you to do your job?

2. How does your leader motivate employee engagement?

3. How do you define employee engagement?

4. Tell me about a time when you felt supported by your peers.

5. Tell me about a time when you felt supported by your supervisor.

6. Tell me how you talk about your disability to your co-workers.

7. How do your co-workers react to you?

8. What do you think are the biggest obstacles to your professional success?

APPENDIX B

Demographic Interview Questions

APPENDIX B: Demographic Interview Questions

The participants will be asked to provide the following information prior to beginning the interview and the following codes (numbers) will be assigned: gender (1 = male, 2= female), age (1 = 21 and under, 2 = 22-49, and 3 = 50 and over), are you an individual with a disability (1= yes, 2=no), type of disability _____, tenure (1 = less than 2 years, 2 = 2 to 5 years and 3 = over 5 years), position title (1 = manager, 2 = Information and Technology, 3 = administration, 4 = other), and position (1 = full time and 2 = part time).

APPENDIX C

Informed Consent Form

APPENDIX C: Consent Form

Engagement – Individuals with Disabilities

You are cordially invited to participate in a research study conducted by Elizabeth M. Small, who is a doctoral candidate at Argosy University, Washington DC. The study examines the factors that impact employee engagement and the barriers to employment for individuals with disabilities. I was invited to participate because I am an employed professional with a disability. A total number of approximately 30 working professional with a disability have been asked to participate in this study. The purpose of this study is to explore barriers to employment that impact individuals with disabilities, and factors that impact employee engagement for individuals with disabilities to determine whether they are engaged within an organization's environment.

If I agree to participate in this study, I will be asked eight questions during the interview. The questions will address your relationship with co-workers and leadership, and what motivates you to do your job. The interview will take approximately 30 minutes to 1 hour, and the interview will be recorded and transcribed to ensure accuracy of your responses. I will be assigned an alias from the onset of the interview to ensure that I cannot be identified. The information you provide for this study will be kept confidential. While this interview is confidential, participants should be aware that the research may be required by law to break confidentiality to report any felony, child abuse, elder abuse, or immediate intent to harm self or other. The recording and transcribe will be kept in a secured file by the researcher. In addition, the researcher will use transcriber assistance and the company will destroy the information once the dissertation is completed. Finally, the results of the research will be reported as aggregate summary data only, and no individually identifiable information or words linking me to the study will be included in the final study.

No significant risks are associated with participation in this study. Your participation in this research is strictly voluntary. If I become uncomfortable during the interview I can terminate the interview or skip the question, without fear of penalty or negative consequences of any kind. I will not receive monetary compensation for my participation in this study, and there will be no direct or immediate personal benefits from your participation in this study.

By law I must inform you and acquire your consent before you participate in this study. I would ask that you be as honest as possible. The information you provide for this study will be treated confidential, and all raw data will be kept in a secured file by the researcher. At the present time I do not see where your participation in this study will have any bearing on your job.

As stated above, your participation will take approximately 30 minutes to 1 hour for the interview. However, I would like your permission to telephone you if any data need to be clarified. Please check one: Yes_____   No_____.

You also have the right to review the results of the study upon completion. A copy of the results may be obtained by the researcher Elizabeth Small at esmall3434@comcast.net

I understand that this research study has been reviewed and Certified by the Institutional Review Board, Argosy University, Washington, DC. If I have any questions related to the research project you may contact Elizabeth Small esmall3434@comcast.net or the dissertation chair, Dr. Michael Piellusch at mpiellusch@argosy.edu.

I have read and understand the explanation provided to me. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this consent form. By signing this document, I consent to participate in the study.

Name of Participant (printed) _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Principal Investigator: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX D

Demographics

APPENDIX D: Demographics

Figure D1 is a representation of the participants' disability types and participants' ages

collected for this study. The figure shows 21 disabilities: 16 are in the age group of 22–
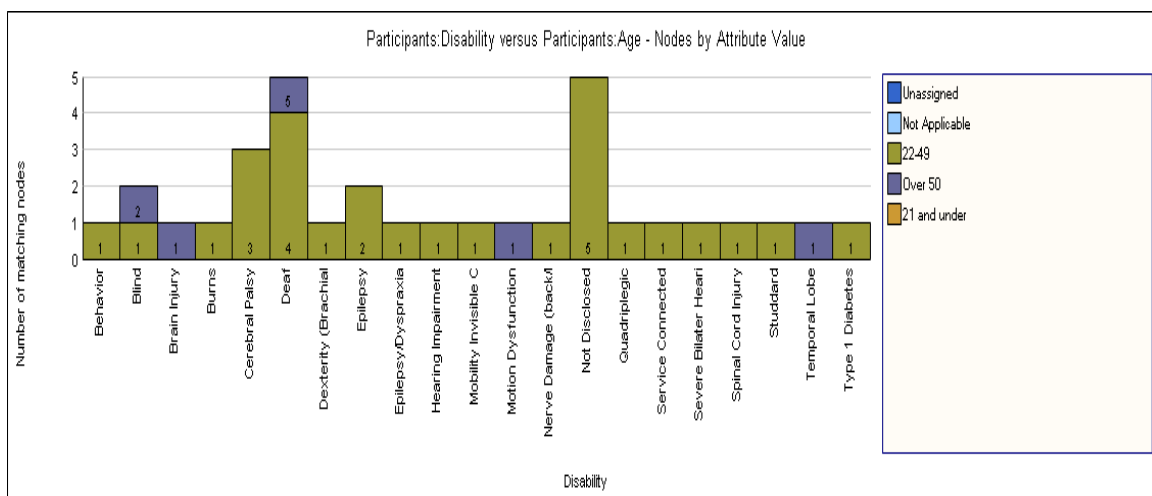
49, and five are in the over-50 group.

Figure D1. Participants' disability type versus age: Nodes by attribute value.

Figure D2 is a representation of the participants' disabilities (21 are shown) and

participants' tenure collected for this study. In addition, six deaf individuals participated

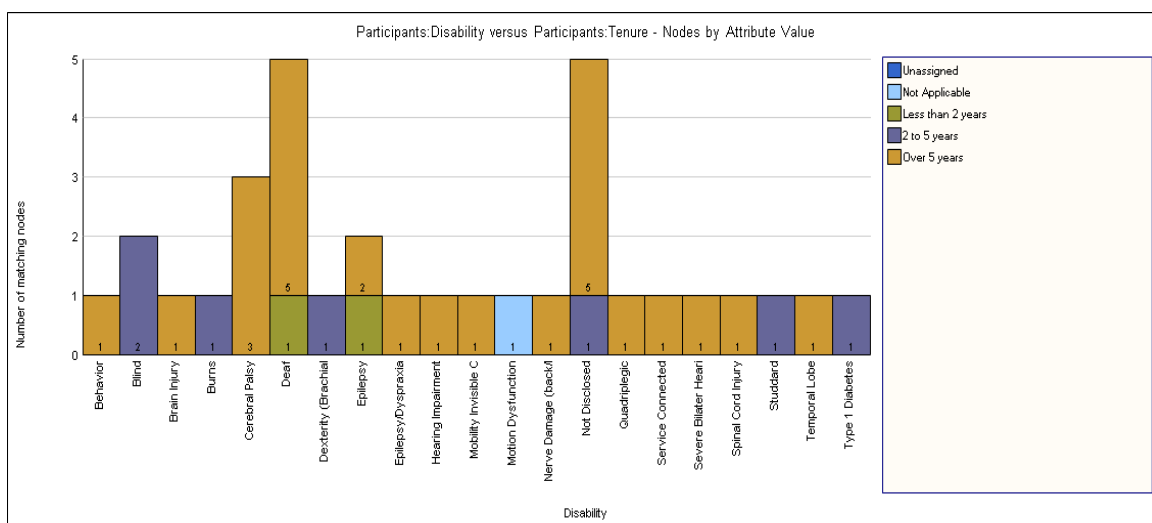in the study, and five out of the six have been employed for over 5 years.

Figure D2. Participants' disability type and participants' tenure.

Figure D3 is a representation of the participants' disability type and participants' position

title collected for this study. This figure clearly shows that over half of the participants

with different types of disabilities work for the information and technology industry.
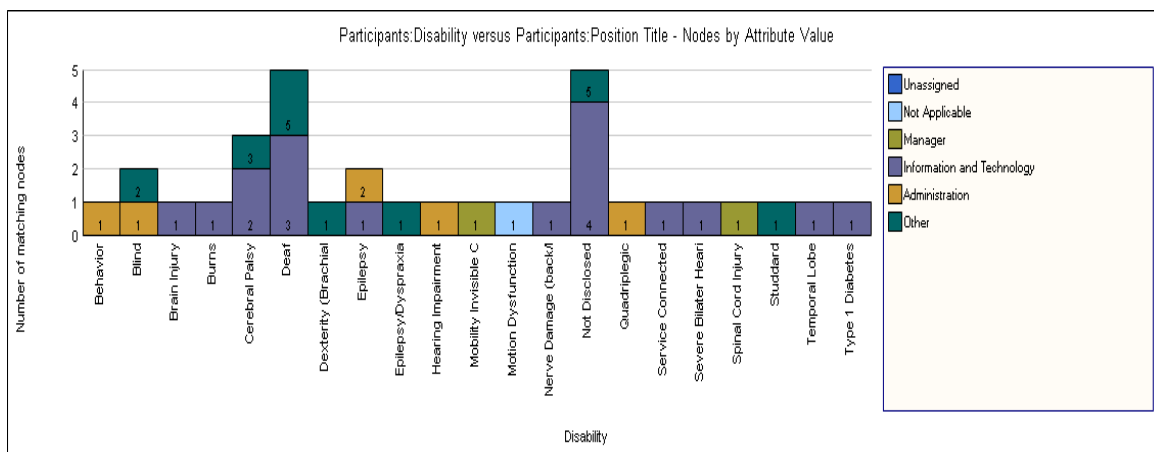

Figure D3. Participants' disability type and participants' position title.

APPENDIX E

Research Findings

APPENDIX E: Research Findings

Figure E1. Output from NVivo: Disability defined by the participants.

Figure E2 depicts a word frequency query using NVivo software. The parameters for the

word frequency query were to display the top 75 words with four letters or more used for

question number one by the participants. The larger the word, the more frequently the

word appeared in the texts. In Figure E2, the largest words are *work*, *family*, and *good*.

Figure E2. Word frequency query for question number one using NVivo software.
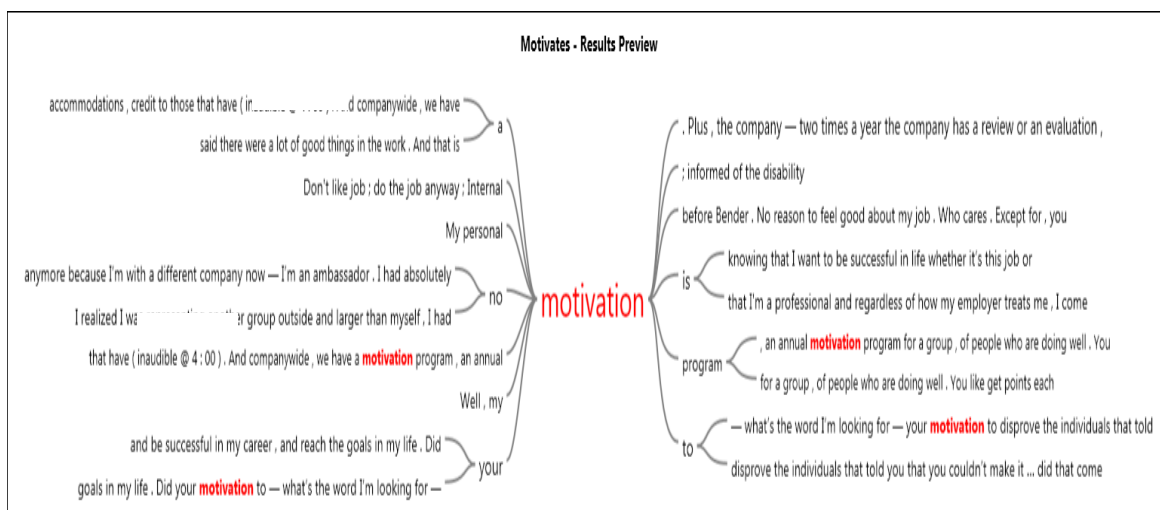
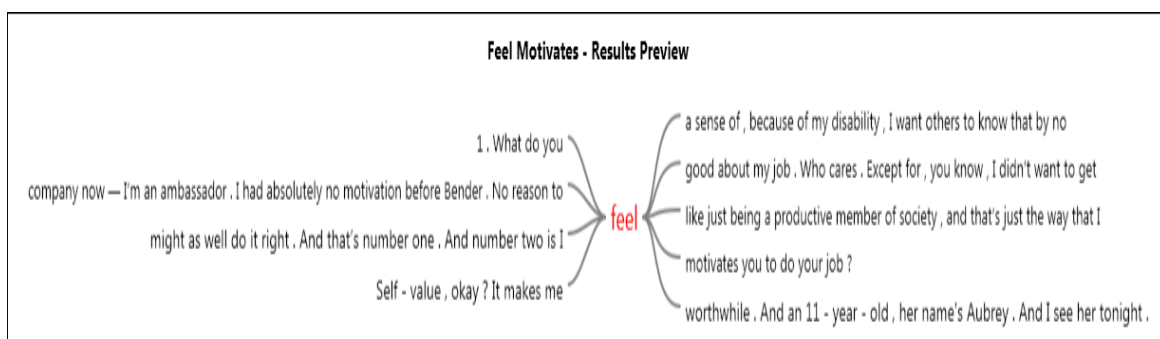*Figure E3.* Text search using NVivo Software for the word *motivation*.

Figure E4. Text search using NVivo Software for the word *feel*.

Figure E5 depicts a word frequency query using NVivo software related to question number two. The parameters for the word frequency query were to display the top 50 words with four letters or more that the participants stated when answering question number two. The larger the word, the more frequently the word appeared in the texts. For example, *work* was the largest, followed by *engagement*, and *good*.

Figure E5. Word frequency query for question number two using NVivo software.

Figure E6 depicts a word frequency query using NVivo software, which displays the common term(s) used for answering question number three. The parameters for the word frequency query were to display the top 50 words with four letters or more that the participants stated when answering question number three. The larger the word, the more frequently the word appeared in the texts. For example, *work* is the largest, followed by *disability* and *motivates*.
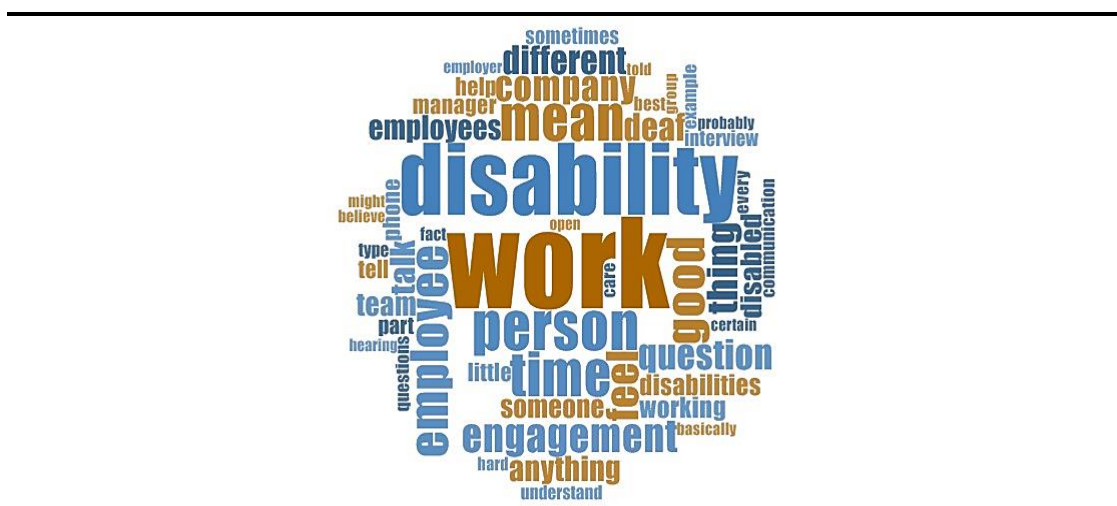

Figure E6. Word frequency query for question number three using NVivo software.

Figure E7 depicts a word frequency query using NVivo software for question number four. The parameters for the word frequency query were to display the top 50 words with four letters or more that the participants stated when answering question number four. The larger the word, the more frequently the word appeared in the texts. For example, *work* is the largest, followed by *team*, and *good*.

Figure E7. Word frequency query for questions four and five using NVivo software.

Figure E8 depicts a word frequency query using NVivo software for this question. The parameters for the word frequency query were to display the top 50 words with four letters or more that the participants stated when answering question number six. The larger the word, the more frequently the word appeared in the texts. For example, *disability* is the largest, followed by *work* and *comfortable*.

Figure E8. Word frequency query for question number six using NVivo software.

Figure E9 depicts a word frequency query using NVivo software. The parameters for the word frequency query were to display the top 75 words with four letters or more that the participants stated when answering question number seven. The larger the word, the more frequently the word appeared in the texts. For example, *workers* is the largest, followed by *mean* and *certain*.
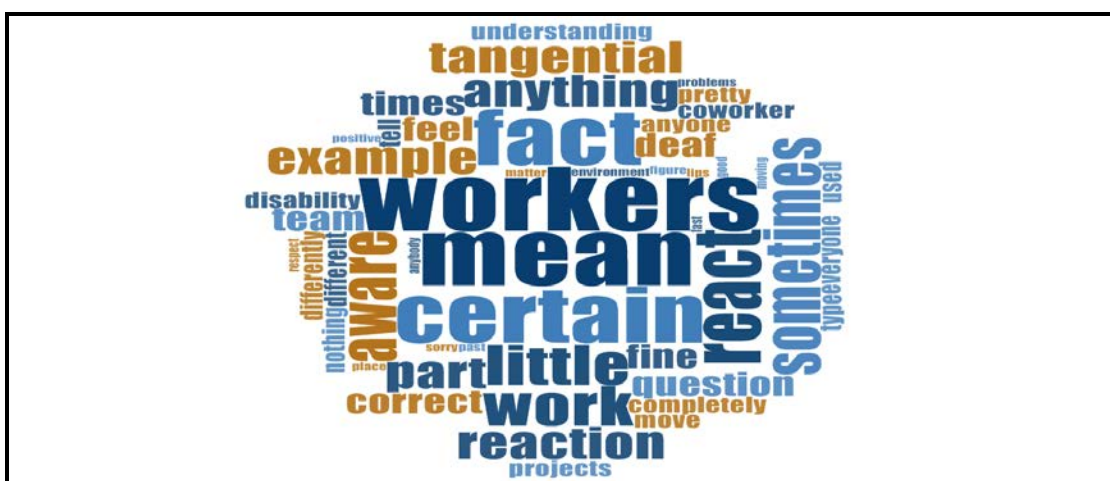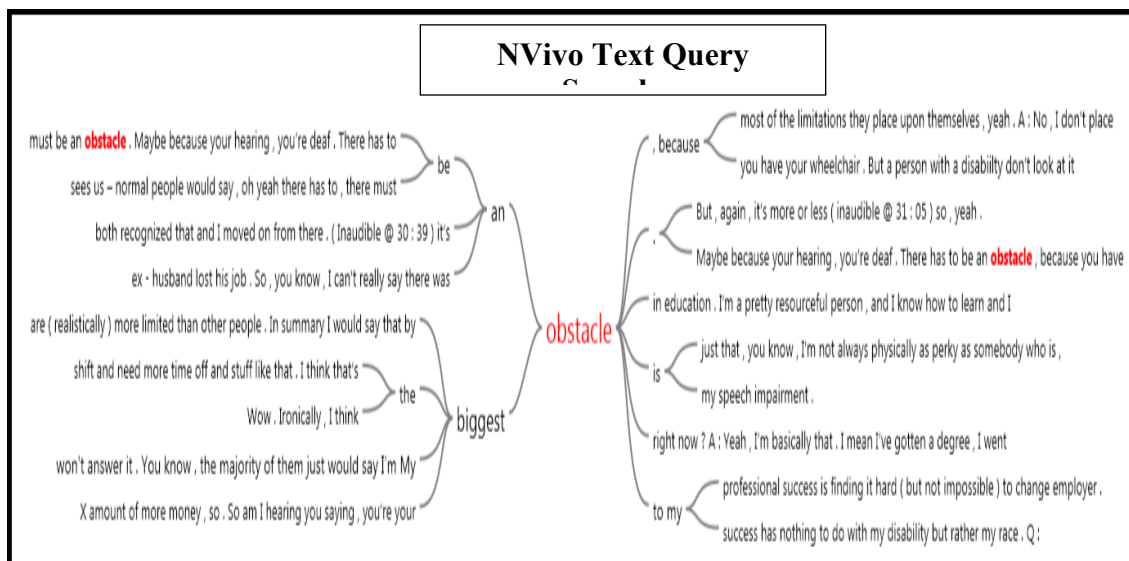

Figure E9. Word frequency query for question number seven using NVivo software.

Figure E10. Text search using NVivo Software for the word obstacle (question 8).