

CHAPTER 4

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, a summary overview of the previous chapters will be presented particularly addressing how the aim and objectives of this study were achieved. Finally, recommendations will be made with regard to the empirical study on the feelings that people with physical disabilities experience regarding discrimination.

4.2 SUMMARY

The aim of this research study was to investigate the feelings of people with physical disabilities regarding discrimination in Tembisa. In Chapter one, the following aspects were dealt with: aim of the study, objectives, research question, research approach, type of research, research design, research procedure and strategy, pilot study, description of research population, delimitation of sample and sampling method, ethical issues, definition of key concepts and contents of research report.

Chapter two focussed on reviewing literature about the phenomenon of physical disability. Though there was no literature available about the feelings of people with physical disabilities regarding discrimination, however, some related and relevant literature was used. The particular chapter highlighted history and nature of discrimination, advantages and benefits of employing people with disabilities, causes of disability, societal attitude towards disability and discrimination, attitudinal barriers and quality of life for people with disabilities.

The empirical study was done in Chapter three and the findings generally revealed that people with physical disabilities feel unpleasant about discrimination due to their physical conditions in Tembisa. People with disabilities in Tembisa felt that they were discriminated against in terms

of attitude from residents and taxi drivers, access to public buildings and equal opportunities in comparison to their able-bodied counterparts.

The aim of the study was achieved in that the feelings of people with physical disabilities were explored in terms of their experiences regarding discrimination in Tembisa and through general research, which focused on the reviewing of literature on disability and the empirical study.

The following objectives were achieved:

OBJECTIVE ONE

To build a theoretical knowledge base through literature study about the phenomenon of physical disability.

Chapter two gives an in-depth understanding from the literature of the phenomenon physical disability, causes and barriers of disability.

OBJECTIVE TWO

To conduct an empirical investigation into the feelings of people with physical disabilities in Tembisa regarding discrimination.

The empirical study in Chapter three revealed the following findings:

- People with physical disabilities feel uncomfortable, irritated, rejected by the way the community members treat them.
- They dislike to be pitied and prefer to be treated the same as the majority of people in the mainstream.
- Discrimination against people with physical disabilities still exists in Tembisa.
- The many people with physical disabilities do not enjoy equal opportunities as able-bodied people.
- Some people with physical disabilities prefer to have a partner with a disability while others prefer ones without a disability. Another

category do not discriminate, as a result, any partner would be suitable.

- Most people with physical disabilities feel discriminated against at the public places due to inaccessibility of some public buildings such as community stadiums, Ekhayalothando hall, etc.
- Public transport, especially the taxi system is also not accessible because some drivers are reluctant to carry wheelchair users.
- The many people with physical disabilities possess a positive attitude towards able-bodied people, while most people with physical disabilities view able-bodied people as possessing a negative attitude towards them.
- Some community members perceive people with physical disabilities as mentally retarded, helpless and dependent.
- Some of the respondents felt that special treatment from the community would make them more dependent, while others felt that they have different needs as a result special treatment should apply.
- Surprisingly, the community members are viewed as accepting of the majority of people with physical disabilities.
- People with physical disabilities still experience discriminatory remarks from their fellow counterparts in the same community.
- The many people with physical disabilities feel unpleasant about the change in their lives of being paraplegias and quadriplegias.
- People with physical disabilities do not enjoy equal rights as stated by the Constitution of the RSA.
- Many respondents disagreed with the notion that they are dependent and helpless because they are involved in self-help projects of car wash, wheelchair repairs and motor mechanic.
- Respondents reacted differently after learning that they are no longer going to walk independently – others had a wish for death than to live with disability; shock and denial was also experienced by others.
- Generally respondents have fully adapted to their physical disability with the help of rehabilitation by social workers and nurses.

- It took about a year for most respondents to adapt to their physical disabilities.
- Some taxi drivers and commuters have a negative attitude towards people with disabilities, especially wheelchair users.
- To eliminate the problem of discrimination against people with physical disabilities, workshops and awareness campaigns should be organised to raise awareness on disability issues.
- People with physical disabilities view the government as non-responsive towards their basic needs.

OBJECTIVE 3

To make recommendation to help social workers develop intervention programs for people with physical disabilities. This objective is achieved and will be outlined at the general recommendations based on the empirical findings.

4.3 CONCLUSIONS

- Self-help projects may be a source of financial support for people with physical disabilities, rather than depending on their state grants.
- Stigmatisation of people with physical disabilities remains a challenge for contemporary society impacting on their functioning and quality of life.
- A number of alternatives were raised as being necessary to contribute towards elimination of discrimination against people with physical disabilities – these included imposing strict disciplinary measures towards those still discriminating against people with disabilities, a march to be organised by all people with disabilities, and a memorandum stating their grievances to be sent to the government, awareness campaigns and workshops on disability issues to be organised and a mediator to advocate for their rights be appointed.
- Participation in community forums, social and interest groups focussing on disability issues will help to conscientise the

community about the needs of people with disabilities as well as issues affecting them.

4.4 **LIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

The following limitation to the study is relevant:

- A small sample was used during this study, particularly in Tembisa. However, the findings thereof, may not be generalised to other communities.

4.5 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

On the basis of the findings that have been observed by the researcher, the following recommendations are made:

- The mindset and perceptions of some able-bodied people need to be changed with regard to the way they view disability and issues affecting people with disabilities.
- Awareness campaigns and rehabilitation programs should be implemented by social workers in order to educate the public about disability issues.
- Social workers should facilitate life skills programs in order to empower people with physical disabilities to be independent and self-reliant.
- Programs that involve ongoing discussions with newly disabled clients should be developed, emphasis being on sharing of their experiences about disability, the importance of accepting and adapting to their conditions and how to boost their self-esteem.
- Social workers should set themselves as examples by supporting self-help projects of people with physical disabilities with regard to car washing in order to promote efficient support from the community at large.
- Social workers should form partnership with the Department of Public Safety in order to educate and involve the community on prevention of road accidents as another main cause of physical disability.

- If the attitudes and perceptions of community members about people with physical disabilities can improve, inclusion in the mainstream of society would be an easy process.
- Social workers should encourage people with disabilities to participate in community forums in order to be part of the decision-making process regarding disability issues affecting them.
- All public buildings in Tembisa must be accessible for wheelchair users.

4.6 **CONCLUDING REMARK**

In accordance with the evaluation of the present situation in Tembisa, with regard to people with physical disabilities, it has been confirmed that the Constitution and Employment Equity Act afforded equality to everyone, but it is not yet implemented and practiced in some areas.