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Disability Demographics Factors and Employment Inclusivity: A Study of Persons with Disabilities in 4-5 Star Hotels in Mombasa City County, Kenya

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Abstract

World Health Organization statistics indicates that the average employment rate for PLWDS is 44%. The hospitality business faces difficulties in hiring PWDs because it is a labour-intensive sector that requires able-bodied human resources. This study's goal was to evaluate the impact of disability demographic factors on employment inclusivity of PWDs in hotels in Mombasa city county Kenya. A mixed research design was used. The study was underpinned by the theory of change, social oppression theory and the resource-based theory of competitive advantage. The target population was 106 participants from selected hotels and organizations in charge of disability persons; 16 general managers, 16 HRM managers, 32 F&B managers, 16 executive housekeepers, 16 front office managers, 1 county PWDs regional coordinator, 1 skills development and placement officer from the MLSP, Mombasa county and 8 PWDs. The population was eventually sampled using a combination of purposive, stratified and census sampling methods. The sample size comprised of all the 106 participants. Data was collected using questionnaires, interviews and observation methods. The results were analysed using content analysis, descriptive analysis, Pearson correlation and multiple regression. Moderation was tested using Process Macro Hayes model 1. The results produced insignificant results that indicate that demographic factors ($B=.141, p=.102$) had not been able to positively and significantly influence the employment inclusivity of PWDs in Kenyan hotels. The most underlying factor that contributed to these findings is the lack of knowledge, awareness, and skills to develop an inclusive work environment, implement by employers. Therefore, this study recommends that stakeholders such as training

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institutions, policy and regulatory frameworks and industry should build capacity by carrying out intensive sensitization campaigns.

Keywords: *Disability Demographics, Employment Inclusivity, Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), Hospitality Industry, Mombasa City County*

1.0 Introduction

Mitra and Yap (2022) assert that 1.3 billion people (16%) worldwide are estimated to be disabled, of which 785 million are working age (ILO, 2020). Disability is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO, 2023) as a physical or mental condition that limits one's ability to manage one's life and engage with the outside environment. Disability affects 15% of the world's population. According to data from numerous studies, the most prevalent type of disability in Africa is visual impairment, which affects 1.8% of the population overall. Mobility disability, memory impairments, and hearing difficulties, which affect 0.4% to 0.7% of the population each, are the next most common forms of disability (Montes & Swindle, 2021).

Approximately 50% of PWDs are employed in developing nations, while only 10% are employed in third-world nations like Kenya. According to a global distribution, roughly 80–90% of people in Latin America and the Caribbean, 63% of people in Asia, and 10% of all workers in the United States were disregarded. South Africa showed a greater degree of marginalization, with an estimated 99% of PWDs unemployed (Bonaccio, Connelly, & Ginis, 2020). There is pay discrimination in Bangladesh, where PWDs are paid 25% less than people without a handicap who perform the same job, and in Kenya and Nigeria, workers with intellectual disabilities are paid 1/10th of the average income (Bialik & Mhiri, 2022).

According to a study by Mor (2022) on managing diversity in the workplace to create a globally inclusive environment, unemployment rates are higher in industrialized nations and even worse in emerging nations. Globally, statistics show that a small percentage of the impaired population works. The ILO (2020) report shows that Japan is at 22.7%, Poland is at 20.8%, the UK is at 38.9%, the Netherlands is at 39.9%, Australia is at 41%, and Canada is at 56.3%. The theme of the 2022 World Economic Summit in Davos, "Nothing about us without us," was centered on empowering PWDs through sustainable employment and social engagement (Global Disability Summit (GDS), 2021).

Other important criteria like age, sex, self-esteem, and competency level also influence PWD employment. The interaction between guests and PWDs is perceived as uncomfortable and would therefore detract from the overall guest experience, which influences referral business, the aesthetic aspect of leisure and hospitality exerts "aesthetic anxiety" (Uji, Prakash & Song, 2021). One obstacle to diversity and mainstreaming is a lack of necessary knowledge and abilities (Shaw, Wickenden, Thompson & Mader, 2022). The hospitality sector is the biggest in the world, accounting for 10% of global GDP and growing at an annual rate of 8.6%. It can employ more than 200 million people (UNESCO, 2020).

In countries where the hotel business is a very minor sector, the growth amounts to 2% of GDP however, in countries where the industry is doing exceptionally well, it translates to over 10% of GDP (Saarinen, 2020). Due to the narrow labor pool in the country, this labor-intensive business is having to compete more and more with other industries for people. A high worker turnover rate,

disproportionately greater than in other industries, ranging from 137 to 238%, exacerbates the problem of labor scarcity (Schuster, 2021).

Schlumberger et al. (2020) found that the underutilization of PWDs resulted in a global decline in GDP of around \$1.3 trillion to \$1.9 trillion. The SDGs, Kenya Vision 2030, and the UN all incorporate a PWD agenda to promote disability mainstreaming in the workplace as a regional and global priority to lower job barriers (Malaguti, 2019). The hotel sector is forced by globalization to embrace cultural diversity as a strategy for competition (Mor, 2022). To obtain fair and PWD accommodations in employment, disability mainstreaming in the workplace can be achieved through quota systems, legal compliance, and adherence to anti-discrimination laws (Kwan, 2020).

Building an inclusive and accommodating workplace, offering flexible work schedules, assigning guided tasks, and teaching all staff members how to communicate with others are the first steps in disability mainstreaming (Elkhwesky, Salem, & Barakat, 2022). An organization can outperform its competitors by implementing a disability mainstreaming culture that is characterized by a comprehensive diversity plan, favorable employer perceptions, explicit disability mainstreaming standards, and an inspiring work environment created by cooperative coworkers (Howleder, 2020). Furthermore, disability mainstreaming in the workplace has several benefits, including improved customer base understanding, a positive work environment, increased job satisfaction, diverse perspectives in decision-making, the development of creative ideas, and the definition of market segments (Koburtay, Syed & Haloub, 2020).

Metts (2022) found in a report commissioned by the World Bank that the projected yearly GDP loss resulting from the exclusion of PWDs was between \$1.37 trillion and \$1.94 trillion. Madera et al. (2019), the study that assessed customer impression of PWDs service found that customers had more positive sentiments about businesses that employ people with disabilities, and these hotels were highly preferred above those that disregarded the needs of their PWD workers. Hospitality establishments that consistently fail to hire different employees, like those with impairments, run the danger of losing their competitive edge in the worldwide market (Bellucci, Marco, Biggeri, Mario, Nitti, Carmela, Terenzi & Linda, 2023).

According to the Owino (2020) survey, there are obstacles to hiring PWDs in the hospitality sector. According to the study, employers were unaware of the best ways to integrate PWDs into the workplace, in addition, they were unable to locate PWD networks or recruiting agencies for assistance. The study reported that PWDs faced social and cultural barriers, including stigmatization of PWDs in the public sphere, negative perceptions and stereotypes, they faced challenges particularly structural and flexible work schedules given the labor-intensive nature of the hospitality sector (Dalagan, Sormaz, Akdağ & Çınar, 2020). Despite years of social and legislative efforts to allow PWDs to work as employees in an organization, their presence is still very small, and even in situations where opportunities are present, PWDs frequently face social exclusion, discrimination, and segregation (Mukhopadhyay & Moswela, 2020).

In their 2019 study "The Invisible Employee," Anderson, Stephenson, Carter, and Carlon discovered that 90% of people wanted to work but were prevented from doing so by laws and external circumstances (Zakaria *et. al.*, 2020). The introduction and implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) has significantly altered how society perceives and provides for its disabled members. The human rights policy offers a framework for mainstreaming and integrating human rights into development planning, execution, and assessment across all domains to completely execute the Kenyan Constitution (2010) and Kenya Vision 2030.

Employers in both the public and commercial sectors are required by law to set aside 5% of their workforce for disabled workers (The constitution of Kenya 2010 Article 54(2) and persons with disabilities Bill 2023). According to a provision of the National Social Security Fund Act, 1965 (No. 5 of 1997), which was amended in 2001, physical and mental disabilities will not be considered reasons for being unable to work. The combined objectives of Vision 2030's programs and long-term development framework are to fight poverty and sustain rapid economic growth. Besides, based on the Kenya Population and Housing Census of 2019, 2.2% of Kenyans are estimated to have a disability, of which 41% are not employed. Only 1% of this population is employed (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

More than one billion, or 15%, of PWDs are disproportionately excluded from the workforce globally; by 2030, that number is estimated to rise by 3.5 million, with an annual growth rate of 2.9%. PWDs employment rates average 44% against 75% (WHO, 2020). According to the World Employment Social Outlook (2022), 80–90% of PWDs are employed in first-world nations, 50% in emerging nations, and 10% in third-world nations. Despite a robust legislative framework, the Kenya Population and Housing Census Report of 2019 states that the prevalence of disabilities in Kenya is 2.2%, with only 1% of those individuals employed (Tripney, 2020). The precise number or proportion of PWDs employed in the hotel industry is also unclear from a statistical standpoint. This gap is not only evident in developing countries such as Kenya but also in first world countries such as USA. Research shows that approximately 90% of PWDs are disregarded in Latin America (Elkhwesky *et al.*, 2022). An estimated 99% of PWDs are unemployed in South Africa (Bonaccio, Connelly & Ginis, 2020). This study is premised on this gap of lack of data. Lack of concrete data in the Kenyan scenario exacerbates the mainstreaming challenges.

The second problem that has motivated this study is influenced by the UN SDGs aim to create a sustainable future by 2030, by providing barrier-free employment accommodations for PWDs. In countries where the hotel sector is rather small, one out of ten job opportunities is in the travel and hospitality sector. In countries where the industry is doing exceptionally well, it accounts for over 10% of GDP. Due to the narrow labor pool in the country, this labor-intensive business is having to compete more and more with other industries for workers. A high worker turnover rate of 137–238%, which is disproportionately greater than in other industries, exacerbates the labor shortage issue (Schuster, 2021). The problem of shortage of labour stifles the achievement of other SDG goals such as Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities and Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth. Research is required to provide information on how problems such as shortage of labour can be addressed for all.

According to Metts (2022), who conducted a report on behalf of the World Bank, the estimated yearly GDP loss resulting from the exclusion of PWDs was between \$1.37 trillion and \$1.94 trillion. The opportunity to hire PWDs from this underutilized pool seems to be apparent for firms in the hospitality industry. Despite advancements in legislation such as the Disability Act 20003, the Constitution of Kenya Article 54 (1: b), the Kenya National Tourism Policy 2020, the SDGs, the Kenya Vision 2030 pillar, and the NCPWD, the unemployment rate for PWDs has continuously remained in the 60%–70% range for decades.

According to research by Anderson et al. (2019), 90% of PWDs want to pursue their careers, but the difficulty is figuring out how to include them in the workforce and value them to society for “they are blocked by legislation and environmental factors”. PWDs have a high unemployment

rate since it is believed that employers are hesitant to recruit them. Given the findings of previous researchers that the hospitality industry may gain from employing from this untapped labor pool, including a larger consumer base, improved inventiveness, and a lower turnover rate of 32%, this stark exclusion gap garners attention (Mugadia, 2020). Given the estimated 2.9% annual rate of population growth, it is quite likely that there will be 3.5 million persons with disabilities by 2030.

Lastly, the hospitality sector is entirely service-driven and prioritizes overall image as a competitive advantage. This makes it crucial to hire PWDs who meet physical attractiveness/appearance, esthetic, and excellent self-presentation skills. Employers often value aesthetics, and PWDs face difficulties finding jobs due to their strong diction, perceived low social skills, unaesthetic physical looks, and presentation, among other issues. In order to debunk and overcome these myths barriers to employment of PWDs, research is required to guide employers on how to incorporate the PWDs in their human resource without looking like the have compromised their competitive advantage.

Finally, as a competitive advantage, overall image is given top priority in the hospitality industry. The hiring of employees who possess physical attractiveness/appearance, aesthetic, and exceptional self-presentation abilities is therefore essential. Among other things, PWDs have difficulties finding employment opportunities in the hospitality because of their perceived strong diction, lack of social skills, unattractive appearance, and presentation, which are all factors that hospitality employers value. Research is needed to debunk these myths and negative attitudes that prevent PWDs from finding employment, and help employers integrate PWDs into their workforce without appearing to have lost their competitive edge.

1.2 Research Objective

To evaluate the impact of disability demographic factors on employment inclusivity of PWDs among 4-5 star hotels in Mombasa City County Kenya.

1.3 Research Hypothesis

H₀ There is no significant relationship between disability demographic factors on employment inclusivity of PWDs among 4-5 star hotels in Mombasa City County Kenya.

1.4 Scope of the Study

Mombasa City County was the study location of this investigation. The research employed an embedded design. The study participants were selected from hotels and organizations in charge of disability persons comprised of 16 General Managers, 16 Human resource managers, 32 Food and beverage Managers, 16 Executive housekeepers, 16 Front office managers, 1 PWDs coordinator, 1 Skills development and placement officer from the MLSP and 8 PWDs.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The study was anchored on Social oppression theory. The Union for the Physically Impaired (UPIA, 1976) is credited with giving rise to this theory's origins. Ingstad & Grut (2020) argue that disabilities is a result of societal attitudes and stereotyping, not an individual's impairment: "A world of people with disability but the shadow side hasn't caught up with what is possible". Social oppression through institutional, environmental, and emotional barriers that obstruct equal access to opportunities in housing, work, leisure, and transportation. In order to enable the disabled community to live independently, this model recognizes impairments and promotes accommodations. For instance, an employment advertisement that is posted through multiple

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channels rather than print media may disadvantage applicants who are visually impaired. Audial advertising channels are recommended.

The United Nations (2019b) states that disabilities impact all facets of our life, necessitating careful planning to create a shared playground for people with different disabilities. The theory is appropriate for the study since it implies that disability is a societal impairment rather than an individual one. The theory argues that for every individual and organization to become culturally competent with people of mental abilities, they must overcome the prejudices and preconceptions of the past. It emphasizes the importance of learning about the cultures and special needs of people with various disabilities, including those with learning difficulties, autism, mobility impairments, hearing, vision, and hidden disabilities. Employers can also learn about special needs people whose disabilities have just recently started. Thus this theory attempts to close the gap that has harmed the PWDS and will continue to do so if not checked.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

Independent Variable

Dependent Variable

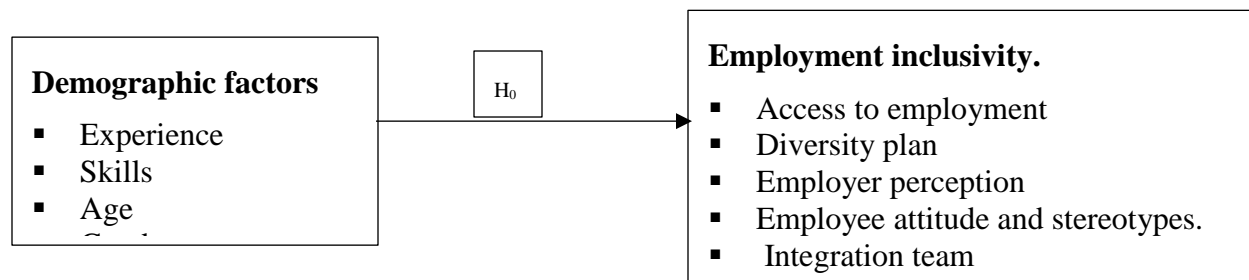


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Modified from KARC, 2020, Peterson (2022)

2.3 Demographic Factors

Hospitality employers often value aesthetics, and PWDs face difficulties finding jobs due to their strong diction, perceived low social skills, unaesthetic physical looks, and presentation, among other issues. Several other studies have reported that PWDs face barriers to employment due to a lack of skills and capabilities (Maja, Mann, Sing, Steyn & Naidoo, 2011). Men are favored over women for employment in Bangladesh due to social norms and institutional framework. Employment is influenced by educational attainment and the degree of hearing loss; the greater the hearing loss, the lower the chance of landing a paid job (Strindlund, Abrandt-Dahlgren & Ståhl, 2020). Research on the hospitality sector has found that some of the barriers to employment for PWDs are exacerbated by employers' preferences for presentation, aesthetics, and physical beauty. According to a study by Garba *et al.* (2020), in the job market, a graduate with the appropriate abilities and competences is the least excluded, regardless of the circumstances. PWDs are severely disadvantaged if they are not included in the educational system.

The lack of communication, social, and technical skills among the disabled workforce is a key barrier to occupational inclusion, according the UN research published in 2021. This is because of the "aesthetic nature of the service industry." A similar conclusion was reached by Michael (2021),

who discovered that all hearing-impaired people with bachelor's or master's degrees were in the workforce. In a similar vein, WHO (2021) discovered that hearing-impaired people in the USA with less than a bachelor's degree generally had 4-5% higher unemployment rates than their hearing counterparts, while those with a bachelor's degree had 1-2% higher rates.

According to a Delphi study on PWDs in the hospitality industry, regardless of the existence or severity of a disability, hiring decisions were made solely based on a candidate's merit, suitability, and ability to perform the job in question based on their professional knowledge and skills (Uji & Björkman, 2021). Due to their physical and communication impairments, female graduates experience a notably greater sense of inferiority complex than male graduates. These insecurities make them feel less self-assured, alone, and uneasy when working in the hospitality sector (Zakaria et al., 2020).

3.0 Research Methodology

The study used a mixed-method research design. Mixed method research design is defined as class of research design in which the researcher integrates quantitative and qualitative research approaches, methods, concepts, or language into a single study in order to gain a deeper and more comprehensive understanding and to corroborate findings (Creswell, 2014). The pragmatic epistemology holds that knowledge cannot be divorced from contingent beliefs, desires, or projections, and that truth is a normative term (Creswell, 2014). The pragmatic worldview concentrates on the current problem, which should be resolved by utilizing the best strategy available. The pragmatic paradigm was thought to be the best fit for this investigation since it encouraged the application of both qualitative and quantitative techniques to address the study's problem.

The study targeted 106 participants from selected hotels and PWD Organizations. They comprised of 16 General Managers, 16 HRM, 32 F&B Managers, 16 Executive Housekeepers, 16 Front Office Managers, 1 County PWDs Regional Coordinators, 1 Skills Development and Placement Officer from the MLSP, Mombasa County and 8 PWDs guided by Tourism Regulatory Authority (Tourism Regulatory Authority, 2018, KATO 2018-2019 Accredited hospitality sectors). The sample was drawn from selected hotels and key informants to the study and organizations that are mandated to cater to the needs of PWDs in Mombasa County Kenya. These data was collected from secondary sources and during a reconnaissance study in preparation of data collection.

The research employed a strategy that combines purposive and stratified sampling methods. The hotel sector under study was stratified into their star rating. To choose responders, the purposive sampling technique was applied. Purposive sampling was applied to the General Managers, HRM, F&B Managers, Housekeeping Managers, Front Office Managers, Skills development and Placement Officers from the MLSP, Mombasa County and 8 PWDs, representing different kinds of disability (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2013).

To gather data, the study employed interview schedules, observation checklists, and questionnaires. The use of numerous research instruments is advised by Turner and Turner (2009) because it makes triangulation easier for data validation. PWDs were interviewed to provide additional information, and general managers, HRM, F&B managers, front desk managers, housekeeping managers, and F&B employees were given questionnaires. The observations checklist was used to demonstrate whether the hospitality sector accommodates people with disabilities. Questionnaire-derived data was properly coded and examined.

4.0 Findings and Discussion

The researcher administered 96 questionnaires but 73 questionnaires were filled and returned. This translated the response rate to 76.04%, which was adequate to generate dependable findings (Kothari, 2004; Fosnacht *et al.*, 2013). The interview guide was applied to 1 Skill development and placement officer, 1 PWDS Coordinator who were selected through purposive sampling, and 4 PWDS picked through simple random sampling from one five-star hotel and the remaining 4 from the four-star hotel category respectively.

Demographic results revealed that more males (54%) seem to dominate the hospitality labor market slightly more than their counterparts (46%), especially in the management level of the food and beverage department, front office, housekeeping, and human resource departments. The sample was drawn from these departments. The results are consistent with a study on gender and disability employment that found that men were more likely than women to be employed (Naami, 2015). There were more youthful employees (25-40 years, 58.8%) in the industry than the young (18-25 years, 8.8%) and the elderly (over 50 years, 13.2%).

The hotel industry seems to have employed very few PWDs (less than 5, 94%). This may imply that few PWDs seek or are considered for employment in the industry. Therefore, the inclusivity of PWDs is still a major challenge and the hotels have not utilized the PWDs' labor pool to best advantage. This observation contravenes section 13 of the PWDs Act 2003 which postulates that 5% employment opportunities be reserved for PWDs. This is an important trend that encourages hotels to work toward increasing the number of employees with disabilities through targeted and effective disability mainstreaming inclusive strategies, outreach programs, and awareness campaigns. The results of the interviews support these conclusions. Respondents noted that even while hotels try to encourage PWDs to apply, they hardly ever receive applications from them.

The PWDs employed in the industry are preferably married (72%) than single (28%). This might be because of the perception that singles are less likely to be loyal than married employees. The finding tallies with (Zakaria *et al.*, 2020) who found out that males are more preferred to females due to their physical and communication impairments, female graduates experience a notably greater sense of inferiority complex than male graduates. These insecurities make them feel less self-assured, alone, and uneasy when working in the hospitality sector.

Hotels seem to prefer to employ physically disabled PWDs (88.0%) followed by deaf (8%) and dumb (4%). The physically impaired employees might be preferred because the hotel can assess the severity of the disability and match them with a suitable job. The visually impaired, blind, intellectually, and those on the extreme might be disadvantaged because employment in the hotel industry is highly characterized by the ability to effectively communicate. These results imply that disability mainstreaming can confidently boost PWDs' inclusion of various types of suitable tasks in the hotel setup. Some Human resource managers attested that they had hired a dumb PWD who had massage therapist skills in one of the Indian Spa wellness centers. The results of this study show that disability mainstreaming must be implemented with vigor so that we can follow in the footsteps of disability mainstreamed champions and enjoy the advantages of 100% inclusivity, as demonstrated by the successful employment of PWDs in various sectors by advocates of inclusivity such as Accor, Park Inn Radisson and Marriot (Marriot Hotel, 2015; Accor Hotels, 2018).

4.1 Descriptive Analysis

Respondents were asked to rate their responses on the extent to which demographic factors impacted employment inclusivity of PWDs among 4-5 star hotels in Mombasa City County Kenya. The respondents strongly agreed that they recruit employees based on their merit, regardless of their disabilities (mean 4.37, std.Dev = 1.139). They also agreed that the departments where PWDs are engaged are determined by the type of disability (mean=4.21, std. Dev. = 0.729). Besides, a majority of the respondents asserted educational competencies and skills positively influence the employment of PWDs. Regarding the issue of whether social norms and values have a significant impact on the employment of male PWDS in the hospitality sector, a majority of the respondents were uncertain (mean=3.04, std. Dev. = 1.160). Lastly, it was not clear whether hotels prefer to employ men living with disability over their women counterparts as a majority remained neutral (mean=2.39, std. Dev. =1.507).

Table 1: The impact of disability demographic factors on employment inclusivity of PWDs

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Regardless of their disability, we hire people on the basis of their qualifications.	4.37	1.139
The type of disability determines which departments PWDS works in.	4.21	.729
Employment of PWDs is significantly impacted by educational competencies and skills.	3.99	1.037
The interests and self-esteem of PWDs impact employment.	3.64	1.240
PWDS employment is determined by the severity of their disability	3.51	1.173
Employment in the hospitality sector is impacted by PWDs' age.	3.46	1.210
The employment of male PWDS in the hospitality sector is impacted by societal norms and values.	3.04	1.160
Men with disabilities are preferred for employment over their female counterparts.	2.39	1.507
Valid N (listwise)		

The interview findings indicate that there is a challenge in the hotel industry in recruiting and selecting PWDs for job opportunities. This challenge is exacerbated by the fact that most PWDs rarely disclose their conditions, and this lowers their chances of being selected. The adverts are mostly posted on our social media pages which are not inclusive. The HRM remarked that:

We are not doing very well in ensuring inclusivity in our advertisements for job opportunities...we use social media that disadvantages candidates with disabilities.....the PWDs do not disclose their disability because of fear of being discriminated against.....in a case where a candidate with a disability turns up for interviews, the rooms where the interviews are conducted are also not friendly... (Resp07, 2024).

One of the respondents with a disability was asked how they got to know about the job opportunity. The respondent indicated that he heard from a friend:

“.....I got to hear about this job from a friend and I applied (Resp01, 2024).

The interview findings coincided with Mueke, (2019) and Opoku et al., (2020) who alleged that PWDs are not very likely to apply for positions due to barriers such as self-stigma and negative self-perceptions of their skills, value, and competitiveness in the labor market compared to their counterparts. Hui, Tsui, & Tavitiyaman, (2020) study shows that employment discrimination was on the minds of several persons with disabilities as they felt that they were refused a job because of their condition and that they found employment opportunities through referrals from friends. This behavior could also be a result of a lack of information about prospective employment opportunities. This sentiment shows how PWDS are in self-denial that is developed by self-concepts influenced by internalized stigma and prejudices that inform their judgment as being less competent than they are. A barrier that can be eliminated through disability mainstreaming to build intrinsic motivation that will drive them to apply for inclusivity consideration. These findings are similar to McKinney, & Swartz (2021). The labor market continues to be a significant source of discrimination against individuals with disabilities. Structured disability mainstreaming can help close this gap and provide opportunities for individuals with disabilities to train, acquire new skills, access professional opportunities, and advance their careers. Further similar is observed by Anderson, Stephen & Carter's (2019) study which established that 90% of PWDS had a desire to pursue careers, but were blocked by Legislation and Environmental barriers. These conditions predispose the Kenyan Vision 2030 projections and aspirations of achieving a globally competitive and sustainable economic growth of 10 % per annum over the next 25 years.

Regarding whether the type of the disability dictates which departments PWDs work in and whether the degree of disability influences PWDs' employment in the hotel sector. The respondent asserted that:

“When a PWD applies for a job and they are successful, we try as much as possible to place them in jobs that they can deliver.....like we have a deaf employee attached at our wellness spa, serving as a massage therapist and an artisanal shoe shiner responsible for cleaning and buffing guests shoes booked in the hotel rooms and apartments and a dumb and deaf sign interpreter at the gusts lobby working as a guest relations officer responsible for guests express check-in of V.I.P.S and other guests challenged differently. (Resp05, 2024).

This remark concurs with a study done by Ellenkamp, Brouwers, Embregts, et al. (2021) which revealed that, ergonomics and Job task re-design are core pillars to reasonable accommodation as a strategy of PWDs inclusion on employment. Benjamin, S., Bottone, E. & Lee, M. (2021) affirmed that a vibrant disability mainstreaming campaign has the potential to achieve reasonable accommodation to a high magnitude that will open the doors to PWDS inclusion in the labor market in which everyone can participate regardless of any form of disability. Graham, L. (2020). Speaks out louder “Disability is the state of the mind!” Giants like Marriot International rated 100% on disability inclusion, Pallet café in Lavington, Founder and CEO Fazul Hussein's philosophy “ PWDS without limits and disability is not inability” deliberately breaks the myth by employing deaf and hearing impaired waiters and waitresses waiters. This bold move clearly illustrates that disability is the state of the mind as held by employers whose barrier can be broken

by disability awareness that will fight the stereotypes, and ableism and dismantle the stigma that limits PWDS opportunities available in the labor market.

From the observation checklist results in Appendix V, it was found that no hotel had made a deliberate effort to set targets on the number of PWDs to be recruited. However, 14 hotels out of 16 had their job advertisements posted on different channels for inclusion purposes. Besides, 10 hotels out of 16 featured a slogan “PWDs inclusive” on their websites, and 11 out of 16 implemented an open door policy for its PWDs employees. This finding therefore implies that, hotels will adhere to inclusive branding by implementing policies, allocating resources, and promoting diversity, all of which will increase PWDs' employability.

4.2 Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation was performed to evaluate the extent to which demographic factors in disability mainstreaming influence the employment inclusivity of PWDs. As shown in Table 2. Demographic factors are not associated with employment inclusivity ($r= 0.228, p=0.061$).

Table 2: Correlation of disability demographic factors and employment inclusivity of PWDs

Predictor (X)	Correlations	Employment inclusivity (Y)
Demographic factors	Pearson Correlation	.228
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.061

Note: ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

To test the impact of the influence of the impact of demographic factors on the employment inclusivity of PWDs, a multiple regression analysis was carried out. Demographic factors were regressed against employment inclusivity. The results produced insignificant results that indicate that demographic factors ($B=.141, p=.102$) do not predict the employment inclusivity of PWDs.

The null hypothesis was not rejected:

***H₀:** There is no significant relationship between disability demographic factors on employment inclusivity of PWDs among 4-5 star hotels in Mombasa City County, Kenya.*

The results contradict (Harkison, 2022) who found that more important than technical and hard skills are PWDs' appearances, physical characteristics, and aesthetic and self-presentation abilities. This contradiction may be explained by methodological flaws such as the small sample size which limited the access to information.

Nonetheless, the results corroborate the interview findings and a Delphi study on PWDs in the hospitality industry, which reported that regardless of the existence or severity of a disability, hiring decisions were made solely based on a candidate's merit, suitability, and ability to perform the job in question based on their professional knowledge and skills (Uji & Björkman, 2021). The results presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Coefficients for the impact of demographic factors on employment inclusivity of PWDs

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	Std. Error	
1	(Constant)	2.023	.468	.000
	Demographic factors	.0141	.085	.102

Notes: a. Dependent Variable: Employment inclusivity

5.0 Conclusions

The study findings indicated that most of the 4-5-star coastal hotels had made some significant and remarkable progress towards disability mainstreaming that impacted PWDs inclusion in employed though none had achieved the 5% threshold of reserving employment opportunities for PWDs as anchored in NCPWD and ADA Act of 2003. It emerged so strongly from the findings that educational competencies and skills positively influence the employment of PWDs.

It was also evident that the departments where PWDs are engaged were determined by the type of disability. However, it was surprising to note uncertainty from a majority of respondents on asserted the question of whether societal values and norms greatly influence the employment of male PWDS in the hospitality industry. This response could indicate that disability mainstreaming strategies used by 4 and 5 star hotels had no significant impact on reasonable inclusion of PWDs so to state. It wasn't clear too, whether the hotels prefer to employ men living with disability over their women counterparts as a majority remained neutral (mean=2.39, std. Dev. =1.507).

6.0 Recommendations

Kenyan hotels should strive to fully exercise disability awareness campaigns to boost PWDs' inclusion of various types to suitable tasks in the hotel setup. Hotels seem to prefer to employ physically disabled PWDs, with a lot of reservations to other types of disabilities such as mental and dumb. Some Human resource managers attested that they had hired a dump PWD who had massage therapist skills in one of the Indian Spa wellness centers. This implies that disability mainstreaming can confidently open doors to other types of disabilities which is a progressive stride towards achieving the 5% quota which is a bone of contention as none of the hotels have met this legal obligation.

Hotel operations are analyzed and redesigned to eventually allow for the best possible utilization of all available labor market skills and work capacity. Creating tasks for individuals with varying levels of capacity and complexity is the main objective of this fundamental principle, which is known as "task differentiation." This is a creative strategy and a fresh way of thinking about jobs and roles in the hotel to accommodate different kinds of impairments rather than following complicated PWDS processes. Statements like "It is not an impairment that hinders a person but a discriminatory environment that doesn't accommodate diversity" will have resonance with this type of flexibility. Disability mainstreaming is the best course of action since it will help dispel misconceptions and open the door to recognizing PWDS' humanity, abilities, and experiences. This will lead to acceptable adaptations, which will increase the number of PWDS in most hotels.

It is recommended that authorities make the effort to establish skills databases that would allow employers to locate PWDs and gather data on their abilities. Employers and TVET institutions

should collaborate and share information regarding the talents of people with disabilities. Most responses of the study claimed “We do not know where to get or reach out to skilled PWDs for inclusion” Little seems to be known about PWDs' abilities and expertise. It is highly recommended to have a dynamic and comprehensive database that contains not only statistics but also comprehensive publications and websites pertaining to disabilities, such as the National Council Persons with Disability job portal.

The findings indicate that some employers were willing to hire PWDs but were left with no alternative as they didn't meet basic infrastructural s and super structural obligations. Lack of information on how to improve accessibility as work design /ergonomics was reported as a great barrier to PWDs inclusion. It is based on this phenomenon that it is recommended that the government through the NCPWD has the obligation of sensitizing hotels on funds that are given to hotels for upgrading infamous of PWDs reasonable accommodation.

The study findings indicated that education is a master key to PWDs inclusion in hotels. It is prudent therefore to recommend that the government collaborates with National Industrial Training Authority (NITA). NITA as an organization that is mandated with curriculum development training, a skills development department, and industrial placement services to identify skills gaps and competencies to meet the labor market by administering unconventional assessment methods such as Government Trade Tests, and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

The study found that some hotels had considered PWDs with special skills as massage therapists, artisanal shoe shiners cater for guests' shoes in rooms & apartments, a deaf as a sign language interpreters alongside non-disabled workers to usher guests of various disabilities to the rooms. This effort underscores that the employers are willing to hire and accommodate PWDS of the right skills and for positions that match their status. The Constitution of Kenya, Kenya Vision 2030, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, ILO recommendation R195-2004, and ILO convention C142-1975 all call for an industrialized economy, and these hotels' progressive actions help to achieve these goals.

The findings of this study revealed that hotels rarely receive applications from PWDs. These is marred with possible reasons among of which, fear or low self-esteem or lack of unique competitive skills and the negative perception that surrounds PWDs which is major stumbling block to their meaningful and willingness to participate in the public sphere. To counter this scene, it is there ideal to recommend that, Training institutions conduct s training on awareness and rights of PWDs to empower them with, job search skills, exhibitions to exhibit competencies and skills and ability of PWDs, digital literacy to access their website or portal for information, networking or synergy this will build self-confidence and finally consider to actualize PWDs events such as disabilities world day that is observed annually on 3rd December! Which according to the study hotels failed to observe.

A well-developed vocational identity that encompasses a person's career goals and interests is what the PWDS should strive to meet. It also helps employees make better decisions, feel more confident, and be better able to handle external influences that affect job growth. According to the study, one of the primary reasons why PWDs are viewed negatively by society and, as a result, effectively excluded from the mainstream of employment is a lack of awareness about disabilities. PWDs should be familiar with anti-discrimination laws in order to develop self-advocacy and self-determination abilities that are appropriate for the workplace. Their "work personality," which is a construct for career development, should be composed of a mix of internalized work-related

values and externalized behaviors that affect work adjustment and adaptation to work environments, which over time help to retain and stabilize jobs.

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