

**CONTRIBUTION OF DISABILITY INFRASTRUCTURE AND
SUPERSTRUCTURAL PRACTICES TO EMPLOYMENT
INCLUSIVITY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN 4-5 STAR
HOTELS IN MOMBASA CITY COUNTY, KENYA**

**¹Binyanya Benard, ²Dr. Monica Akinyi Wandolo (PhD) & ³Dr. Albert Chege Kariuki
(PhD)**

¹PhD Candidate, Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management
Kenyatta University

^{2,3}Lecturer, Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management
Kenyatta University

*Email of corresponding author: benardbnn105@gmail.com

Publication Date: January 2025

ABSTRACT

Purpose of Study: The purpose of this study was to to determine the contribution of disability infrastructural and super structural practices on employment inclusivity of PWDs among 4-5 star hotels in Mombasa City County Kenya.

Problem Statement: 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). The hospitality business faces difficulties in hiring PWDs because it is a labour-intensive sector that requires able-bodied human resources.

Methodology: 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 sample size comprised of all the 106 participants. Data was collected using questionnaires, interviews and observation methods.

Result: The findings revealed that infrastructural and super structural practices had a moderate effect on PWDs employment inclusivity ($r= 0.350$, $p=0.004$) Multiple regression analysis was carried out. The results produced insignificant results ($B=.114$, $p=.242$), and thus infrastructural and super-structural practices do not predict employment inclusivity.

Recommendation: Hotels should enhance their disability mainstreaming efforts by prioritizing the development and implementation of comprehensive health and safety policies that encourage disability inclusion. This includes establishing proper job-matching programs tailored to the skills and capabilities of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) and introducing mentorship initiatives to provide consistent support and guidance for PWD employees.

Keywords: *Disability Inclusion, Employment Inclusivity, Infrastructure Practices, Superstructural Practices, Hospitality Industry Kenya*

INTRODUCTION

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). Approximately 50% of PWDs are employed in developing nations, while only 10% are employed in third-world nations like Kenya. 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). 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).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

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). 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). 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 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.

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.

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.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

To determine the contribution of disability infrastructural and super structural practices on employment inclusivity of PWDs among 4-5 star hotels in Mombasa City County Kenya.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

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

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study was underpinned by Resource-Based Theory of Competitive Advantage. Barney (1991) and Grant (1991) developed this theory to offer a theoretical framework based on resources for employing and attracting members of minority communities. According to Barney's idea, a company has a competitive advantage if its resources are relatively scarce, valued, dispersed differently across rival enterprises, and impossible to copy. According to Mugadia (2020), the model highlights human capital as the primary source of competitive advantage. This is due to the fact that human capital is defined by a personalized touch that is not possible in the hospitality business through worldwide developing trends and technology, but rather through interpersonal interactions, corporate culture, and reputation among clients and staff. This theory demonstrates that capitalizing on minority groups as a labour market does not only give the hospitality sector a competitive edge but also result in devoted workers and lower employee turnover, not to mention a varied clientele. This is demonstrated by the Marriot hotel, which employs a large number of minority employees and receives positive feedback from patrons. Compared to the workforce without disabilities, PWDs worked in the hospitality sector for longer periods (Jones, 2022).

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

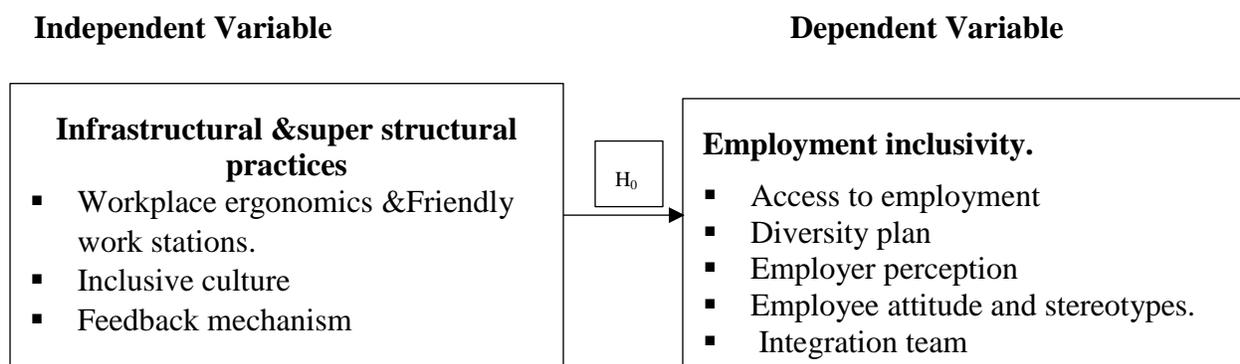


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

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

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

According to Garba, Dawha, and Sini (2020), super structural practices involve a supportive and accommodating culture that meets individual requirements based on the kind and severity of disability, whereas infrastructure improvements relate to the physical environment and job ergonomics. A person with a disability may perform almost any work, and in the correct setting, the majority of them can be productive (WHO & World Bank, 2011). Physical and social obstacles are lessened by workplace infrastructure improvements, particularly accessible facilities, assistive technology, lighting, and acoustics, as well as safety precautions. Shakespeare's (2006) social

model of disability states that in order to overcome impairment, the external environment needs to be changed. Hospitality industries that take into account inclusive hiring practices and anti-discrimination policies, it is becoming more and more evident that superstructural accommodation also plays a significant role in disability inclusion (Anand & Sevak, 2017).

Modified equipment and flexible work hours are examples of accommodating programs that can assist create a more disability-friendly workplace, but top management and HR personnel support these initiatives (Bruyère, Erickson, & VanLooy, 2000). The likelihood of landing a job in the hotel industry depends on the kind and degree of the impairment (Garba et al. 2020). A restricted range of job opportunities and visual and bodily impairments were mentioned as reasons why some job descriptions were deemed unsuitable for specific types of disability. People with intellectual disabilities and sensory impairments are frequently marginalized and viewed by society as unemployed (Calheiros, 2020).

Similarly, a lot of firms are reluctant to recruit blind people, but the visually impaired are preferred and work as switchboard operators and masseurs. This is because autistic people seek stable jobs, and housekeeping has been proved to be a good fit for them. This is linked to 31 units operated in Turkey "Down Cafe" and Marriott and Radisson hotels that have adopted disability inclusion as a tactic to stay competitive (Dalagan et al., 2020). The biggest obstacle to employment for people with hearing impairments has been their inability to acquire social skills, which is a need for most companies. As a result, they are either unemployed or forced into temporary, low-paying positions (Burns, Howard & Ospina, 2021).

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.

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 dump 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).

Descriptive Analysis

The top three infrastructural and superstructural practices that respondents agreed to in disability mainstreaming were; using non-discriminatory motivation and rewards to encourage PWDs inclusion (mean= 4.12, std. Dev. 0.993); promoting the exchange of good experiences and best practices to lessen stigma and fear among coworkers and employers (mean = 4.10, std. Dev. 1.046) and investing in hotel structures that encourage PWDs inclusion (mean= 4.04, std. dev. 0.944). The least adopted strategies were establishing health & safety policies that encourage disability mainstreaming (mean = 3.64, std. Dev. 1.311); doing job matching (mean = 3.36, std. Dev. 1.711), and having mentors who support PWDS to promote disability employment (mean =3.15, std. dev. =1.304).

Table 1: The contribution of disability infrastructural and super structural practices on employment inclusivity of PWDs

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Non-discriminatory motivation and rewards encourage PWDs inclusion.	4.12	.993
We encourage employers and coworkers to share good experiences and best practices in order to lessen stigma and fear.	4.10	1.046
The structure of our hotel encourages PWD inclusion.	4.04	.944
Guided tasks reduce PWDs' barriers to employment.	3.82	1.058
Our work schedules promote the mainstreaming of PWDs	3.76	1.143
Our safety and health regulations promote the mainstreaming of PWDs.	3.64	1.311
We facilitate disability mainstreaming through job matching.	3.36	1.177
We have mentors who assist PWDS in advancing their employment	3.15	1.304

Valid N (list wise)

The descriptive results were corroborated by the interview findings. The respondent remarked that the hotel has made efforts to provide infrastructural support by providing a fairly well-equipped working environment and facilities.

“All the guest rooms and the offices have ramps.and a wheelchair on standby for use of both guests and staff...” (Resp04, 2024).

Other support mechanisms that were reported include the establishment of health committees to address workplace ergonomics of all staff including PWDs. The results of the observation checklist in Appendix V indicated that 2 five-star rated hotels and 2 four- star rated hotels had established PWDs mainstreaming committees even though, none of the hotels had established a network of PWDs resource groups. One respondent asserted that:

“We have health committees who audit our workplaces to ensure they are friendly to PWDS” (Resp08, 2024).

These findings coincide with WHO & World Bank, (2011) which underscore that a person with a disability may perform almost any work, and in the correct setting, the majority of them can be productive. However, the results of the observation checklist indicated that none of the 16 hotels had employed the “employee of the month award” to motivate PWDs. In addition, there were seemingly no innovations of PWDs displayed or archived by the hotels. It was also established from the observation checklist that all the hotels had made considerable efforts to provide ramps, elevators/lifts, parking slots, wide doors, and other emergency facilities e.g. visual alarms/lighted fire strobes for PWDs. On the contrary, some facilities and resources such as tactile/braille signage and maps, picture books of drill procedures for workers with disabilities, sign language interpreters, and accommodation rooms for PWDs challenged with frequent travel were rarely provided.

Moreover, less than half of the 16 four and five-star rated hotels had color-coded fire doors and exit ways for workers, guiding and counseling offices for PWDs, modifications of workstations, use of ICT, assistive devices to enable communication or accommodation of PWDs, flexible work schedules / blended schedules and centralized disability support office/ PWDs welfare office. This observation concurs with study findings made by Maclean, (2021) which revealed that disability inclusion is not seamless, it is marred with lots of bottlenecks that can be broken by disability awareness campaigns. NCPWDS needs to amplify these sentiments for an inclusive and sustainable future by creating a platform that breaks down social barriers through compliance checks, reports, disability mainstreaming practices, and hotel sensitization to integrate PWDs and close gaps in implementing the law that requires 5% reservations as a catalyst for diversity.

Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation was performed to evaluate the influence of infrastructural and super structural practices on employment inclusivity of PWDs among 4-5 star hotels in Mombasa City County. As shown in Table 4.5 infrastructural and super structural practices are moderately associated with employment inclusivity ($r= 0.350$, $p=0.004$).

Table 2: Correlation of disability infrastructural and super structural practices and employment inclusivity of PWDs

Predictor (X)	Correlations	Employment inclusivity (Y)
Infrastructural and super-structural practices	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.350** .004

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

To test the impact of the influence of the impact of disability infrastructural and super-structural practices on employment inclusivity, a multiple regression analysis was carried out. The results produced insignificant results ($B=.114$, $p=.242$), and thus infrastructural and super-structural practices do not predict employment inclusivity. Therefore, the following null hypothesis was not rejected:

H₀: There is no significant relationship between disability infrastructural and superstructural practices on employment inclusivity of PWDs among 4-5 star hotels in Mombasa City County, Kenya.

This study contradicts the previous studies (Shakespeares', 2006) that the external environment should be altered to overcome impairment; and that employers should consider implementing anti-discrimination policies. This contradiction arises from the limited information on PWDs inclusivity in the Kenyan hotel industry scenario. Even though the quantitative results of the Pearson correlation indicate a positive relationship between disability infrastructural and superstructural practices on employment inclusivity of PWDs in Kenyan hotels, the existent relationship is not predictive. This means that the Kenyan hospitality industry needs to do more to achieve inclusivity of PWDs through infrastructural and super-structural support. The results presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Coefficients for the contributions of disability infrastructural and super structural practices on employment inclusivity of PWDs

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Sig.	
	B	Std. Error		
1	(Constant)	2.023	.468	.000
	Infrastructural and super-structural practices	.114	.097	.242

Notes: a. Dependent Variable: Employment inclusivity

CONCLUSIONS

Regarding infrastructure and superstructure, the findings found that they promoted inclusion especially non-discriminatory motivation, sharing of positive experiences that reduce stigma and the structure of the hotel was accommodative. It was also revealed that the hotels didn't consider health and safety, were challenged with job matching to various disability types, and that most hotels didn't have mentors to journey with to cater to the needs of PWDs. These results suggest that the issue does not appear to be with the actual ramps. Those in positions of authority, like the employer in this instance, must put in effort to install the ramps. The obstacles disabled individuals encounter when attempting to enter the workforce are symbolized by ramps.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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 government should actualize tax benefits to employers or hotels so they can be used to upgrade work ergonomics for reasonable accommodation of different types of disabilities as this was pointed out by the findings of the study as a stumbling block. The findings indicate that some employers were willing to hire PWDs but were left with no alternative as they didn't meet basic infrastructural 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 infamously 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). This study signaled that the main obstacles to the employment of PWDs in the hotel industry were stigma, employers' lack of information or knowledge about disabilities, and perceived costs associated with accessibility. These concerns were also opined by Duguet, (2021). This study recommends that the government initiates a business disability forum website that will enable employers to share experiences and motivate each other to understand the arguments for inclusion it recognizes the best performers to establish best practices on disability inclusion among public entities, and encourage others to step up their efforts in mainstreaming disability. The website may also serve as a benchmark for measuring continuous improvement of disability inclusion in the subsequent years.

The study revealed that health and safety was found to be neglected by most hotels a clear indicator that disability mainstreaming was not executed to achieve significant inclusion of PWDs. These findings call for an urgent fix by the Ministry of Housing under the Building Authority to upgrade hotels or consider innovative practices to make hotels accessible by PWDs. The results of the investigation showed that none of the hotels had met their quota. Most hotels appeared to consistently fail to meet the 5% quota by failing to set the target on PWD absorption that is achievable through disability mainstreaming, the current study suggests that the government and stakeholders work together to benchmark and develop standards and measures that will monitor and facilitate the compliance of quota obligations within hotels. Alternatively, they could create a policy that is likely to be used as criteria during upgrading or star rating exercises.

The study further recommends that the MLSP, and the Skills Placement Office under the NCPWD open a vibrant communication channel between employers and workers with disabilities such that the employers understand the needs of disabled workers and the PWDS informed about their rights in making requests for reasonable accommodation. The study findings revealed that employers were not aware of the ability of PWDS and positions that could suit them. One of the respondents in an interview responded that "few applications were received from PWDS requesting for accommodation" Gonzales, Matt. (2023). A study on the Employment of PWDS remarked that PWDS who received support from their placement organizations penetrated the labor market with

ease. This sentiment shows that a gap exists in feedback from PWDs working in the hotel industry that urgently calls for probably an appraisal exercise can be conducted by the NCPWD placement department to inform the current status of affairs about the work environment and so reveal the effect of disability mainstreaming programme and practices in the hotels.

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. It is also important to consider casting the net wider by using diverse strategies especially by a robust networking that will have a positive impact to inclusion. This is a severe and recurring challenge that has affected and will possibly continue to challenge disability mainstreaming. Similar findings were presented by Mueke, (2019); and Opoku et al., (2020) on disability mainstreaming and PWDs inclusivity in the labor market. The PWDS be exposed to Professional orientation and counseling on career planning; job coaches, personal assistants, and mediators, so they are linked to labor market opportunities. This training session will make them realize their abilities and thus serve as a guide as to which positions they are eligible to apply for consideration.

REFERENCES

- Akın, A., Akın, A., Çakan, S., & Karakan, H. I. (2022). Is a disability a hindrance of employment in tourism industry. *Journal of Tourism and Gastronomy Studies, Special Issue (4)*, 554-564. <https://doi.org/10.21325/jotags.2020.704>
- Anand, P., & Sevak, P. (2017). The Role of Workplace Accommodations in the Employment of People with Disabilities. *IZA Journal of Labor Policy*. vol 6, (12)
- Anderson, A. H., Stephenson, J., Carter, M., Carlon S. A. (2019). Systematic Literature Review of Empirical Research on Postsecondary Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder. *J Autism Dev Disord*. 49(4), 1531-1558
- Anderson, A.M., & Butt, (2021). Disability disadvantage: Experimental evidence of hiring discrimination against wheelchair users. *European Sociological Review*, 37(5), 818–833
- Bellucci, M., Biggeri, M., Nitti, C., & Terenzi, L. (2022). Accounting for disability and work inclusion in tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 98, 103526. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2022.103526>
- Bialik, K., & Mhiri, M. (2022). Barriers to employment for people with intellectual disabilities in low- and middle-income countries: Self-advocate and family perspectives. *Journal of International Development*, 34(5), 988-1001. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jid.3659>
- Bonaccio, S., Connelly, C.E., Gellatly, I.R., Jetha, A. & Ginis. K.A.M. (2020). The participation of people with disabilities in the workplace across the employment cycle: employer concerns and research evidence. *J Bus Psychol*, 35(2), 135-158
- Bruyère, S., Erickson, W., & VanLooy, S. (2020). HR's role in managing disability in the workplace. *Employment Relations Today*, Autumn, 47-66. Available at

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/37151884_HR's_Role_in_Managing_Disability_in_the_Workplace (Retrieved on 8th Sep. 2024)

- Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2021). Persons with a disability: Labor force characteristics — 2020. Available at <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/disabl.pdf> (Retrieved on 18th Aug. 2024)
- Calheiros, F. (2020). Inclusive tourism: A priority for Portugal. Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes inclusive employment – Are the current approaches deep enough? *Journal of International Development*, 34(5), 942–963. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jid.3692>
- Chan, F., Tansey, T. N., Iwanaga, K., Bezyak, J., Wehman, P., Phillips, B. N., & Anderson, C. (2020). Company Characteristics, Disability Inclusion Practices, and Employment of People with Disabilities in the Post COVID-19. *Job Economy: A Cross Sectional Survey Study. J Occup Rehabil*, 2;31(3):463–473.
- Dalagan, S., Sormaz, Ü., Akdağ, G. & Çınar, Z. (2020). Are prejudices obstacle to the employment of disabled individuals? Example of food and beverage services field. *Journal of Tourism and Gastronomy Studies*, (4), 554-564
- Elkhwesky, Z., Salem, I. E., & Barakat, M. (2022). Diversity management in hotels: The moderating role of empowerment and capability development. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Insights*, 2(2), 166-185.
- Garba, A. G., Dawha, M. J., & Sini, K. L. (2020). Technical Vocational Education and Training Institutions and Industry Collaboration: Analysis of Benefits, Strategies and Challenges. *ATBU Journal of Science, Technology and Education*, 7(4), 324-330.
- Genc, V. & Akoglan Kozak, M. (2020). Emotional and Social Competence in the Aestheticization of Labor in the Restaurant Industry. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 32 (3), 1201-1225
- GoK. (2008). Vision 2030, A Globally Competitive and Prosperous Kenya's Nairobi: Government Press. MoE. (2019). *Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2019, A Policy Framework for Reforming*. Nairobi: Government Press
- GoK. (2010). *The Constitution of Kenya*. Nairobi: Government Press
- Howard, J., Burns, D., & Ospina, S. (2021). *SAGE Handbook of Participatory Research and Inquiry*. SAGE. ISBN: 9781526440501
- Howleder, M. M. (2020). The Impact of Diversity Workforce on the Company Work Performance. A Case Study of Diversity Workforce in Silom, Bangkok, Thailand. Available at <https://e-research.siam.edu/wpcontent/uploads/2019/04/IMBA-2018-IS-the-impact-of-diversity-workforceon-the-company-work-performance-a-case-study-of-diversity-workforce-insilom-bangkok-thailand-compresses.pdf> (Retrieved on 23rd May 2024)
- ILO. (2020). *Labour Market Statistics on Persons with Disabilities*. Available at https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/disability-&-work/WCMS_569088/lang-en/index.htm (Retrieved on 3rd Jun. 2024)
- International Disability Alliance (IDA) and Christian Blind Mission (CBM). (2020). Disability data advocacy toolkit. Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disability for Sustainable

- Development. Available at 2020cbm-global.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/DisabilityData_advocacytoolkit_accessible.pdf (Retrieved on 3rd Jun. 2024)
- International Labour Organization (ILO). (2019). Decent work for persons with disabilities: Promoting rights in the global development agenda. Available at www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---ifp_skills/documents/publication/wcms_430935.pdf (Retrieved on 20th Oct. 2024)
- Jones, M. (2022). Covid-19 and the labour market outcomes of disabled people in the UK. *Social Science & Medicine*, 292, 114637.
- Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS), (2020). 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census: Volume I Population by County and Sub County. Nairobi: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics.
- KNCHR, (2014). From norm to practice a status report on implementation of the rights of persons with disabilities in Kenya. Nairobi: KNCHR. Available at <https://www.knchr.org/Portals/0/Reports/Disability%20Report.pdf> (Retrieved on 20th Oct. 2024)
- Koburtay, T., Syed, J., & Haloub, R. (2020). Implications of Religion, Culture, and Legislation for Gender Equality at Work: Qualitative Insights from Jordan. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 164, 421–436. doi : 10.1007/s10551-018-4036-6
- Kothari, C.R. (2004) *Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques*. 2nd Edition. New Age International Publishers: New Delhi.
- Lim, J.E. (2020). Understanding the Discrimination Experienced by Customers with Disabilities in the Tourism and Hospitality Industry: The Case of Seoul in South Korea. *Sustainability*, 12(18), 7328
- Maclean, N. (2021). *Factors which Facilitate a State-Owned Enterprise in the Western Cape, to Recruit Persons with Disabilities to meet Employment Equity Targets*. Unpublished Master's Thesis. Stellenbosch University, Cape Town
- Madera, J.M., Taylor, D.C., & Barber, N. A. (2019). Customer service evaluations of employees with disabilities: The roles of perceived competence and service failure. *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, 61(1), 5-18
- Malaguti, E. (2019): Agenda 2030, social and work inclusion even for people with intellectual disability: ecological social and human approach, *Open Journal perlaformazione in rete*, 321-332
- Mor, B. M. E., (2022). *Managing diversity: Toward a globally inclusive workplace*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Mose, V. (2021). Tightening Affirmative Action on Employment of Persons with Disabilities. Available at <http://kippra.or.ke> (Retrieved on 12th Oct. 2024)
- Mugadia, M. (2020). *Hope for Persons with Disabilities amid Looming Recession in Employment*. Available at <https://www.andy.or.ke/economic-empowerment/hope-for-persons-with-disabilities-amid-looming-recession-in-employment> (Retrieved on 12th Aug. 2024)

- Mugenda, A. & Mugenda, O. (2013). *Research methods: Quantitative and qualitative approaches*. Nairobi: ACTS Press.
- Saarinen, J. (Ed.). (2020). *Tourism and sustainable development goals: Research on sustainable tourism geographies*. Routledge.
- Schlumberger, M., Schuster, P., Eichinger, M., Mayer, P., Mayr, R., Immendörfer, M., Richter, J. (2020). Posterior cruciate ligament lesions are mainly present as combined lesions even in sports injuries. *Knee Surg Sports Traumatol Arthrosc*, 28(7), 2091-2098.
- Schuster, J., (2021). The role of international organisations and non-state actors in the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and inclusive education. Published Ph.D. thesis. Fachbereich Erziehungswissenschaft und Psychologie der Freien Universität Berlin. Available at https://refubium.fu-berlin.de/bitstream/handle/fub188/33629/Dissertation_Schuster.pdf;jsessionid=63AE8B017B9C6F5D2AED51CBE7470654?sequence=3 (Retrieved on 10th Aug. 2024)
- Shaw, J., Bharadwaj, S., Chandrasekharan, A., & Dheerjaj forthcoming (2022). Pathways to scaling social inclusion innovation through PAR. In S. Kindon, R. Pain, & M. Kesby (Eds.), *Critically Engaging Participatory Action Research*, (2024). Routledge. ISBN9780429400346
- Shaw, J., Wickenden, M., Thompson, S., & Mader P., (2022). Achieving disability inclusive employment – Are the current approaches deep enough?. *Journal of International Development*, 34(5), 942-963
- Thompson, Stephen (2020). Bangladesh Situational Analysis for Inclusion Works. the Institute of Development Studies and partner organisations. Available at <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12413/15483> (Retrieved on 10th Aug. 2024)
- Tourism Data Bank, (2021). Available at <https://www.turizmdatabank.com/> (Retrieved on 10th Aug. 2024)
- Tourism Regulatory Authority, (2018). Enhancing Hospitality & Tourism Standards In Kenya. Available at [tourismauthority.go.ke/index.php/resource centre/news](http://tourismauthority.go.ke/index.php/resource%20centre/news) (Retrieved on 12th Oct. 2024)
- Turner, P & Turner, S. (2009). Triangulation in practice. *Virtual Reality*. 13. 171-181. 10.1007/s10055-009-0117-2.
- Uji, A., Prakash, A., & Song, J. (2021). Does the “NIMBY syndrome” undermine public support for nuclear power in Japan? *Energy Policy*, 148, 111-944, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.enpol.2020.111944>.
- UNESCO, (2017). Better Education for Africa’s Rise II Project 2017-2021. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Available at <https://www.unesco.org/en/skills-work-life/bear-project/phases1-2> (Retrieved on 16th Jul. 2024).
- United Nations (UN), (2021). Disability inclusion strategy. Available at www.un.org/en/content/disabilitystrategy/ (Retrieved on 16th Jul. 2024).

- WHO. (2021). *Disability Inclusion*. World Health Organization. Available at <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/disability> (Retrieved on 12th Aug. 2024).
- Wickenden, M., Shaw, J., Thompson, S., & Rohwerder, B. (2021). Lives turned upside down in COVID times: exploring disabled people's experiences in 5 low-and-middle income countries using narrative interviews. In Special Issue: Disability and covid-19. *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 41(3), 1–28.
- World Employment Social Outlook (2022). *World Employment and Social Outlook*, (1), 5-10.
- World Health Organization (2021). *World report on hearing*. Available at <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240020481> (Retrieved on 2nd July 2024).
- Zakaria, N. A., Mat Noor, S., Mohamed Rani, Z., Mohd Akhir, I., Rozekhi, N. A., Abd Hakim, F., & Md Tahir, N. (2020). Assessing acceptance of service staff towards employee with disability in hotel industry. *Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 4, 132–144