

**Title: The challenges experienced by Students with Physical Disability (SWPD's) at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop Campus).**

**Mpho Rosa Maotoana**

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**Supervisor: Prof K. Nel**

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## **Abstract**

The research is a qualitative investigation into the challenges experienced by Students with Physical Disabilities (SWPD's) at the University of Limpopo (Turffloop Campus). The study uses Thematic Content Analysis as both a framework and a mode of data analysis in the study. Interviews using a semi-structured questionnaire were used to investigate the phenomena. Themes found in the data of the present study indicated that disabled students generally find that there is inadequate physical infrastructure which compromises their physical access within the institution. The participants also had to deal with discrimination from peers and staff. Furthermore, participants reported that being provided with proper amenities such as laptops and wheelchairs would help them find the environment less challenging. Educating able-bodied staff and students was also seen as necessary in order to combat discrimination. The poor infrastructure at the university provides many challenges and barriers to the disabled being able to move freely which, at times, leads them to staying in their rooms thus increasing their isolation.

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## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

### **1. Introduction**

The research is about the challenges experienced by Students with Physical Disability (SWPD's) at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop Campus). The researcher focused particularly on those students with physical disability to find the experiences which they have encountered and how that affected their academic performance, social and other aspect of their lives as well. There is no study conducted in this university previously pertaining physically challenged students and their experiences, the researcher therefore found it significant in order to determine the role of the university in helping physically challenged students have equal access to academic resources.

#### **1.1 The research problem**

Lack of appropriate and adequate provision for learners with disabilities at schools in South Africa profoundly affects access to higher education for people with disabilities. Students with disabilities are often discriminated against in their personal and social lives which are mirrored in their academic involvements. Many students with physical disabilities experience frustration with their post-secondary experiences stemming from negative attitudes from others, physical barriers on campus, a lack of appropriate services and programmes and funding to improve those services and programmes. Students who are physically challenged (mobility disabilities), have hearing or visual disabilities and non-visible disabilities such as learning problems and/or psychiatric disabilities because attitudes from non-disabled individuals usually reflect prejudiced opinions about what a person with a disability can and cannot do. Students without disabilities are also prone to making negative stereotypical judgments pertaining to a disabled student's academic ability (Healey, Pretorius & Bell, 2011). Government policy in South Africa reflects the fact that considerable effort has been invested in the preparation of numerous Codes, Guidelines and White Papers dealing with disability however, very little has been done to ensure that guidelines and policy relating to disabled people has been adhered to (Healey et al., 2011). At present the University of Limpopo (Turfloop campus) does not have a policy regarding students with disabilities (SWD's) but is in the process of drafting one (DSU, 2012). Few studies about the challenges experienced by physically disabled students have been carried out on

campuses in South Africa generally and none at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop campus) specifically. The proposed research is thus seen as an important addition to research in the field.

## **1.2 Motivation for the study**

This study is important in that it will give an insight to the experiences of student with physically disability in the Limpopo University (Turfloop Campus). The main importance of the study is that it aims to give an insight to the academic challenges that students with disability encounter. It will serve as direction on the service provision for students with disability. Like any other student, students with disability encounter challenges which are more likely difficult that those who are able-bodied. The study will also involve statistics combined by the South African Statistics for 2001 census. The census for 2013 was not used broadly as it did not contain detailed information about disability in the areas the study focused on.

## **1.3 Study Aim and objectives**

### **1.3.1 Study Aim**

The study has the following aim:

- to explore the challenges experienced by students with a physical disability at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop campus).

### **1.3.2 Study objectives**

The main objectives of the study are:

- to explore the experiences of students with physical disabilities in an academic environment;
- to investigate what kind of psycho-social support physically disabled students experience during the period they are registered for a degree at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop campus);

- to determine if physically disabled students experience discrimination from their peers, and/or lecturing staff at the University Limpopo (Turfloop campus);
- to determine if physically disabled students are exposed to an environment which is user friendly and allows them easy access to lecture halls, residences and/or any other part of the institution.

#### **1.4 Definition of key terms**

**Physical Disability or challenge:** according to Seirlis and Bergmann (2007) an individual qualifies as disabled or challenged based on personal or group standards or norms. Such impairments may include physical, sensory and/or cognitive or disabilities. A physical disability is any impairment which limits the physical function of one or more limbs and/or the fine gross motor ability of an individual. Other physical disabilities include impairments which limit other facets of daily living, such as respiratory disorders and/or epilepsy and/or sight and/or audio impairments (See Appendix A for types of physical disability).

**Challenges:** refers to any situation where a physically disabled/challenged individual has to overcome obstacles which require great mental or physical effort because appropriate infrastructure (psycho-social or physical) is not in place (Seirlis & Bergman, 2007).

**Students with Disabilities (SWD's):** According to Rhinehart - Neas (2011) different terms exist for physically handicapped or disabled persons or students. At present the term used by those with disabilities is either Persons with Disabilities (PWD's) or if a registered tertiary student, Students with Disabilities (SWD's). For the purpose of this study the term Students with Disabilities (SWD's) will be used to describe registered students with a physical disability.

#### **1.5 Summary**

The chapter introduced the study and noted its aims and objectives. The research problem and motivation for the study were also addressed and a definition of key terms given. Chapter two focuses on literature about disability relevant to the present study.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Introduction

For students with disabilities, inequalities in higher education begin which inequalities within the both primary and secondary schooling systems in South Africa. Historically, there was a dominant mainstream system for so-called *normal* learners and a secondary system of specialized education for learners with special needs. In the latter system however, the curricula was appropriate to prepare learners for the world of work and only a very limited number of schools offered tuition up to matriculation (Grade 12). Learners who went to these schools were not given the opportunity to go to university. It is also true that because of poor physical infrastructure and lack of support many learners with physical disabilities were totally excluded from the education system (Healey et al., 2011).

According to Healey et al. (2011), although contemporary schooling systems in South Africa have the potential to support greater participation by persons with disabilities in higher education, barriers still remain. Traditional attitudes and stereotyping of the abilities of learners with disabilities still lead to exclusion and reinforcement of the idea that these learners do not have a future in higher education. Barriers are intensified by inequalities inherent in the higher education system. For example, students with disabilities are still being excluded from higher education and being channeled into work such as telephony or supervised practical work. This stereotype is linked to the medical model of dealing with disability where emphasis is placed on the nature and extent of the student's impairment rather than on existing institutional barriers. It is difficult to prove outright discrimination against potential students with disabilities. However, subjective evidence suggests that learners are often advised to follow post-school education viewed as suitable for them which is practical rather than academic. It must also be noted that institutional exclusion is often based on the perceived difficulties surrounding specified accommodation needs that an institution claims it cannot provide.

It has been suggested that the continued use of the medical discourse of disability has also influenced the way in which institutions respond to students with disabilities, particularly in terms of addressing their medical needs. Whilst facilities play an important role in supporting students with disabilities the extent to which teaching and learning processes marginalize or exclude learners and students with disabilities has not been fully researched. The absence of inclusive teaching and learning methodologies (for instance, for blind persons) plus the physical and social barriers at universities remain challenges within the field of higher education. There is thus an urgent need for further research on all aspects of the challenges and experiences that face SWD's in higher education (Healey et al., 2011). It is further stated that support provision for SWD's is based on the assumption that all of a student's problems can be solved by a particular piece of equipment without attempts being made to understand the social context and other factors aggravating the barriers experienced by the student. The Government wants to ensure equal access to higher education for all South Africans and has promulgated legislation in this regard.

Globally, almost 180 million young people between the ages of 10-24 live with a physical, sensory, intellectual or mental health disability significant enough to make a difference in their daily lives. The vast majority of these young people, some 150 million (80%) live in the developing world. They are routinely excluded from most educational, economic, social and cultural opportunities and are amongst the poorest and most marginalised of the entire world's young people. Of all groups with disability, the groups about which we know the least are disabled adolescents and young adults. This category encompasses both individuals in the age range labelled by UNICEF (2011) as adolescents (those between the ages of 10 to 18) years and by the United Nations (2012) as youth (19-24 years). Sub-groups within this category have distinct issues and concerns which are often not addressed (Groce, 2004).

## **2.2 Demographics pertaining to physical disability**

According to Groce (2004) world-wide, estimates of the number of adolescents and young adults who live with a disability vary widely. Estimating the number of disabled young people is complex for two reasons. The first is that disabled young people are often grouped together with children or adults which make it hard to estimate their numbers as a distinct group. The second is that definitions of disability vary widely. In some nations, only individuals with significant disabilities are identified whilst in others, even those with mild disabilities are included. Issues of accuracy and reliability of statistics have been raised for individuals with intellectual disabilities and individuals with mental health concerns, as well as those with physical and sensory disabilities.

Suris and Blum (1993) reported that disability rates are higher in wealthier countries. This seems to be because screening programmes are more available, allowing identification of more adolescents with moderate and mild disabilities. While high infant and child mortality rates in poorer countries may contribute to this discrepancy, under-reporting of disability also cannot be ignored. Suris and Blum (1993) in analysing various databases for statistics on disabled persons for 42 countries reported a wide disparity in the rates of reported disabilities between countries. At the time of their study these rates ranged from 108 disabled persons per 100.000 in Myanmar to 6726 per 100.000 in Canada. The study noted that reported disability in 15 to 19 year olds ranged from 142.6 per 100.000 in Myanmar to 5099.5 per 100.000 in Austria. The research also noted that there is sometimes a lack of consensus on what constitutes a disability within countries. In 2002, the United Nations established a new international consortium the Washington City group to more accurately determine national and international statistics on disability at all ages. However, the prevalence of disability is still not reported accurately in many countries, particularly those that are labeled developing nations. In 2005 it was estimated there were around one billion disabled adolescents in the developing world. Recent estimates differ from organisation to organisation, thus a global estimate is difficult however, it is likely that this figure is presently around 1.5 billion (United Nations, 2012). Moreover, with half of the world's population below fifteen years of age, the number of young people with disability can be expected to rise markedly over the next decade, particularly in the developing world. This will not simply reflect a rising birth rate, better medical interventions both in developing and

developed countries, will allow a growing numbers of disabled infants and children, to survive into adolescence and adulthood. Young people are also at increased risk of disability due to work-related injuries and risk-taking behaviour(s). These include, but are not limited to, motor vehicle accidents (MVA's), experimentation with drugs and gang related violence (United Nations, 2012).

It is also true that the sensory, physical and mental health impairments associated with the HIV/AIDS virus will add millions of young people to the growing ranks of those who are disabled. Of equal concern is the increased risk for young people with disability of becoming infected by the HIV/AIDS virus. It is often incorrectly assumed that disabled young people are not or will not become sexually active, use intravenous drugs or be victims of abuse or rape. Owing to this misconception they are often not provided basic sex education and the resources to protect themselves (UNAIDS, 2011).

According to Suris and Blum (1993) experts generally agree that disability disproportionately affects the poor. Moreover, the few national data sets that do exist suggest that throughout the developing world disability affects more males than females, and is found more commonly in rural as opposed to urban areas. However, such data may also reflect survival rates, access to diagnostic services, census collection techniques and definitional differences of what constitutes a disability. These issues make conclusions about the distribution of disability within populations, especially for the very poor and for young women with disabilities open to question.

### **2.3 Surveys on disability in South Africa**

Before 2009 questions relating to disability were broken down into different types of disability in South Africa, particularly in the 2001 household survey. After this date the questions used to indicate disability were changed to relate to those used worldwide. These questions were developed by the Washington Group and were introduced into household surveys after 2001. These questions require each person in the household to rate their ability level for a range of activities such as seeing, hearing, walking a kilometre or climbing a flight of steps, remembering and concentrating, self-care, and communicating in his/her most commonly used language, including sign language. During the analysis, individuals who said that they had some difficulty

with two or more of the activities or had a lot of difficulty or were unable to perform any one of the activities were ranked as disabled. The analysis was confined to individuals aged 5 years or older as children below the age of five years are often mistakenly categorised as being unable to walk, remember, communicate or care for themselves when it is due to their level of development rather than any innate disabilities they might have (Department Women, Children and People with Disabilities, 2012).

Using this classification system, 5.2% of South Africans aged 5 years and older were classified as disabled. Women (5.4%) were slightly more likely to be disabled than men (5.0%). The Northern Cape (10.2%), North West Province (7.7%) and Free State (6.7%) presented the highest rates of disability in the country. No clear patterns emerge when the findings are compared to the results from 2001, 2009 and 2010. While nationally, the percentage of disabled individuals over the age of four years increased from 5.7% in 2009 to 6.3% in 2010, before declining again to 5.2% in 2011, different provincial patterns emerged in terms of disability generally (Statistics South Africa, 2011).

The questions used to ascertain disability in the 2001 (Statistics South Africa, 2003) census made it easier to make comparisons between different types of disability (for instance, deafness, blindness or inability to walk). The present study reports the older statistics, as well as those above, which indicate what types of disability exist rather than give a pattern of general disability, which is indicated in the later surveys. It must also be stated that the more contemporary methods of reporting disability make it very difficult to identify enduring patterns and inter-provincial differences in specific disabilities thus making an analysis of possible reasons [for the disability] impossible.

## **2.4 South African government legislation pertaining to disability**

Legislative documents issued by Government pertaining to disability include the following.

- The Constitution of South Africa, 1996 (and more particularly the Bill of Rights) which prohibits all forms of unfair discrimination entrenches the right of equality and provided for measures to address past imbalances.

- The Employment Equity Act, 1998 (EEA) which aims to address inequalities in the workplace.
- The promotion of Equality and prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, 2000.
- The Code of Good Practice and the Technical Assistance guidelines on the Employment of Persons with Disability (these two guidelines are not legislation but simply serve to aid and clarify the Employment Equity Act).
- The Integrated National Disability Strategy (INDS, 1997) which is intended as both a guide and to support increased employment of and services to, people with disabilities within government structures.

Healey et al. (2011), state that within the context of Higher Education the South African Higher Education policy framework has a strong equity agenda which includes the following.

- Education White Paper 3 (2010): transformation of the higher Education System recognizes both the need to prevent unfair discrimination and to implement strategies and practice which are designed to overcome inequalities generated in the past. This is important as it sets the framework for how the needs of Students with Disabilities must be responded to by the system as a whole and by the individual institution.
- The National plan for Higher Education (2001) identifies so-called non-traditional students (which include Students with Disabilities) as a target group for inclusion into the higher education system.
- Education White Paper 6 (2010): Special Needs Education covering inclusive education makes provision for regional collaboration between institutions in providing services to address special needs. A further paper is expected describing how recommendations can be operationalized.

## 2.5 Disability prevalence at the South African national level

According to Census 2001(Statistics South Africa, 2003) a total of 2 255 982 persons reported that they had some kind of disability that prevented them from full participation in life activities. This number constituted 5% of the total population (44 819 778) enumerated in the census. The most recent census (Statistics South Africa Census, 2011) statistics for disability prevalence in the country are not yet available.

### 2.5.1 Prevalence by population group in South Africa

The Black population reported the highest number of disabled people (1 854 376 or 5.2% out of a total of 35 416 166), followed by Whites (191 693 or 4.5%), Coloureds (168 678 or 4.2%) and Indian/Asians (41 235 or 3.7%). These percentage differences (See table 1) are probably due to a variety of socio-economic and demographic factors, as well as unique social cultural perceptions and stigmatisation with regard to the reporting of disability generally (Statistics South Africa Census, 2001).

Table 1: Percentage of different population groups with disability in South Africa

Types of disability % per population group in South Africa	African %	Coloured %	Indian/Asian %	White %
Sight	33.8	24.2	27.4	23.6
Hearing	19.7	18.2	16.2	26.1
Communication	6.0	8.4	7.6	8.7
Physical	28.0	37.9	36.1	37.0
Intellectual	11.5	15.3	13.9	17.6
Psychological (emotional)	15.7	18.2	15.4	14.1

## 2.5.2 Prevalence of disability by gender and province in South Africa

It is important to recognize that even within the disabled community there are sectors that experience discrimination and exclusion, more acutely than others. Women with disabilities bear the brunt of discrimination and exclusion more acutely than men and have a higher rate of disability than men, due primarily to women's higher average longevity (however, as the population is larger for females a lesser percentage overall is noted females versus males). The information collected in the 2001 census followed this trend, with 1 173 939 females affected compared to 1 082 043 males (See table 2). The table also indicates the number of disabled person per province. It shows that KwaZulu-Natal had the highest number (470 588) while Northern Cape had the lowest number (46 973). In terms of prevalence, Free State had the highest percentage (6.8%) of PWD's within its borders. The provinces with the lowest prevalence of disability were the Western Cape at 4.1 % and Gauteng at 3.8 % (Statistics South Africa Census, 2001).

Table 2: Number of disabled people by gender and province

Province	N			%		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
Western Cape	96 549	90 301	186 850	4.4	3.9	4.1
Eastern Cape	173 229	199 037	372 266	5.8	5.8	5.8
Northern Cape	23 620	23 353	46 973	5.9	5.5	5.7
Free State	87 758	97 619	185 377	6.8	6.9	6.8
Kwazulu-Natal	219 685	250 903	470 588	5.0	5.0	5.0
North West	105 169	106 054	211 223	5.8	5.7	5.8
Gauteng	164 588	167 023	331 611	3.7	3.8	3.8
Mpumalanga	87 319	94 874	182 193	5.8	5.8	5.8
Limpopo	124 128	144 774	268 902	5.2	5.0	5.1
<b>South Africa</b>	<b>1 082 043</b>	<b>1 173 939</b>	<b>2 255 982</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>5.0</b>

### 2.5.3 Prevalence of disability by age in South Africa

The age profile of the disabled population shown in Table 2.3 indicates that 2% of persons aged 0-9 years were reported as disabled. This percentage increases steadily amongst those aged less than 40 years and increased rapidly thereafter. There were no significant differences between females and males. However, there are variations and similarities in the prevalence of disability among different age groups (Statistics South Africa Census, 2001).

Table 3: Number of Persons with Disabilities by gender and age group

Age group (years)	N			%		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	%
0-9	101 838	88 822	190 660	2.2	1.9	2.1
10-19	156 980	148 755	305 735	3.2	2.9	3.0
20-29	149 422	134 806	284 228	3.7	3.2	3.5
30-39	165 153	145 787	310 940	5.4	4.3	4.9
40-49	165 871	168 727	334 589	7.5	6.7	7.1
50-59	142 602	155 928	298 530	10.8	10.3	10.5
60-69	102 815	138 168	240 983	13.7	12.5	13.0
70-79	62 396	111 578	173 974	16.9	17.7	17.4
80+	34 966	81 368	116 334	25.6	27.9	27.2
<b>South Africa</b>	<b>1 082 043</b>	<b>1 173 939</b>	<b>2 255 982</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>5.0</b>

### 2.5.4 Prevalence of disability linked to educational levels in South Africa

According to Census 2001(Statistics South Africa, 2003) the percentage of disabled persons is highest among those who did not complete primary school (10.5%) and lowest amongst those with higher levels of education as shown in table 4. This is probably because facilities and support services at schools are poor for PWD's and psycho-social problems (for instance, stigmatisation and bullying because of lack of understanding).

Table 4: Percentage of People with Disabilities in each educational level in South Africa

<b>Level of education</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Basic (not finished primary school)	10.7	10.4	10.5
Primary	5.3	5.2	5.2
Secondary	4.1	3.8	3.9
Higher	3.1	2.9	3.0
Other	1.7	1.5	1.6

### **2.5.5 Major disability types in South Africa**

In South Africa the major disability types fall into the groups designated under table 5 which provides the percentage of disabled persons who are affected by the various types of disabilities (Statistics South Africa Census, 2001). The prevalence of sight disability is the highest (32%) followed by physical disability (30%), hearing (20%), emotional or psychological disability (16%), intellectual disability (12%) and lastly communication disability (7%).

Table 5: Major disability types in South Africa (% of total South African population)

<b>Types of disability</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Sight	28.3	35.6	32.1
Hearing	19.4	20.7	20.1
Communication	7.2	5.8	6.5
Physical	30.7	28.6	29.6
Intellectual	13.5	11.3	12.4
Emotional	17.3	14.3	15.7

### 2.5.6 Disability percentages per South African population group

The data on disability by population groups is very likely incomplete as there is stigma attached to disability in general and some disabilities more so than others, for instance psychiatric disabilities (Chih-Hsuan & Bih-Ching, 2012). Table 6 indicates the percentage of disabled persons who suffer from the major disabilities by the various South African population groups.

Table 6: Percentage of disabled persons affected by specific disabilities by population group

<b>Types of disability</b>	<b>African %</b>	<b>Coloured %</b>	<b>Indian/Asian %</b>	<b>White %</b>
Sight	33.8	24.2	27.4	23.6
Hearing	19.7	18.2	16.2	26.1
Communication	6.0	8.4	7.6	8,7
Physical	28,0	37,9	36,1	37.0
Intellectual	11.5	15.3	13.9	17.6
Emotional	15.7	18.2	15.4	14.1

The results presented show that 5% of the population counted in Census 2001 were disabled. Africans had the highest prevalence (5.2%) while Indians/Asians had the lowest (3.7%). Free State had the highest prevalence (6.8%) and Gauteng the lowest (3.8%). The prevalence by age indicates that disabilities increase with age. Most of the disabilities reported in South Africa are those concerning sight and physical (Statistics South Africa Census, 2001).

### 2.6 Institutional attitudes towards Students with Disabilities (SWD's)

According to Seale, Draffan and Wald (2008) many students with disabilities experience frustration with their tertiary education experiences. This frustration arises from negative peer attitudes, physical barriers on campus and lack of appropriate services and support. The successful integration of tertiary students with disabilities requires positive institutional attitudes which begins at top-management level and filters through to faculties, schools and departments. It is however, inevitable that institutions are inherently predisposed to stereotypical attitudes held by the community in which they are placed and those held by the major groups within their

student body. This difficulty can be overcome by using interventions that discuss disability and difference during the orientation of all new students to the institution.

## **2.7 Peer attitudes towards Students with Disabilities (SWD's)**

According to Gorter (2009) various studies in integrated school contexts indicate that the disabled child is usually socially isolated and is at risk of developing psychological or emotional problems because of peer rejection or neglect. In university settings this is unlikely to change unless staff and students are educated to understand difference. According to Milsom (2006) staff should be given pre-service education, in-service education and/or other professional development activities regarding creating a positive university experience for SWD's. Tertiary education students who have had contact with individuals who have a physical disability before attending university are more comfortable during interaction and more at ease with their disabled peers than those who have not had contact with persons with disabilities. Further, tertiary students without disabilities are more uncomfortable interacting with peers with disabilities than with peers without disabilities, and students with disabilities are more comfortable interacting with peers with similar disabilities (Fichten, Bourden, Amstel & Fox, 1989).

## **2.8 Physical barriers for Students with Disabilities (SWD's) on tertiary education campuses**

One of the many negative consequences of having a chronic physical health problem is decreased physical mobility and difficulties in executing everyday activities. It is especially problematic for non-able-bodied students to navigate a post-secondary campus that is inaccessible. After 1994 tertiary education campuses tried to make their buildings user-friendly or accessible for disabled persons (Healey et al., 2011). However, although institutions have worked at improving access for the disabled many constraints exist for instance, budgetary and or architectural problems. Studies suggest that SWD's often encounter physical barriers in the tertiary education environment which remain an unaddressed concern by these institutions. Students report their concerns about physical barriers within the university environment which are not readily identified by non-disabled student however, little gets changed. This may add an

additional stress level for SWD's not experienced by non-disabled students. Singh (2003) reports that SWD's are treated differently by lecturers or teachers and thus receive a different level of education which may be positive or negative but is perceived by the SWD as different thus as not acceptable. SWD's expect the same level of interaction and teaching as able-bodied students. Finally, he reports that only seven percent (7%) of institutions in the United States of America (USA) provide full accessibility to students with physical disabilities. It was also concluded that only a small minority of sample institutions offer structural, academic, and dormitory accessibility as well as recreational opportunities for students with physical disabilities. Information regarding physical access for SWD's at tertiary institutions in South Africa is not available but it is unlikely that all tertiary facilities are completely user-friendly for SWD's.

According to Venter, Rickert and Maunder (2012) problems accessing universities in South Africa for disabled students are many for instance, public transport systems are not yet developed to include facilities for wheelchairs. The authors state that most developing countries are in the process of devising specialised environmental access not general access for the disabled, thus getting to and from institutions is difficult.

## **2.9 Student Services for Students with Disabilities (SWD's)**

Student services in tertiary institutions are growing in numbers to meet the demands of the growing numbers of SWD's attending these institutions. According to Milsom (2006) support services on USA college campuses has increased by ninety percent (90%) since the 1970's. Despite this increase, however, administrators need to be aware that although students may report a disability, those students may not necessarily request special services or identify themselves as having a disability as they often express a conflict between their desire to be independent and their desire to use services and accommodations available to them. Campus disability support services in the USA reports that between one (1%) and three (3%) percent of all students on college campuses request these services.

In South Africa a report on disability in higher institutions (Healey et al., 2011) reported that the SWD's experience inequalities and discrimination at all educational levels in South Africa. Historically, there was a dominant mainstream system for *normal* learners and a secondary system of specialized education for learners with so-called special needs. In the special needs category the curricula was appropriate to prepare learners for the world of work and only a very limited number of these schools offered tuition up to matriculation excluding many learners from higher education opportunities.

Building the social skills of SWD's is of equal priority to the necessary academic skills, which prepare these students with the skills to meet challenges beyond the academic environment. However, an institution's support service often does not contribute to social integration. For example, SWD's who discontinue their education often report that reasons for discontinuation include a lack of social support within the university environment. It may be assumed that while disabled students feel academically supported by student support services in postsecondary institutions, their overall psychological and social needs are not being adequately addressed. This may contribute to a lack of adjustment to the higher education environment overall (Healey et al., 2011).

## **2.10 International research on Students with Disabilities (SWD's)**

Groce (2004) states that whilst international research may be lacking, extrapolation from available data on youth in general and disability in broadly, can provide a starting point. This is because the needs of disabled young people are similar to those of their non-disabled peers. These are the need for education, job training, employment, and inclusion through participation in social, cultural, religious and economic affairs. In the UK (HEFCE, 1999) research in schools and tertiary education campuses noted that disabled students experienced barriers to accessing classes and that the physical environment possessed many challenges that these students had to overcome on a daily basis. This meant that provisions for disabled learners did not fully meet the criteria established as base-level education needs relating to the physical environment as specified by the Higher Education Funding Councils for England. Similar research, in Wales,

also found that physical barriers were a significant factor in determining the choice of institution a physical disabled learner chose to study at. The research also found that many institutions did not meet the minimum requirements (as laid down in law) for providing a safe, accessible and nurturing environment for disabled learners. It was also noted that in institutions which met and exceeded minimum requirements for infrastructure for disabled students the attitudes of staff and peers was intolerant which often led to these students not completing their courses.

Ogunlana (2012) notes that disabled persons from developing countries in Africa are not represented as they should be in a tertiary education environment. This is often related to the economic system in those countries which does not provide the physical infrastructure for these students. At present, most developing countries, who are trying to make a place for themselves within the global economy, do not see disabled minorities as urgently needing help.

### **2.11 Disability, stigma, gender and minority status of Students with Disabilities (SWD's)**

According to Groce (2004) globally, it is widely acknowledged that the greatest impediment to the lives of young people with disabilities is prejudice, social isolation and discrimination. While all individuals with disability may be affected by this lifelong cycle of stigma and prejudice, females are at increased risk. In societies where girls are valued less than boys, the investment in education, health care or job training that families are willing to make in disabled girls are often substantially less than for disabled boys. Some discrimination may be subtle, for example, a poor family may wait a few days more to invest in an antibiotic for an ill daughter with a disability than they would for a son with a disability, hoping that the condition will clear on its own.

A study by the International Labour Organisation (ILO, 2011) in six Asian Pacific nations found that the incidence of disability was in fact higher for women than for men, making higher survival rates for men with disabilities. Young people with disability who are members of ethnic and minority populations are also at increased risk. Coming from different cultural, linguistic and religious traditions, these young people are less likely to be included in whatever services and programmes that exist. An ethnic or minority status can also compound the discrimination already encountered by disabled young women, who find they contending with forces that would exclude them on the basis of their gender, their disability and their heritage.

If comprehensive guides, for instance that used by Western Michigan University (nd) in the United States of America (USA) are used, which give a detailed explanation of the facilities available for disabled students, are posted on the inter and intranet stigmatisation and discrimination are likely to be lessened and SWD's can find out information they need in a user-friendly manner.

## **2.12 The cycle of disability, poverty and isolation amongst young people**

Young people with disabilities have needs very similar to the needs of all other young people, as clearly stated in Article 23 of the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNICEF, 2011). They need a safe and supportive environment, education, health services and access to sport and recreation. They also need to develop skills that will serve them well in the community and the work place. In many cultures however, the traditional approach is to acknowledge that they are no longer children, but assume that they will never be accepted or able to function as adults, either in the workplace or as sexual beings.

UNICEF (2011) reports that disabled children, particularly those with more visible disabilities, are frequently assumed to be in frail health and, as such, unlikely to survive into adulthood. In many countries, a significantly disabled child is referred to as, an innocent or a little angel. Sending such children to school, including them in social interactions or preparing them for participation in the adult world is seen as unnecessary. Families with significantly disabled children often anticipate their disabled child will die young and not survive into old age.

Bjarsason (2002) discussing the transition to adulthood of young people with disabilities in Iceland describes this as eternal youth. This is described as a limbo in which these young people are not expected to reach adulthood. However, if they do reach adulthood, and there are care-homes available, they are placed in care and not visited regularly (if at all) by their families. If care homes are not available disabled adults continue to live as children in their parents households, or find themselves living as vagrants.

According to UNICEF (2011) in many countries, particularly where extended family units are still the norm, it is considered appropriate for all young people to remain at home, including those with a disability. Personal assistance, if needed, is provided by immediate family members, (most commonly the mother), which means that these young people often have little or no say over even the most basic aspects of their lives. This limits a disabled young person's ability to establish a sense of autonomy or gain experience in making independent decisions. Elsewhere, rapid moves towards modernisation have led to the expectation that young non-disabled adults will eventually live independently of their parents. Young disabled adults however, are often expected to continue living at home - making their lived experiences as young adults increasingly different from that of their non-disabled peers. In many cases, poverty and lack of viable options will force many young adults, particularly young males, to leave home for a life without family supports or a life on the streets.

### **2.13 Education pertaining to People with Disabilities (PWD's)**

Groce's (2004) research is a key concern for most disabled young people in the developing world. In many countries, children with disabilities are considered to be incapable of learning, no matter what their disability is. Often a disabled child is considered a distraction to other students and simply sent home. Lack of schooling may reflect the belief that such children cannot learn, that such children should not be put through the stress of learning or that such children are an embarrassment (evidence of bad blood, incest or divine disfavour) and should not be seen in public. School buildings are routinely built with stairs, or far from community centres, making them inaccessible to those with mobility impairments. Lack of trained teachers, appropriate teaching materials and an unwillingness to include disabled children in classrooms accommodating predominately able-bodied children, limits access to education for millions of blind and physically disabled children. This lack of access is even more problematic for intellectually disabled children and those with mental health difficulties. However, one of the primary reasons disabled children are so rarely in school is that their family and the community they live in may not perceive that they need an education. This general lack of access to education is cumulative and by the time children with a disability reach early adolescence, the

vast majority find themselves far behind the educational and skill levels of their non-disabled peers.

According to Russo (2003) gender further compounds inequities in education. The research notes that cultural bias against women in general and reduced expectations for disabled females in particular, further limits what funds families and schools are willing to spend on academic and vocational training. Compounding this, where school fees and barriers make universal education unavailable, anecdotal reports indicate that some parents choose to put all the family resources into educating non-disabled siblings, with the expectation that these children will be better able to support their disabled sibling in adulthood. The option of educating the child with a disability to ensure he or she will be self-supporting is often not considered as an alternative. It was further noted in the research that only a few studies have found some inclusion of disabled adolescents and youth in general classrooms without special consideration being given to their disabled status. According to Miles (1983), in a study in rural Pakistan, found 22% of all disabled children had received some schooling within the general classroom setting and reports similar observations from Sri Lanka. This casual integration is hard to track, but it was noted to represent an important area for further study, not only for its implications for education, but also because it might provide functioning models of inclusion that may be of relevance to subsequent job training and economic development schemes.

Additionally, there has been growing interest in inclusive schooling practices with UNICEF, (2011) promoting greater integration for disabled children and adolescents into the general classroom. However, most of these efforts have been directed towards younger children, not disabled adolescents. In fact, by the time they reach adolescence, the vast majority of young people with disabilities world-wide are no longer in school. The social isolation, poverty and discrimination faced by children with disabilities also sets up an interconnected pattern of problems. Many children with disabilities do not attend school or leave school early. Millions of these young people end up on the street, unemployed and often involved in crime, sex work and drugs, frequently at the request of others who see them as easily persuaded (essentially, with

very few other options). It is estimated that at least one-third of all street children, adolescents and adults have a disability.

According to (Shevlin & Kenny, 2002) in developed nations there exists extensive educational systems for most children with disabilities through to late adolescence. Some nations integrate these adolescents into general classrooms. Others provide specialised classes and training in social and job skills to help disabled children in the transition to adulthood. These programmes have varying degrees of success. An extensive body of research has documented this process of transition in some detail, although there is still relatively little information on the effects of this process on the social integration of the individual, and its implications for the family unit. Comparable data from the developing world are hard to come by.

Students with a disability are often formally restricted in what course of study they are allowed to pursue. In a recent study from Ireland it was reported that disabled high school students are not allowed to enroll in the full range of academic courses. The same research noted that in China, disabled university students are not allowed to major in most sciences, as it is felt that the degree would be wasted on an individual who would never be able to find a position in his or her field of study. This systematic lack of education has immediate relevance to disabled young people. At an age when non-disabled individuals are beginning to define themselves through their anticipated careers, most disabled young people enter the workforce strikingly unprepared (Shevlin & Kenny, 2002).

#### **2.14 People with Disabilities (PWD's) in Africa**

In Africa, an estimated 60 to 80 million people are living with disabilities. Their numbers are rising due to conflict, malnutrition, natural disasters and HIV/AIDS. Conflict is one of the major causes of disability in the region, as it causes significant number of non-fatal injuries among civilians and soldiers, and has long lasting psychological impacts. During conflicts, civilians and soldiers are at risk from hostilities, as well as from unexploded landmines and violent incursions. Angola and Mozambique are two heavily mine-affected African countries, which have mines numbering 15 million and 3 million respectively (HST, 1999: ICRC, 2011).

## **2.15 People with Disabilities (PWD's) in South Africa**

The higher education system in South Africa is one that has been moulded by various historic, socio- political factors. Taking the degree of racial inequality that existed in the past, it is not surprising that there has been a large focus over the last few years on increasing the participation of Black students in the higher education system. Some attention has also been directed at the position of women. Parallel to equity issues, government embarked on a process of restructuring the institutional landscape by merging and consolidating different universities and technikons into the 23 tertiary institutions that currently exist in South Africa. Within all of these developments and changes that have taken place over the last couple of years, limited attention has been placed on addressing issues of access, retention and participation of students with disabilities. This is notwithstanding the fact that they have been identified in various governmental policy documents as being historically disadvantaged and deserving of special attention (HST, 1999; Statistics South Africa Census, 2003).

It is within this context that some tertiary institutions in South Africa have established so-called Disability Units (DU) to offer specialized services to their students with disabilities in order to facilitate access and integration of these students. Not all 23 institutions currently have such Units. Their functionality and services offered differ considerably from institution to institution. The question that arises is whether these units play a role in ensuring access and participation of students with disabilities and how they are viewed by different role players within the institution as well as students (HST, 1999; Pillay, 2011).

For students with disabilities, inequalities in higher education begin with inequalities within the whole schooling system of South Africa. Historically there was a dominant mainstream system for *normal* learners and a secondary system of specialised education for learners with so-called special needs. In the latter system very often, however, the curricula was inappropriate to prepare learners for the world of work and only a very limited number offered tuition up to matriculation (now Grade 12) level effectively excluding many learners from higher education opportunities. Many learners were also totally excluded from the education system. It has been estimated that as many as 70% learners with disabilities of school going age were outside of the general education and training system at that time<sup>1</sup>. The lack of appropriate schooling has profoundly affected access to higher education for persons with disabilities. Census data suggests that the

number of children with disabilities entering the schooling system has since improved (HST, 1999; Magongwa, 2009).

Although the schooling system in South Africa has the potential to support greater participation by PWD's in higher education, barriers still remain. Traditional attitudes and stereotyping of the abilities of learners still lead to exclusion and reinforcement of the notion that learners with disabilities do not have a future in higher education. Barriers are worsened by inequalities inherent in the higher education system. This includes the ways in which modules are structured and the general role that that higher education plays within society as a whole. For example, SWD's are still excluded or channeled into programmes or degrees based on the perceptions of their capabilities. If programmes have mandatory fieldwork or practical development in off-campus facilities or entail the use of specific types of equipment SWD's are often not allowed to register. This perceived ineligibility is linked to the continued use of the medical model in dealing with disability, which puts the emphasis on the nature and extent of the student's impairment rather than on institutional barriers (Shevlin & Kenny, 2002).

Although in most cases it is extremely difficult to prove discrimination against students or potential students with disabilities, anecdotal evidence suggests that these students are often persuaded to follow a certain course viewed as suitable for them. Disabled students are often excluded from residence at institutions because it is assumed that the institution cannot meet their needs. It is also likely that institutions fear that something may happen to the disabled student on campus and they will face a lawsuit (UNICEF, 2011).

The way in which learning support and services is provided currently at South African Higher Education Institutions (HEI's) to students with disabilities has been widely criticized. Available evidence suggests that the initiatives and structures in place at the various institutions vary considerably in what work they do and the services they offer. In some institutions constraints relating to funding exist however, this is often an excuse as some of the best facilities for SWD's in tertiary institutions is found at rural institutions who have historically less funding than their so-called mainstream counterparts. The structural separation of learning support for disabled students from other learning support is criticised and an integrated approach is seemingly preferred (UNICEF, 2011).

However, Jjuuko (2013) comments that the realisation of education for all disabled individuals in South Africa is being led by tertiary institutions like the University of Venda (a previously disadvantaged institution) which has implemented inclusive education for both able and disabled students far more proportionately than many more affluent institutions in the country,

## **2.16 Summary**

The chapter discussed disability globally, in African and South Africa. Statistics for disability pertinent to the study were also presented. The effect of gender pertaining to disability was also discussed. Factors pertaining to disability in higher education generally were also presented. The following chapter presents the theoretical framework used by the study.

## **CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This section explains how this study uses thematic analysis as a framework for the study and as a mode of analysing the qualitative data. According to Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2009), the key to ensure a satisfactory interpretive analysis is to stay close to the data, and to interpret it from a position of empathic understanding. This entails a range of careful steps to provide a thorough description of characteristics, processes, transactions, and contexts that constitute the phenomenon being studied. It should also include an explanation of the researchers' role in constructing the description. To use it as a framework for a study it is important that the theoretical position of a thematic analysis is made clear, as this is all too often left unspoken (and is then typically a realist account). Any theoretical framework carries with it a number of assumptions about the nature of the data, what they represent in terms of the world, and lived reality. A good thematic analysis will make this transparent and provide a framework for the study.

### **3.2 Thematic Content Analysis as a framework for the present study**

Braun and Clark (2006) postulate that thematic analysis offers the researcher flexibility which allows it to form a broad theoretical framework for many qualitative studies. In many studies where it is used it is implicitly framed as an experiential method which because of its theoretical freedom provides a flexible tool which can provide an in-depth, detailed and complex interpretation of the data.

According to Braun and Clark (2006), thematic analysis is a poorly demarcated, rarely-acknowledged, yet widely-used qualitative analytic method within psychology. It offers an accessible and theoretically-flexible approach to analysing qualitative data and is also an analytic method that search for themes or patterns, and in relation to different epistemological and ontological positions. It is a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes)

within data. It minimally organises and describes your data set in (rich) detail. However, it also often goes further than this, and interprets various aspects of the research topic (Boyatzis, 1998). Thematic analysis differs from other analytic methods that seek to describe patterns across qualitative data – such as ‘thematic’ discourse analysis, thematic decomposition analysis and grounded theory. These different methods share a search for certain themes or patterns across an (entire) data set, rather than within a data item, such as an individual interview or interviews from one person, as in the case of biographical or case-study forms of narrative analysis.

Thematic analysis can be an essentialist or realist method, which reports experiences, meanings and the reality of participants, or it can be a constructionist method, which examines the ways in which events, realities, meanings, experiences and so on are the effects of a range of discourses operating within society. It can also be a contextualist method, sitting between the two poles of essentialism and constructionism, and characterised by theories such as critical realism, which acknowledge the ways individuals make meaning of their experience, and, in turn, the ways the broader social context impinges on those meanings, while retaining focus on the material and other limits of ‘reality’. Therefore, thematic analysis can be a method which works both to reflect reality, and to unpick or unravel the surface of ‘reality’.

Themes that are gleaned during thematic analysis reflect what is important in the data linked to the research question or questions. The researcher finds what can be called levels of patterned responses which give specific meaning within a data set (Braun & Clark, 2006). As the data which is analysed is qualitative gleaning or pulling out themes from data is not represented on a proportional basis. However, any specific set of data should display evidence of a theme if it is to be considered as a theme. According to Braun & Clark (2006, p. 10) the following is important.

It is not the case that if it was present in 50% of one’s data items [for instance, 50% of one’s data items could be Yes or No] it would be a theme. However, if it was present in only in 47%, then it would not be a theme. Nor is it the case that a theme is only something that many data items give considerable attention to, rather than a sentence or two. A theme might be given considerable space in some data items, and little or none in

others, or it might appear in relatively little of the data set. So researcher judgement is necessary to determine what a theme is.

In conclusion, although thematic analysis is often thought of as a more simplistic form of qualitative analysis than for instance, grounded theory Braun and Clark (2006, p. 27) argue that:

a rigorous thematic approach can produce an insightful analysis that answers particular research questions. What is important is choosing a method that is appropriate to your research question, rather than falling victim to ‘methodolatry’, where you are committed to method rather than topic/content or research questions. Indeed, your method of analysis should be driven by both your research question and your broader theoretical assumptions.

In this study a fundamentally essentialist or realist approach is used in terms of thematic analysis as the investigation concentrates on reporting the experiences, meanings and the reality of the participants

### **3.3 Summary**

The chapter focused on Thematic Analysis as a theoretical framework used in the study. Thematic analysis is a qualitative method which allows for content analysis of data and which can be used as a framework with which to underpin a qualitative study. The following chapter focuses on the research methodology used in the study.

## **CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Chapter four deals with the approach and research design used by the study and elaborates on the method used to collect, analyse and interpret the data.

### **4.2 Research design**

Research design according to Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2009) is the plan of how, when and where the research will be conducted. The research will utilize a qualitative approach to the phenomenon under investigation. Qualitative research in its widest sense refers to investigations that elicit participants' accounts of their meaning, experiences and perceptions of any given situation. A qualitative approach using Thematic Content Analysis (TCA) to analyse and evaluate data is therefore considered an appropriate approach for the phenomena under review. The researcher aims to get an in-depth understanding and detailed information about the challenges faced by students with disabilities (SWD's) at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop Campus) using this approach.

- Area of the study

The study will be conducted at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop campus) situated In the Limpopo Province, in the Mankweng area.

- Description of the population

The population consists of all physically disabled students registered for studies at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop campus). The age and level of study of the students is not taken into account as they will all have different experiences of being physically disabled (See Appendix B for a list of all disabled students registered at UL, 2012).

### **4.3 Research questions**

The study has the following research questions.

- How significant is perceived peer group stigmatization/discrimination in terms of the challenges experienced by Students with Disabilities to their social integration at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop campus).
- How significant is perceived lecturing staff stigmatization/discrimination in terms of challenges experience by Students with Disabilities academic progress at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop Campus).
- How significant are physical barriers at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop campus) in terms of challenges experienced by Students with Disabilities relating to their ability to get to lectures/social gatherings.

### **4.4 Sampling method**

Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2009) report that sampling means taking any portion of a population or universe as representative of that population or universe. In this study, the researcher will use a purposive sampling technique, which is a form of non-probability sampling method. In non-probability sampling, the probability of each element in the population being selected in the sample is unknown. The selection chances may be influenced by factors such as availability, convenience and study objectives. Purposive sampling is a procedure that enables the researcher to use his or her own judgment to select into the study participants who possess the knowledge the research intends to unearth (Bailey, 1994). The sample is then chosen on the basis of a possession of required and ideal characteristics. The study will consist of participants who are currently registered with the University of Limpopo (Turfloop campus) and who have a physical disability. The researcher will approach only the candidates who best meet the requirements of the study. In this case the sample will consist of SWPDs who are willing to participate in the study and who are currently registered students at the institution.

## **4.5 Sampling procedures**

The study will consist of participants who are physically disabled and who are registered students at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop campus) for the year 2012. The students will be interviewed at their residence (Shaka and Kganya residences are those designated for SWD's) in their rooms. If this does not meet with their approval a quiet, safe and comfortable room will be found on campus where interviews can take place. In qualitative research there is no need for large samples as information rich data is acquired from participants. Data is often derived from one or two participants in qualitative research because the researcher has to get deep insight into the phenomena under investigation (Patton, 2002). This research study will consist of a minimum of six to eight participants. The sample will however, grow in size until saturation of new themes and topics is reached. It is not anticipated that the number will exceed ten participants.

### **4.5.1 Inclusion criteria**

The following inclusion criteria will be used:

- All physically disabled students registered as students (See Appendix B) at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop campus).

### **4.5.2 Exclusion criteria**

- The study focused on students who are physically disabled and residing on campus, excluding other forms of disability such as blindness, Dwarfism and albinism. Furthermore, SWD's who are not residing on campus will not be included in the study because of lack of financial resources on the part of the researcher.

## **4.6 Data collection**

In this study, the researcher will use a semi-structured interview technique. Semi-structured interviews allow researchers to probe for information in relation to the topic (Terre Blanche,

Durrheim & Painter, 2009). An audio tape recorder will be used to record the participants' experience if permission to use one is given. Handwritten notes will supplement the audio recording detailing the researcher's observations of the participant. The audio recordings and or the handwritten notes will be transcribed within two days of the interview. Handwritten notes will, immediately after the interview, be entered into a Word document. The interview process is defined by rapport built up by the social interaction between the researcher and participant (Richard & Morse, 2007). Appropriate demographic questions will be asked first followed by appropriate open-ended questions. These will form the basis of the semi-structured interview protocol (See Appendix C). The researcher will conduct the interviews in a quiet and relaxed setting in which the participant can feel safe. Each participant will be given an appointment time which is suitable to them. There will be no money offered as a form of incentive to participate in this research study. However cool drinks or water will be available as the interview may take sixty minutes to an hour and a half.

The data will be collected as follows. Demographic questions will be asked to obtain relevant background information followed by questions that are expected to glean in-depth information of the participant's challenges and experience of being disabled on the University of Limpopo campus. After the interview participants will be de-briefed, which will give them the opportunity to share their recent experiences with someone who is willing to listen and empathise without judgement or criticism (Williams, 2000). The researcher will ask questions in the students' preferred language and later transcribe in to English, as the researcher can speak Tshivenda, Xhonga, Sepedi and English and some of the students do speak these languages. If the researcher feels that the student requires further counselling the matter will be discussed with the student and, if the student agrees, a referral will be made to student counselling services. This will be discussed with the researcher's supervisor, a qualified psychologist (the student will be made aware of this). Each interview will last from sixty minutes to an hour and a half. After the interviews have been transcribed a further appointment will be made with the participant so that she or he can verify that the true meaning of what they said was captured.

## 4.7 Data analysis

According to De Vos (2005) data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to a mass of collected data. Data analysis is also a way of categorizing, ordering, manipulating and summarizing data to obtain answers to research questions. The study will use Thematic Content Analysis (TCA) to analyze and categorise the data. Data will be analyzed in the language in which the interview will be conducted, reading carefully through all the transcripts to properly understand the meaning of the data. It will be transcribed first into the language the interview was conducted in and then into English. Analysis of data using TCA uses the following steps which enhance Thematic Content Analysis (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2009).

- **Familiarisation and engagement** - familiarisation, according to Treleaven and Voola (2008), refers to the experience of becoming familiar with the responses and implications from the respondents' point of view. Engagement, on the other hand, refers to being involved in an action that keeps the researcher close to the context of the study. The interaction that takes place between the researcher and the research participants during the research process enables the researcher to get close to the understanding from the respondents' viewpoint. The length of time of engagement, and the level at which engagement takes place determine the extent to which familiarisation with the responses or data occurs.
- **Inducing themes** - at the heart of qualitative data analysis is the undertaking of discovering themes. Themes are equal to the concepts which researchers identify during and after the collection of data. The theme of identification is essential in qualitative research. Themes come from reviewing the data. The richer the data the more themes are produced. They also come from the features of the phenomena being studied, and they come from already-agreed-upon professional definitions, from local common-sense constructs, and from researchers' values, theoretical orientation, and personal experience with the subject matter. There are different ways to glean themes from the data these include word repetitions, key-words-in-context, compare and contrast, and searching for missing information, metaphors and analogies, transitions, connectors, unmarked texts, pawing (underlining key phrases), as well

as cutting and sorting (Patton, 2002). In this study word repetitions and key words are used as the principal methods of inducing themes from the data.

- **Coding** - coding is a process for both categorizing qualitative data and for describing the implications and details of these categories. Firstly, the researcher does open coding which involves looking at the data detail and developing some primary categories. After this the researcher begins more careful coding where systematic coding is attempted in respect of the main concept.
- **Elaboration** - entails providing all the necessary contexts that relate to the data and unpacking the data so that they can illustrate the information inside those contexts. It means an exhaustive explanation on the thought being put forward. Elaboration is only possible when the researcher is familiar with the context of the research and the data. Without having engaged with the data and the research context in advance, elaboration may be deficient since its success depends on complete knowledge or familiarity with the data and research context.
- **Interpretation and checking** - of research data refers to interpreting the meaning of the research finding in the language used by the audience for which the research is intended. It is a mode of showing how far the research problem has been addressed, or the extent to which the objectives of the study have been attained. These findings have to be checked for accuracy and relevance, or validated because a central issue in qualitative research is validity (also known as credibility and/or dependability). There are many different ways of establishing validity, including: interviewer corroboration, peer debriefing, prolonged engagement, bracketing, and balance.
- **Reflection** – the researcher must reflect on all of the steps and try to be as objective as possible in his or her interpretation of the data. The researcher must then reflect on the process of analysis at each stage and whether s/he is able to “bracket” any existing prejudices or ideas s/he might have. Bracketing requires trying to put aside these existing notions.

According to Braun and Clarke (2006) TCA used in psychology is an accessible and flexible theoretical context within which qualitative data can be analysed. TCA is used for identifying, analyzing and reporting themes or patterns that emerge from qualitative data. A theme is identified as something which is important in terms of the research questions and is seen as a form of patterned responses or meanings within any given data set. TCA also allows for more detailed interpretations of any theme or meaning which may need further elaboration. Fundamentally, TCA involves the searching across a data set to find recurring patterns of meaning that are important in terms of the research aims, objectives and questions.

#### **4.8 Reliability, validity and bias**

According to Shenton (2004) researchers seek to satisfy four criteria in addressing reliability and validity which are credibility (internal validity), transferability (external validity), dependability (reliability) and conformability (objectivity). This research study will adopt the following criteria to ensure reliability and validity.

- *Triangulation*: this is using multiple sources of data to confirm the emerging findings. The researcher will make use of one to one interviews, tape recordings and observations, as these are different ways that can be used to collect information.
- *Member checks*: participants will also be asked to check the transcripts of the data. The participants must be able to say if their words have been properly captured by the researcher and the transcript is a true reflection of what they think and or feel.
- *Frequent debriefing sessions*: the researcher and the supervisors form collaboration. This collaboration will be used by the researcher to provide a sounding board in developing her ideas, interpretations and will also be used so that both the supervisor and researcher are able to recognise their own biases.
- *Transferability* – as this is a study using a small sample and the study is qualitative external validity will be gained by a detailed description of the unique characteristics inherent to each interview.
- *Dependability or reliability*– this is when a method is used that allows the same results to be obtained if that method is repeated in a similar context. The following steps will be used to safeguard reliability.

The research will be implemented according to the research design. The research design will describe how the research will be planned and carried out in a practical manner and the following steps undertaken:

- Each step of the Data gathering and analysing procedure will be described in detail.
- An interview (pilot study) will be carried out with a disabled student who is not going to be part of the final sample. This pilot of the study will inform the researcher if the questions are fit for purpose and how long each interview is likely to take (De Vos, 2005).

#### **4.9 Bias**

The research study is qualitative therefore some bias is inevitable. According to Shenton (2004), bias means that the researcher of the study may influence the results in order to portray a certain outcome. Richard and Morse (2007) state that the interviewer has to have an in-depth understanding of the research and a good grasp of the study's objectives and his or her prejudices to help guard against bias. In this study to minimize bias the researcher will be as objective as possible and use “bracketing” which according to Tufford (2010) is a technique which involves the identification and temporary setting aside the researcher's own assumption(s). The researcher will also utilise de-briefing sessions with her supervisor to help recognise any biases or prejudices that she might have.

#### **4.10 Ethical considerations**

Ethical considerations are critical and they guide the researcher in terms of not causing harm to the participant. There are various types of ethical consideration in the social research. This study extends all standards of ethical consideration to the participants.

- **Informed consent**

The participants will be informed about the nature of the research. They will be informed about the purpose of the study and how the gathered data will be utilized. Participants will be able to

make well informed decisions, on whether to participate or not. This will help them make an informed decision about participating in the study.

- **Confidentiality and anonymity**

Before they agree to partake in the study, the participants will be assured that the data will be collected in full confidentiality and anonymity. They are also free to end their participation at any time and no physical or psychological harm is anticipated towards the participants. They will be de-briefed after interview sessions and if they feel the need to talk about their experiences and challenges further they will be referred to the student counselling unit on the campus. The participants will sign an informed consent form it will however, be made clear that this does not mean they have to continue to participate in the research if they don't want to (See Appendix D).

- **Deception**

The researcher will not deceive the participants. The true nature of the study will be explained honestly and any risks explained. The participant will be informed that there are no material benefits for participating in the study. The participant will be informed that the dissertation is for academic purposes and that it will be published in the university library (however, their names will not be kept confidential and not be found in the study).

- **Voluntary participation**

Participation in this study is purely voluntary participants' will be made aware that they can withdraw at any time without having to give a reason for their withdrawal.

#### **4.11 Significance of proposed research**

This study is important in that it will give an insight to the challenges experienced by students with physical disabilities at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop campus). The findings of the current study will provide information to help physically disabled students at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop campus). Furthermore the recommendations that arise as a result of the study will inform policy decisions pertaining to physically disabled students at all campuses of the University of Limpopo.

#### **4.12 Summary**

The chapter summarised the research design and qualitative approach to the summary which included stating the sampling method and data collection procedure. Thematic Content Analysis was presented as process by which the data for the study is interpreted. Ethical issues were addressed as was the significance of the study. The following chapter presents an analysis and discussion of the research results.

## CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS OF DATA AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an analysis of the data and a discussion of the results. This chapter is aimed at presenting the data as themes become apparent or are revealed to the researcher. The breakdown of data in this study will be aimed at interpreting meanings from the original transcripts. The interpretation will be conveyed through a thorough understanding of an analysis of the challenges reported by the participants with physical disabilities. Thematic analysis, as a framework, is a method which works to reflect reality and to disentangle the meanings of an individual's surface reality it is thus used in this research to *wrap* and *interpret* the data emerging out of the study. A transcript of the original interviews can be found in appendix E.

### 5.2 Presentation of research findings

Demographic information will be presented first in a tabular format followed by a summary of the emerging themes with a brief discussion. The themes will then be presented in tabular format for clarity and in order to summarise them. Appropriate themes are also discussed in terms of the study research questions namely:

- How significant is perceived peer group stigmatization/discrimination in terms of the challenges experienced by Students With Disabilities to their social integration at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop campus)
- How significant is perceived lecturing staff stigmatization/discrimination in terms of challenges experience by Students With Disabilities academic progress at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop Campus).
- How significant are physical barriers at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop campus) in terms of challenges experienced by Students With Disabilities relating to their ability to get to lectures/social gatherings.

### 5.2.1 Demographic information

Table 7: Demographic information of students with physical disability participating in the study

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Form of disability</b>	<b>Year of study</b>
Males	Two	20 & 22	Physically challenged	1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year
Females	five	25, 26, 29,29 & 30	Physically challenged (one participant in a wheel chair)	1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Year

The students were mostly undergraduate students with one fourth year (not a post-graduate but a student who has had to repeat some modules). The age of the students was somewhat higher than the norm for their year levels of study. A preliminary discussion aimed at building rapport with participants, before the interview using the semi-structured questionnaire took place, revealed that this was because they had found it hard to study at school because of lack of physical facilities (limited classroom access, for instance) and thus took longer to get their matriculation certificates. At school level they noted that there were no facilities in both primary and secondary schools in terms of access to schools and classrooms. They also noted that they were not given extra space in classrooms and had to share desks which was problematic.

### 5.2.2 Presentation of themes arising out of the data

To preserve anonymity the responses of the participants will be labelled as participants' 1 up until 7. The participants were given the numbers in no particular order and although they are anonymous their age and programme they are registered in is reported. Themes that emerge out of the data are then reported. The responses are colour coded in terms of which theme they are categorised in. Themes that emerged arose out of a reading and re-reading of the transcripts. The transcripts were verified, in a second shorter meeting, with each participant to ensure that the researcher recorded the participants' answers, thoughts and/or experiences correctly. The data gleaned from responses to the questions asked by the researcher were analysed using Thematic Content Analysis. The researcher read and re-read the data which is how she familiarised and

engaged with the process. Themes were induced and primary themes were found, which were coded to ensure that the theme was appropriate. The themes were induced and emerged out of the data after which the researcher reflected on the process and presented a relevant discussion.

### **Theme 1: Infrastructure**

The experience of students with physical disability in higher institutions includes the physical environment they find themselves in (Healey et al., 2011). Information regarding physical access for SWD's at tertiary institutions in South Africa is not available but it is unlikely that all tertiary facilities are completely user-friendly for SWD's (Singh, 2003). The university should provide access to classrooms, toilets and any other facilities that are required to ensure there is an enabling environment at the institution. In the present study the disabled students faced difficulties with access to buildings because of the *stony floor* (cobble stones), lack of lifts in some buildings, no cover between lecture halls meaning disabled students are unable to walk to classes on crutches holding an umbrella thus either get wet (and possibly sick) or don't go to class when it is raining and no access for students in wheelchairs to some lecture halls. Disabled students often become very tired trying to find their way around campus as, particularly if they are using crutches, they expend more energy than able-bodied students. This can lead to problems focusing during lecture periods. The research question which asked how significant are physical barriers at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop campus in terms of challenges experienced by Students With Disabilities relating to their ability to get to lectures/social gatherings is regarded by this study as very noteworthy. The theme emerged from responses such as the following.

*“Some lecture halls are not accessible, like K21. You find that if the lift is not working you cannot access that lecture room.”*

*“No, they are too far [the lecture halls] and it is tiring for me to get there. The stones on the campus [cobble driveways and recreational areas] make it very hard.”*

*“The ramps are just too many. You will get tired of climbing them. By the time you get to class you will be tired as you take a long time to use the ramps to get to classes.”*

*“If it is raining for example, I can’t carry an umbrella at the same time as I use my crutches. It then becomes a challenge for me to go to class.”*

These problems are not just internal (to the institution) but external or environmental as, according to Venter, Rickert and Maunder (2012) developing countries do not have adequate infrastructure allowing the disabled to access for instance, educational facilities unlike countries in the developed world. Ogunlana (2012) also reports that governments of developing countries do not consider minorities like the disabled properly, when planning programmes for disadvantaged persons.

## **Theme 2: No support**

Onasanya (2002) reports that literature indicates that many of the academic and social challenges faced by SWD’s have been ignored for a long time, because of broad societal discrimination and inequalities in the workplace and education system that such students have to face. The daily challenges that SWD’s deal with can be overwhelming. Disabled students often isolate themselves as they do not want to face rebuffs. Disabled students also seem to be *invisible* in that they are not properly seen and understood by their peers and lecturing staff. These students may not always recognise that they need emotional support as they become used to doing things by themselves. This study reflects this view and also indicates that students do not seem aware of where to find emotional support. The research question which asks if SWD’s find that peer group and lecturer discrimination and stigmatisation are significant in terms of social integration are upheld by the present theme and the following theme (no 4). This theme emerged from responses such as the following.

*“I would say no they don’t seem to see us at all.” [Lecturers]*

*“I don’t know if I need that support...sometimes I am lonely. I don’t know where to access that kind of support, no.”*

*“I have never received any emotional support from this university.”*

*“I prefer being alone as at times I get tired of having to beg them for assistance. I always have to do things the way they want so that can get assistance from them.”*

The first draft report on persons with disabilities for the United Nations was released in South Africa for public comment in 2012 (Department of Women, Children and People with Disabilities, 2012). The far reaching support needed for all persons, including SWD's, is thus beginning to be understood by the government of the country. It is hoped that updated legislation is tabled out of the report at the end of the public commentary process.

### **Theme 3: Discrimination**

Seale, Draffan and Wald (2008) report that Students With Physical Disabilities (SWD's) face challenges and discrimination from their peers. They note that many SWD's experience frustration with their tertiary education experiences which arises from negative peer attitudes. Lecturers may also discriminate against disabled students as they may see them as too much trouble. Jjuuko (2013) notes that higher institutions like the University of Venda, a predominately Black institution in a rural area, in South Africa, has made inroads into registering disabled students which promotes non-discrimination. According to Fichten, Bourden, Amstel & Fox, 1989) tertiary students without disabilities are more uncomfortable interacting with peers with disabilities than with peers without disabilities, and students with disabilities are more comfortable interacting with peers with similar disabilities than those with different disabilities. It appears that in terms of SWD's social integration peer group and lecturer discrimination and stigmatisation are noteworthy in terms of perceived challenges which is reflected by the following statements this is underpinned by the results found under theme 2, No support.

*“Yes, I have seen that some of them look at me with a weird eye while others take advantage of me. So I decided to be by myself. That is why we relate only in class, if there is a need.”*

*“They isolate themselves from me. Most of them don't even talk to me in class and even around campus.....I feel very bad. Like I have some kind of infection or something.”*

*“They discriminate. Like when we form groups, they don’t want to be in the same group as us in the classroom. We have to be in the group at the bottom of the lecture hall because when they are forming the groups those of us with crutches or wheelchair can’t go up the steps when the groups are formed. Sometimes the lecturer has to put us into a group as there is no one who wants us.”*

*“I don’t think so. Some don’t even know that you are disabled and expect you to do the work in the same time as all the other students, even though you can’t always get to the library or the computer labs. I think they, you know....prefer able-bodied students.”[Lecturers]*

#### **Theme 4: Friends**

According to Gorter (2009) various studies in integrated school contexts indicate that the disabled child is usually socially isolated and is at risk of developing psychological or emotional problems because of peer rejection or neglect. Fichten, Bourden, Amstel and Fox (1989) note that university students with disabilities tend to be good friends with people with the same or similar disabilities and these are the persons who are likely to help them. In this study SWD’s were friends with others with disabilities rather than with the able-bodied, apart from one student who had a disability that could not be seen. This student kept the disability to *herself* essentially, to prevent isolation and discrimination from able-bodied students.

*“No, I would rely on my friends to give me information.....No, they are friends who have disabilities, some of us are worse than others.”*

*“I only found this out after my first year when a friend told me that they gave assistance.. [a disabled friend].”*

*“....then others [my friends] from the DSU helped me by bringing me the books and notes.”*

*“Which mostly then I depend on my friends, who have not the same disability [lesser] or the assistants in the library.”*

## **Theme 5: Education**

Singh (2003) reports that SWD's are treated differently by lecturers or teachers and thus receive a different level of education which may be positive or negative but is perceived by the SWD as different thus as not acceptable. Persons without disabilities need educating about people with disabilities (UNICEF, 2011). SWD's face many challenges and, as reported in this study, are often discriminated against by their peers and lecturing staff. A common theme when participants were asked what they thought could be done to improve their situation was that both students and staff should have workshops (education) about people living with disabilities. The following responses highlight this theme. A disability policy is presently being compiled at the University of Limpopo (Turfloup campus) which it is hoped will be far reaching and utilise a guide, such as that used by Western Michigan University (nd) in America, which will help eliminate differences in treatment between able and disabled students.

*“The university at large, including the management should better understand the challenges that we encounter they must educate them.”*

*“They should write everything down in a book – some say there is a book with which tells us where we get help, I haven't seen it. This should be given to all students and the lecturers...so they know us.”*

*“They must also tell others about us so that they can understand us.”*

*“I also think that disability workshops [to inform students and staff about students with disabilities] must be conducted at a regular basis, so that people would be aware of the challenges we encounter.”*

## **Theme 6: Amenities**

According to Healey et al. (2011), traditional attitudes and stereotyping of the abilities of students who have disabilities leads to the idea being reinforced that they do not have still lead to exclusion and reinforcement of the idea that these learners are not suitable for higher education. The lack of provision of adequate amenities plus the channeling of students to register for degrees which are considered suitable for those with disabilities is still prevalent. The same

authors note that there must be provision of appropriate facilities for the disabled. The following responses are those which support the abovementioned theme.

*“I wanted to do pharmacy, but due to the building I could not do it. The building does not have lifts and I had to choose another field as a result.....which was not fair....It was a problem back then, but now I have accepted it as I didn’t have a choice. I am talking in terms of the up-coming group when I say something should be done about this.”*

*“They should at all the time consider us and our disabilities and how they can hinder our progress academically. Like when it rains, how can I access the lecture hall? It is either go to class and get wet and then get sick or do not go and sometimes when I miss class I can’t get the notes.”*

*“I think the university should consider those with severe disabilities, particularly those on wheelchairs and crutches. They should give them what they need to work with laptops and provide proper facilities.”*

*“If the university can supply us with assistive devices like other universities. Like a personal computer to ease our life....Also to have transport to take us from our rooms to classes. I think if the management would come up with something like that, it would be very helpful.”*

### **5.2.2.3 Tabular format of emerging themes**

The themes are presented, as a summary, in a tabular format to help clarify the aforementioned interpretation. See appendix E for a verbatim transcript of colour coded responses.

Table 8: Emerging themes

<b>Theme</b>	
1. <b>Infrastructure</b>	The theme infrastructure arose from the responses which described the infrastructure of the university not being user friendly to them. The majority of respondents reported their difficulties in accessing buildings within the campus.
2. <b>No Support</b>	The theme no support support emanated from the responses which described no emotional support was received either from the university [specific interventions] or staff.
3. <b>Discrimination</b>	The theme of discrimination arose out of most participants feeling that their peers discriminated against them as well as lecturing staff.
4. <b>Friends</b>	The theme friends notes that most disabled students are friends with other disabled students who may have a lesser disability and, who for instance, are able to help them get notes and/or get to class.
5. <b>Education</b>	The theme education arose from the following responses about experiences on campus. Some respondents believe that there need to be more campaigns of people with disability which would inform the public of their needs.
6. <b>Amenities</b>	Participants noted that if they had proper amenities such as motorised wheelchairs and laptops. [Separated from physical infrastructure].

### **5.3 Research conclusions**

The study underpinned results found in previous research on Students With Disabilities. Themes noted in previous research were found in the data of the present study which indicates that disabled students generally find that there is inadequate physical infrastructure which compromises their physical access within the institution. The participants also had to deal with discrimination from peers and staff. Furthermore, participants reported that being provided with proper amenities such as laptops and wheelchairs would help them find the environment less challenging. Educating able-bodied staff and students was also seen as necessary in order to combat discrimination.

Most of the students indicated that they felt that they have been discriminated against by their peers and by lecturing staff. They indicated that they are mostly assisted by their disabled peers and, as a result, they depend on them for assistance. Furthermore, participants reported that they felt the institution is not assisting them in terms of infrastructure and providing appropriate amenities. Emotional support is lacking although the majority of the disabled students report that it is not necessary. It is however, highly likely that they do need emotional support but do not want to admit it for fear of further discrimination. The poor infrastructure at the university provides many challenges and barriers to the disabled being able to move freely which, at times, leads them to staying in their rooms thus increasing their isolation.

## **CHAPTER 6: METHODOLOGICAL STRENGTHS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING OUT OF THE RESEARCH**

### **6.1. Introduction**

The chapter will focus on the strength and the limitations of the research furthermore; it will make recommendations for future research in the field at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop campus).

### **6.2 Methodological strengths**

The major strength of the research was that it conducted interviews and asked disabled directly about their challenges on campus.

The research also used an appropriate mode of analysis and framework for the study namely Thematic Content Analysis (TCA).

### **6.3 Methodological limitations**

The major limitation of the study was the difficulty in getting students to participate in the research as they were scared that what they said would be repeated to their departments, able-bodied students and or administrators. They feared they would be victimised further. A focus group was at first thought an appropriate tool as well as individual interviews. However, preliminary research made it clear that due to the aforementioned fear disabled students preferred individual interviews and did not want to participate in a focus group.

### **6.4 Recommendations arising out of the research process**

**The following recommendations are made:**

- That the University of Limpopo (Turfloop campus) completes their strategic plan for disabled students in close consultation with the differently abled groups on campus.
- Further research including deaf, blind, partially sighted and other disabilities such as albinism is recommended so that specific problems in each group are noted and addressed should be undertaken.

- Workshops sensitising able-bodied students and staff to disabilities should be offered.
- Students with the physical disabilities should be given a platform to express their challenges in full to the management and the lectures.
- Infrastructure problems should be addressed so that future generations of students do not suffer the physical challenges generated at present.

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## **Appendix A: Types of physical disability adapted from Seirlis and Bergmann (2007).**

### Types of physical disability

- Mobility impairment is a category of disability that includes people with varying types of physical disabilities. This type of disability includes upper limb disability, manual dexterity and disability in co-ordination with different organs of the body. Disability in mobility can either be a congenital or acquired with age problem. This problem could also be the consequence of some disease. People who have a broken skeletal structure also fall into this category of disability.
- Visual impairment is another type of physical impairment. There are hundreds of thousands of people that greatly suffer from minor to various serious vision injuries or impairments. These types of injuries can also result into some severe problems or diseases like blindness and ocular trauma, to name a few. Some of the common types of vision impairments include scratched cornea, scratches on the sclera, diabetes-related eye conditions, dry eyes and corneal graft.
- Hearing impairment is the category of physical impairment that includes people that are completely or partially deaf. People who are only partly deaf can sometimes make use of hearing-aids to improve their hearing ability.

**Appendix B: Statistics for 2012 for disabled students registered at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop campus).**

<b>Disability</b>	<b>No. of students</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
Blind	13	03	10
Albinism	16	04	12
Partially sighted	17	09	08
Mobility impaired	06	09	03
Multiple-disability	02	0	02
Dwarfism	01	01	0
Medical condition	01	01	0
Physical disability	13	08	05
Total	69	29	40

## **Appendix C: semi-structured interview guide**

### Part A: General demographic questions.

1. Age
2. Gender
3. Ethnicity
4. What religion do you follow?
5. What academic programme have you enrolled in and what is your level of study?

### **Section B: experiences on campus**

The students will be asked the following questions – probing may be necessary to clarify what the student means.

1. Have you always been disabled?
2. Did being disabled affect your education at school level? If so how?
3. Do you have a lot of non-disabled friends?
4. Do your non-disabled friends invite you to parties/socials or just to have lunch with them?
5. How do non-disabled students treat you generally?
6. Do you find it easy to get around on campus? If not why not?
7. Are lecture halls easily accessible?
8. Do lecturing staff treat you the same way as they treat non-disabled students?
9. Can you access the library easily?
10. What support do you receive on campus?
11. Do you ever need emotional support? If yes, is there anywhere you can access emotional support?
12. Have you any suggestions that you think would make your university experience better?

**Appendix D: Informed consent form**

Date: 03/10/13

**FORM B – PART I**

**PROJECT TITLE: The challenges experienced by Students with Physical Disability (SWPD’s) at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop Campus).**

**PROJECT LEADER: Ms M R Maotoana**

**DECLARATION**

I, the signatory, hereby apply for approval to conduct research described in the attached research proposal and declare that:

1. I am fully aware of the guidelines and regulations for ethical research and that I will abide by these guidelines and regulations as set out in documents (available from the Secretary of the Ethics Committee); and
2. I undertake to provide every person who participates in this research project with the relevant information in Part III. Every participant will be requested to sign Part IV.

**Name of Researcher: Maotoana Mpho Rosa**

**Signature:.....**

**Date: 03.10.13**

**For Official use by the Ethics Committee:**

Approved/Not approved

Remarks:.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Signature of Chairperson:.....

Date:.....

**FORM B - PART II**

**PROJECT TITLE: The challenges experienced by Students with Physical Disability (SWPD's) at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop Campus).**

**PROJECT LEADER: Ms M R Maotoana**

Protocol for conducting research using human participants

1. Department: Psychology.
2. Title of project: **The challenges experienced by Students with Physical Disability (SWPD's) at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop Campus).**
3. Full name, surname and qualifications of project leader: **Ms Mpho Rosa Maotoana**
4. List the name(s) of all persons (Researchers and Technical Staff) involved with the project and identify their role(s) in the conduct of the experiment:

Name:	Qualifications:	Responsible for:
Mpho Maotoana	Honours Degree in Psychology/ M1 Clin Psych	research

5. Name and address of principal researcher: **Maotoana Mpho: house No.Lethuli Park(Phase 1) Seshego 0724.**
6. Procedures to be followed: semi-structured interviews
7. Nature of discomfort: some students may feel uncomfortable talking of their disability. They may reluctant or even not participate in the study at all.
8. Description of the advantages that may be expected from the results of the study: the study will help us to understand the experiences that students with physical disability encounter at Campus. This would also help the university to understand the experiences that are encountered at the campus by the students with physical disability.

Signature of Project Leader:.....

Date:.....

## **PART II - INFORMATION FOR PARTICIPANTS**

**PROJECT TITLE: The challenges experienced by Students with Physical Disability (SWPD's) at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop Campus).**

**PROJECT LEADER: Ms. Maotoana Mpho**

1. You are invited to participate in the following research project The challenges experienced by Students with Physical Disability (SWPD's) at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop Campus).
2. Participation in the project is completely voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the project (without providing any reasons) at any time.
3. It is possible that you might not personally experience any advantages during the project, although the knowledge that may be accumulated through the project might prove advantageous to others.
4. You are encouraged to ask any questions that you might have in connection with this project at any stage. The project leader and her/his staff will gladly answer your question. They will also discuss the project in detail with you.
5. Some students may feel uncomfortable talking of their disability. They may be reluctant or even not even want to participate in the study at all. If participants feel discomfort and need counselling they will be referred to appropriate professionals on the UL (Turfloop campus).
6. Should you at any stage feel unhappy, uncomfortable or is concerned about the research, please contact Ms Noko Shai-Ragoboya at the University of Limpopo, Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, Tel: 015 268 2401.

## PART IV - CONSENT FORM

**PROJECT TITLE: The challenges experienced by Students with Physical Disability (SWPD's) at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop Campus).**

**PROJECT LEADER: Ms Maotoana Mpho**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ hereby voluntarily consent to participate in the following project:

**The challenges experienced by Students with Physical Disability (SWPD's) at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop Campus).**

I realise that:

1. The study deals with: **The challenges experienced by Students with Physical Disability (SWPD's)**
2. The procedure or treatment envisaged may hold some risk for me that cannot be foreseen at this stage.
3. The Ethics Committee has approved that individuals may be approached to participate in the study.
4. The research project, ie. the extent, aims and methods of the research, has been explained to me.
5. The project sets out the risks that can be reasonably expected as well as possible discomfort for persons participating in the research, an explanation of the anticipated advantages for myself or others that are reasonably expected from the research and alternative procedures that may be to my advantage.
6. I will be informed of any new information that may become available during the research that may influence my willingness to continue my participation.
7. Access to the records that pertain to my participation in the study will be restricted to persons directly involved in the research.
8. Any questions that I may have regarding the research, or related matters, will be answered by the researcher/s.
9. If I have any questions about, or problems regarding the study, or experience any undesirable effects, I may contact a member of the research team or Ms Noko Shai-Ragoboya.

10. Participation in this research is voluntary and I can withdraw my participation at any stage.
11. If any medical problem is identified at any stage during the research, or when I am vetted for participation, such condition will be discussed with me in confidence by a qualified person and/or I will be referred to my doctor.
12. I indemnify the University of Limpopo and all persons involved with the above project from any liability that may arise from my participation in the above project or that may be related to it, for whatever reasons, including negligence on the part of the mentioned persons.

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCHED PERSON

SIGNATURE OF WITNESS

SIGNATURE OF PERSON THAT INFORMED  
THE RESEARCHED PERSON

SIGNATURE OF PARENT/GUARDIAN

Signed at \_\_\_\_\_ this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_

## Appendix E – Transcript and coding of participants responses

- **Verbatim responses of participants**

The following responses from the participants are included verbatim (with grammatical errors). In the transcript responses that are linked to the themes that arose out of immersion with the data are given specific colours to match explicit themes. The themes are then expanded upon and presented in tabular format for ease of interpretation.

- **Participant 1**

Age: 29

Gender: Female

Ethnicity: Venda

Religion: Christian

Law – LLB 2<sup>nd</sup> year

**Question 1:** Have you always been disabled?

**Answer:** Yes, I have since birth

**Question 2:** Did being disabled affect your education at school level? If so, how?

**Answer:** Yes, it is very hard, as I could not get around easily, **but thanks to God, for all those people who have been helping me throughout my studies at school and here.**

(Probing – which people are you referring to?)

**Answer:** **My friends because it is not easy for me to access the library and come to the lecturing halls.** It becomes easy as my friends assist me with materials [they bring them to me].

**Question 3:** Do you have a lot of non-disabled friends?

**Answer:** Yes

(Probing - have you always had the able-bodied friends on campus?)

Answer: **Not always. During my first year it wasn't not easy, particularly during the 1<sup>st</sup> semester people stared a lot, they were not used to me.**

Question 4: Do your non-disabled friends invite you to parties/ social or just to have lunch with them?

Answer: Yes, they do invite me to social gatherings.

(Probing - and how do other students treat you at the gatherings?)

Answer: **Well, if there were people who did not know me, they would avoid me and even stare. But then those who invited me did not have a problem.**

(Probing - those who avoided you, where they able-bodied?)

Answer: **Yes, most of them.**

Question 5: How do non-disabled students treat you generally?

Answer: **We relate okay if we have to.**

(Probing – so non-disabled students do not discriminate against you?)

Answer: **Some do, I think is because they are not familiar with people of our condition.**

(Probing - how do they discriminate against you?)

Answer: **Some would just pass you and not even greet you, whilst other would just stare and you, some might even whisper about you.**

Question 6: Do you find it easy to get around campus? If not, why?

Answer: **Not all the venues. The library for example, I always need to ask my class mates or friends to get me a book. The lifts are not working and I cannot access the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor for a book I want. At times we ask the library assistants to help us, but sometimes they may not be there.**

**Question 7:** Are the lecture halls easily accessible?

**Answer:** It depends on the weather conditions and if there is a lift in a building. If it is raining for example, I can't carry an umbrella at the same time as I use my crutches. It then becomes a challenge for me to go to class. I can't get to all venues because there are no lifts in some places.

(Probing - so you would not go to class?)

**Answer:** No, I would rely on my friends to give me information.

(Probing – are these friends able-bodied?)

**Answer:** No, they are friends who have disabilities, some of us are worse than others.

**Question 8:** Do the lecturing staff treat you the same way as they treat non-disabled students?

**Answer:** I would say no. Some of them are not even aware of our disability. They are not even aware of our day to day challenges that we live with and still they expect us to deliver the work at the same time as other students.

**Question 9:** Can you access the library easily?

**Answer:** No.

(Probing - so in that instance, how do you get to the library?)

**Answer:** well, we have our own library at DSU, but at times what is needed is not there, so we need to go to the library. Which mostly then I depend on my friends, who have not the same disability [lesser] or the assistants in the library.

**Question 10:** Do you ever need emotional support? If yes, is there anywhere you can access emotional support?

**Answer:** Of course I do need that support, but I am not aware of where I can get it.

**Question 11:** Have you any suggestions that you think would make your University experience better?

**Answer:** If the university can supply us with assistive devices like other universities. Like a personal computer to ease our life. Also to have transport to take us from our rooms to classes. I think if the management would come up with something like that, it would be very helpful. I also think that disability workshops [to inform students and staff about students with disabilities] must be conducted at a regular basis, so that people would be aware of the challenges we encounter.

- **Participant 2**

Age 25

Gender: female

Ethnicity: Tsonga

Religion: Christian

B.A. Degree – 1<sup>st</sup> year

**Question 1:** Have you always been disabled?

**Answer:** Yes

**Question 2:** Did being disabled affect your education at school level? If so, how?

**Answer** Yes. Is not easy moving around campus on a wheelchair. It's like the university was not built for us [disabled students]. Some of the lecture halls are too far to access, like T block.

(Probing - why do you say the university did not consider you?)

**Answer:** The ramps are just too many. You will get tired of climbing them. By the time you get to class you will be tired as you take a long time to use the ramps to get to classes.

**Question 3:** Do you have a lot of non-disabled friends?

**Answer:** No. most of the people I hang out with are like me.

(Probing - do you mean disabled?)

**Answer:** Yes, those who are also disabled.

**Question 4** Do your non-disabled friends invite you to parties/ social or just to have lunch with them?

**Answer:** **No**

(Probing – why do you think that is?)

**Answer:** **Like I said earlier, I do not have able bodied friends.**

**Question 5:** How do non-disabled students treat you generally?

**Answer:** **Some are good, but most of them are bad.**

(Probing – do able bodied students discriminate against you?)

**Answer:** **Most of the non-disabled students, eish they want nothing to do with me. They always complain that I always want something from them.**

**Question 6:** Do you find it easy to get around campus? If not, why?

**Answer:** **No. I always have to depend on people to help me. Especially academically, I mean to get to the classes because of the long distance and sometimes there are no lifts or no lifts that are working.**

**Question 7:** Are the lecture halls easily accessible?

**Answer:** **No. they are not. There are stairs and too many ramps. You cannot get into M block, for instance on crutches or wheelchairs.**

**Question 8:** Do the lecturing staff treat you the same way as they treat non-disabled students?

**Answer:** **I don't think so. Some don't even know that you are disabled and expect you to do the work in the same time as all the other students, even though you can't always get to the library or the computer labs. I think they, you know....prefer able-bodied students.**

**Question 9:** Can you access the library easily?

Answer: **No. that is why I always depend on my classmates to get the books for me.**

**Question 10:** Do you ever need emotional support? If yes, is there anywhere you can access emotional support?

Answer: **I don't think the university is supportive in any way. All I hear is just rumours saying that the university does support us, but I honestly do not know how.**

(Probing - apart from the rumours, what are your own experiences with university support?)

Answer: **I think the university does not understand our situations. As a result they are not giving us any support that we need. There is a unit but they do not seem to communicate well with the rest of the university [Unit for Disabled Students].**

(Probing - how does this make you feel?)

Answer: **It really makes me feel unwanted. Like the university is trying to get read of me. As if we are not welcomed at this institution.**

**Question 12:** Have you any suggestions that you think would make your University experience better?

Answer: **The University must sit down together with disabled students to get to know exactly what we are going through and what we need.....not the people who run the disabled unit but us those who are disabled. They must also tell others about us so that they can understand us.**

- **Participant 3**

Age 22

Gender: Male

Ethnicity: Sotho

Religion: Z.C.C

BA degree – 1<sup>st</sup> year

**Question:** Have you always been disabled?

Answer: No

**(Probing - how long have you been disabled?)**

**Answer:** It has over five years now.

**(Probing - what happened that lead to your disability?)**

**Answer:** I just got sick and ended up disabled. I couldn't move my legs properly after the sickness.

**Question 2:** Did being disabled affect your education at school level? If so, how?

Answer: **Yes at school I couldn't get around it was difficult, my friends helped me. Here the ramps are difficult. They are not even comfortable. When it is raining I can't even go to class as I can't hold an umbrella and it is too slippery.**

**Question 3:** Do you have a lot of non-disabled friends?

**Answer:** A few.

**Question 4:** Do your non-disabled friends invite you to parties/ social or just to have lunch with them?

**Answer:** **No**

**(Probing – so do they just not invite you or do you prefer not to go with them?)**

**Answer:** **I was never invited and besides I don't think I would be comfortable.**

**Question 5:** How do non-disabled students treat you generally?

Answer: They discriminate. Like when we form groups, they don't want to be in the same group as us in the classroom. We have to be in the group at the bottom of the lecture hall because when they are forming the groups those of us with crutches or wheelchair can't go up the steps when the groups are formed. Sometimes the lecturer has to put us into a group as there is no one who wants us.

(Probing - so there is discrimination against you by non-disabled students?)

Answer: Yes, a lot.

Question 6: Do you find it easy to get around campus? If not, why?

Answer: No.

(Probing – Why not?)

Answer: I hate being stared at and the buildings are far apart from each other making it difficult to get around. It is tiring moving from one venue to the other.

(Probing – do you mean you do not get around campus much then?)

Answer: Yes, I stay in my room and the class representative brings me the work...sometimes other students and friends who find it easier to get around bring me the notes.

Question 7: Are the lecture halls easily accessible?

Answer: No. they are not. The university is just difficult to move around because of the stones that make it hard [many of the university areas have cobble-stones which are uneven and difficult to negotiate].

Question 8: Does the lecturing staff treat you the same way as they treat non-disabled students?

Answer: No. they don't every try to understand our challenges. Just like the other staff members. Like at admin block, their windows are high and they shout at us [the windows through which students speak to administrators]. As a result we end up not getting any help.

**Question 9:** Can you access the library easily?

**Answer:** **No. the lifts are not working. I have to depend on other people for assistance.**

**Question 10:** Do you ever need emotional support? If yes, is there anywhere you can access emotional support?

**Answer:** **I have never seen or got any support from the university.**

**(Probing - what about the disability unit? What kind of help do they give you?)**

**Answer:** **If they do give support I am yet to receive it. I honestly don't know. They say they will help but if you go to them there is never anyone available.**

**Questions 12:** Have you any suggestions that you think would make your university experience better?

**Answer:** **They should give us equipment's that we need. For example, wheelchairs those are faster and more comfortable. Laptops that can make our lives easier to do school work. These are things that we need to receive at the beginning of the year. They should write everything down in a book – some say there is a book with which tells us where we get help. I haven't seen it. This should be given to all students and the lecturers...so they know us.**

- **Participant 4**

Age 26

Gender: female

Ethnicity: Tsonga

Religion: Christianity

Teaching - (Method Level – 4<sup>th</sup> year)

**Question 1:** Have you always been disabled?

**Answer:** Yes, from birth

**Question 2:** Did being disabled affect your education at school level? If so, how?

**Answer:** Not really...the nature of my disability I am not that severe. My leg is weak it always has been but some people do not even know that I am disabled. This gives me courage to study more and work hard in my books.

**(Probing - what is the nature of your disability?)**

**Answer:** just disabled on my left leg. But it doesn't prohibit me from anything.

**Question 3:** Do you have a lot of non-disabled friends?

**Answer:** Yes, I do.

**(Probing – on campus?)**

**Answer:** Yes, I have a lot of friends on campus who are not disabled.

**Question 4:** Do your non-disabled friends invite you to parties/ social or just to have lunch with them?

**Answer:** Yes, a lot

**Question 5:** How do non-disabled students treat you generally?

**Answer:** They treat me like anybody else. They don't isolate me....but I told you my disability isn't very noticeable sometimes the other disabled students [with more noticeable disabilities] complain they get isolated...**I don't tell about my problem as I don't want to get isolated...**

**(Probing – do you think they would isolate you if they knew about your disability?)**

**Answer:** **Probably.....I think so....I'm not sure.**

**(Probing - so there is no discrimination against you by non-disabled students?)**

**Answer:** **No, not at all, because they don't know that I am different from them.**

**Question 6:** Do you find it easy to get around campus? If not, why?

**Answer.** Yes, I do. My nature of disability is not that severe.

**Question 7:** Are the lecture halls easily accessible?

**Answer:** For me, yes they are.

**(Probing - so you don't experience any challenges at all?)**

**Answer:** **Not at all. Just at times, my leg would be painful if I walk for a longer period of time then sometimes I wish for help.**

**Question 8:** Does the lecturing staff treat you the same way as they treat non-disabled students?

**Answer:** Yes. For me, my disability does not hinder me from doing anything. Is just my leg and it does not affect me in any way really.

**Question 9:** Can you access the library easily?

**Answer:** Yes, I can get anywhere on campus.

**Question 10:** Do you ever need emotional support? If yes, is there anywhere you can access emotional support?

**Answer:** No, I am just as everyone else. My disability is not noticeable to others.

**Question 12:** Have you any suggestions that you think would make your University experience better?

**Answer:** **I think the university should consider those with severe disabilities, particularly those on wheelchairs and crutches. They should give them what they need to work with laptops and provide proper facilities... toilets in the blocks are not all for people with disabilities.**

### **Participant 5**

Age 20

Gender: Male

Ethnicity: Sotho

Religion: Christian

BA degree - Second year

**Question 1:** Have you always been disabled?

**Answer:** Yes, since birth.

**Question 2:** Did being disabled affect your education at school level? If so, how?

**Answer:** **Yes. It is very difficult for me to access the classrooms at school and often I sat in one classroom and others brought me notes. On campus the lecture halls and library are very difficult to get to, I therefore depend on my friends, and sometimes I need to beg them for their assistance.**

**Question 3:** Do you have a lot of non-disabled friends?

**Answer:** **No, they move too fast and I can't keep up.**

(Probing - why is that?)

**Answer:** **I prefer being alone as at times I get tired of having to beg them for assistance. I always have to do things the way they want so that can get assistance from them.**

**Question 4:** Do your non-disabled friends invite you to parties/ social or just to have lunch with them?

**Answer:** **No**

**Question 5:** How do non-disabled students treat you generally?

**Answer:** **They isolate themselves from me. Most of them don't even talk to me in class and even around campus.**

(Probing - how does that make you feel?)

**Answer:** **I feel very bad. Like I have some kind of infection or something.**

(Probing - so there is discrimination against you by non-disabled students?)

Answer: **A lot they isolate most of us with bad disabilities.**

Question 6: Do you find it easy to get around campus? If not, why?

Answer: **No. they are too far [the lecture halls] and it is tiring for me to get there. The stones on the campus [cobble driveways and recreational areas] make it very hard.**

Question 7: Are the lecture halls easily accessible?

Answer: **No. like I said, access around the university is very difficult for me.**

Question 8: Do the lecturing staff treat you the same way as they treat non-disabled students?

Answer: **No. they are just like the management. It is like they don't even know that there are disabled student who are registered on this campus.**

Question 9: Can you access the library easily?

Answer: **No. just like the rest of the university it is difficult to access with the stones and steps. I have to ask other friends to get my work for me.**

Question 10: Do you ever need emotional support? If yes, is there anywhere you can access emotional support?

Answer: **I have never received any emotional support from this university.**

Question 12: Have you any suggestions that you think would make your University experience better?

Answer: **The university at large, including the management should better understand the challenges that we encounter they must educate them. They should at all the time consider us and our disabilities and how they can hinder our progress academically. Like when it rains, how can I access the lecture hall? It is either go to class and get wet and then get sick or do not go and sometimes when I miss class I can't get the notes.**

- **Participant 6**

Age: 30

Gender: Female

Ethnicity: Sotho

Religion: Christian

B A degree – 2<sup>nd</sup> year

**Question 1:** Have you always been disabled?

**Answer:** No, in 2008 after I was involved in a car accident, that's when I got disabled.

**Question 2:** Did being disabled affect your education at school level? If so how?

**Answer:** It never affected me, instead I think it helped me because I didn't have money to go to go school as I had passed my matric [before being disabled] and stayed home, but with my disability, I got the opportunity to further my studies as I got grants.

**Question 3:** Do you have a lot of non-disabled friends?

**Answer:** **Not really. I enjoy being alone and by myself as most of the people [able-bodied], judge me.**

**Question 4:** Do your non-disabled friends invite you to parties/socials or just to have lunch with them?

**Answer:** **Like indicated, I prefer being by myself and don't really have non-disabled friends.**

(Probing - is that because of your experiences with the able-bodied people after becoming disabled?)

**Answer:** **Yes, I have seen that some of the look at me with a weird eye while others take advantage of me. So I decided to be by myself. That is why we relate only in class, if there is a need.**

**Question 4:** How do non-disabled students treat you generally?

**Answer:** **I would say some of them treat me well, although most of them are just ignorant[and don't treat me well]. With most of them, I would not know how they treat me**

**as they just ignore my disability. Generally they are okay ....probably because I do not interact with them that much.**

**Question 5:** Do you find it easy to get around on campus? If not why not?

**Answer:** I get around okay, I guess.

**Question 6:** Are lecture halls easily accessible?

**Answer:** **Some lecture halls are not accessible, like K21. You find that if the lift is not working you cannot access that lecture room.**

**Questions 7:** Do lecturing staff treats you the same way as they treat non-disabled students?

**Answer:** Yes, I never experienced any negativity from them.

**Question 8:** Can you access the library easily?

**Answer:** We have our own library at the DSU and if I need any book at the library, the help desk and assistance are there..... **although at times they are not there and that is frustrating, sometimes they don't seem to want to help us.**

**(Probing - so then what do you do when there is no assistance at the DSU?)**

**Answer:** Mostly I try to access the internet but that is difficult if there is no computer available.

**Question 9:** What support do you receive on campus?

**Answer:** Currently I am on an automatic wheel chair which I got from the campus. So yes, I do think they are playing a role in supporting me.

**Question 10:** Do you ever need emotional support? If yes, is there anywhere you can access emotional support?

**Answer:** **I don't know if I need that support...sometimes I am lonely. I don't know where to access that kind of support, no.**

**Question 11:** Have you any suggestions that you think would make your university experience better?

**Answer:** Make my experience here better? [laughs]. No.

- **Participant 7**

Age 29

Gender: female

Ethnicity: Venda

Religion: Christian and African

Bachelor of Medical Sciences – 4<sup>th</sup> year

**Question 1:** Have you always been disabled?

**Answer:** No, it started in 2006 when I was in high school I got sick and afterwards had weakness in my body and could not walk properly.

**Question 2:** Did being disabled affect your education at school level? If so how?

**Answer:** **Yes it has as it started while I was attending the mainstream and could not cope with the environment and infrastructure, I moved to the special needs school because I could not walk around properly. It is difficult to get around here to.**

**Question 3:** Do you have a lot of non-disabled friends?

**Answer:** On campus.....yes, a lot.

**(Probing - even when you first registered?)**

**Answer:** **No, during my first year it was tough. I struggled a lot as I didn't have friends and most of the able-bodied students discriminated me. It was not easy to adapt and people would normally look at me and stare. Like in my class, I am the only one who is disabled doing the degree. So I had no choice I had to ignore those looks.....it is better now as they are used to me.**

**(Probing - how does that make you feel, being the only one in your class who is disabled?)**

**Answer:** It encourages me that I am disabled but can continue with my life... **although is hard that I am in a wheelchair as we are using instruments and I can't reach them**, but lecturers and other students assist me.

**Question 4:** Do your non-disabled friends invite you to parties/socials or just to have lunch with them?

**Answer:** Yes, we do hang out most of the time. They even come to my room and I also go to them [their rooms].

**Question 5:** How do non-disabled students treat you generally?

**Answer:** They treat me okay. My classmates treat me well.

**(Probing - so besides your classmates do you have able-bodied friends?)**

**Answer:** No..... I socialise with my classmates **not with other students who are not disabled.**

**(Probing - so you don't interact with other able-bodied students on campus?)**

**Answer:** I do not have a problem with them. I just never really interacted with most people on campus except those who I attend with.....they stare at me but don't talk to me.

**Question 6:** Do you find it easy to get around on campus? If not why not?

**Answer:** When I was using the wheel chair it was extremely difficult, but after I got my automatic one, it got better.

**Question 7:** Are lecture halls easily accessible?

**Answer:** At the moment it is easy for the course I am registered in. We are few so we use our building at Q block on the second floor. The problem comes when the lift is not working sometimes there is no electricity or it is broken. I do not know the situation for the rest of the disabled students.....it is probably difficult...though because it was during my first year, then others [my friends] from the DSU helped me by bringing me the books and notes.

(Probing – how was it difficult in your first year?)

**Answer:** It was difficult as you had to write on your lap. There were no tables. I couldn't climb stairs and there were no lifts in some buildings....it is okay here in Q block though.

**Question 8:** Do lecturing staff treat you the same way as they treat non-disabled students?

**Answer:** I don't know about the others but with me I don't normally isolate myself. For example, I write my test with other students, except for examinations where I write at the DSU as other halls are not user friendly for me. I can't get to the multi-purpose centre where many of the exams are written because it is far away.

(Probing – yes, but do the lecturing staff treat you the same way as able-bodied students?)

**Answer:** I would say no they don't seem to see us at all.

**Question 9:** Can you access the library easily?

**Answer:** It is not easy, especially if the lifts aren't working, but with the help of my friend and the assistants at the library I usually manage....also the DSU does assist in that...I only found this out after my first year when a friend told me that they gave assistance.. [a disabled friend].

**Question 10:** What support do you receive on campus?

**Answer:** Like with me. The tables at the laboratory are high, so I contacted the DSU and told them I am struggling. So they bought me a chair so that I can use the laboratory. I have adapted to the conditions and I can use the microscope with ease now.

**Question 11:** Do you ever need emotional support? If yes, is there anywhere you can access emotional support?

**Answer:** No, I don't need that....no, I don't know where to get it though.

**Question 12:** Have you any suggestions that you think would make your university experience better?

**Answer:** I wanted to do pharmacy, but due to the building I could not do it. The building does not have lifts and I had to choose another field as a result.

(Probing - so you chose a field due to the infrastructure not being adequate at the university?)

**Answer:** Yes, which was not fair.

(Probing – how did that make you feel?)

**Answer:** It was a problem back then, but now I have accepted it as I didn't have a choice. I am talking in terms of the up-coming group when I say something should be done about this [ lack of adequate infrastructure for disabled persons to take the subjects/degrees they want to take].