

## CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS - THE CASE OF GLENVIEW 3, HARARE

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The study sought to critically examine survival strategies employed by persons with disabilities amidst economic depression and interrogate the effectiveness of these strategies. The study utilised the case of Glenview 3, a high-density area located in the South-Western part of Harare Central Business District. The chapter presents the findings on the survival strategies employed by persons with disabilities in the middle of economic depression. In presenting, discussing and analysing findings of the study, this section will remain guided by the aim, objectives and research questions informing the study. The findings to be presented, analysed and discussed in this section were obtained through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, documentary analysis and key-informant interviews that were conducted by the researcher during the study to elicit information on survival strategies employed by persons with disabilities in the middle of economic depression. Findings will also be discussed and analysed in line with the critical disability theory that underpinned the study. Similarly, findings is analysed in line with literature that was reviewed in chapter two. The chapter present themes that emerged from different research methods that were employed by the researcher in conducting the study. Findings will be organised along thematic concerns.

Through the study, the researcher identified a myriad of challenges facing persons with disabilities. This section presents economic challenges facing persons with disabilities. In this section, the challenges is presented together with factors exacerbating those economic challenges.

Participation in the labour market is one of the most reliable ways to emancipate persons with disabilities from shackles of poverty. However, through focus group discussions, in-depth interviews and key-informant interviews, the researcher discovered that participants are unemployed. One of the participants revealed that:

*ini handisati ndamboenda kubasa . mabasa hakuna ndoriwanepi basa iwo maindustry akavhara kare... (I have never been employed, there are no jobs in Zimbabwe; where can I get a job when the industries have closed long back)*

Adding her voice on the issue of unemployment as one of the economic challenges facing persons with disabilities, one of the key informants was of the opinion that one of the main challenges facing persons with disabilities is unemployment. Due to marginalisation in the labor market, persons with disabilities languish in poverty. In supporting the argument of high unemployment among persons with disabilities, one of the key informants said:

*Majority yavo havaende kubasa. Havana kuenda kuchikoro saka zvinonetsa kuti vawane basa*  
(Most of them are unemployed. They lack education qualifications so it is difficult for most of them to get jobs)

The study discovered that unemployment is one of the most common challenges facing persons with disabilities. Some of the participants have never participated in the labour market. For example one of the participants revealed that she has never been employed she said:

*ini handisati ndamboenda kubasa kunyangwe nyika payainhge yakanaa paye handina kumbobvira ndashanda ini.* (I have never worked even during the days when the economy was stable.)

Low participation among persons participants is in line with World Report on Disability (2018) that reports that there is low participation in the labour market among persons with disabilities. The sentiment given by a female who is visually impaired is in resonance with Groce *et al.* (1984; 2014) that persons with disabilities are generally the last to be hired.

Through focus group discussions and in-depth interviews, the researcher noted several factors precipitating low participation of persons with disabilities in the labour market. Factors hindering participation of persons include lack of education, attitude of employers towards persons with disabilities, lack of awareness and low self-esteem among persons with disabilities. Factors precipitating low participation in the labour market are discussed below.

Through focus group discussions and in-depth interviews, participants revealed factors precipitating high unemployment among persons with disabilities. Lack of education is one of the chief factors precipitating poverty

among participants thereby creating vicious cycle of poverty among persons with disabilities. One of the participants said:

*ini handina kumboenda kuchikoro saka ndiani angandipe basa ndisina kudzidza?.* (I am not educated so who can employ someone who is not educated?)

This finding is tandem with Groce *et al.* (2014) who argue that lack of education precipitates high unemployment among persons with disabilities. World Report on Poverty further supports this view by arguing that lack of education hinders persons with disabilities from participating in the labour market.

On the same note, one of the participants revealed that:

*ini mabasa ndinombomaona hangu ari pama advert asi handimbo applye nekuti ndine two subjects asi mazuvano mabasa mazhinji anoda munhu ane five O' level subjects zvichikwira. ....*  
(At times I see job adverts but I don't apply for them because I passed two subjects but most of the jobs requires people with five 'O' Level subjects and above.)

Adding on, lack of education as one of the main causes of unemployment, a participant with visual impairment revealed that:

*ini handina chikoro saka handingatarisire kuwana basa especially munyika musina mabasa... (I am not educated so I don't expect to get a job especially in a country with no job opportunities...)*

Zimbabwe signed and ratified United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Article 24 thereof provides that persons with disabilities have the right to education. Zimbabwe is also a signatory of Sustainable Development Goals. SDG 4 emphasises on the need to promote inclusive education. Although several measures were put in place to ensure that people realize their right to education. The study has discovered that a lot must be done if the goal is to be achieved. To confirm on the issues that a lot need to be done to ensure education for all, one of the participants with visual impairment revealed that she have never been to school. She narrated:

*ini handina kumbobvira ndamboenda kuchiko...(I have never been to school...)*

These testimonies imply there is need put more effort to ensure that persons with disabilities become educated. Eide and Ingstad (2011) argue that education is the key determinant of participating in the labour market. The narrations given by the participants shows that have not participated in the

labour market due to lack of education hence this confirms with the available literature that argue that lack of education among persons with disabilities precipitates unemployment.

In addition, due to misconception of disability, persons with disabilities lack confidence to look for employment. Oliver (1990) argues through medical model of disability, disability is viewed as a pathological condition. It is through this model that persons with disabilities are viewed as people who cannot look after themselves. Discussions with some participants shows that some of them have adopted medical model and charity model of disability to explain their disability hence they have lost any hope of becoming gainfully employed therefore even if they hear about any job opportunities they do not apply for those employment opportunities.

Misconception of disability by the employers also precipitates high unemployment rate among persons with disabilities. Employers who view disability through medical model lances are less likely to hire them as they view disability as a pathological condition hence regarding persons with disabilities as “incapable” and in need of “rehabilitation”. This is in resonance with critical disability theory that seeks to challenge traditional views that assumes that persons with disabilities cannot perform at par with non-disabled people.

Through in-depth interviews, the researcher finds out that employers' preference to hire non-disabled people to persons with disabilities is one of the main factors leading to high unemployment among persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities were unemployed due to their impairments.

Due to employer's preference of non-disabled persons, some participants reveal that they conceal their disability when they apply for jobs to maximise their chances to be considered.

One of the participants echoed the following sentiments:

*pamabasa vanowanza kuda vanhu vasina hurema...vanhu vasina hurema vanoonekwa sevanogona kushanda kudarika vanhu vanehurema. Nekudero ini kana ndichito applier basa handimbonyore kuti ndine disability kuitira ndiwedzere mukana wangu wekuwana basa(employers normally*

prefer to hire non-disabled people... non disabled people are normally perceived to be more competent than persons with disabilities. Because of that, if I am applying for employment I conceal the information that I have a disability to increase my chance of getting employed.)

Similarly, another participants said:

*ma panelists akashamisika achiona ndichipinda mu interview. Ndakangoona nemutarisire wavakaita pandakapinda mu interview room kuti nyangwe ndikapasa interview havambondipe basa. I am sure interview iyoyo ndakapasa asi nenyaya*

Failure of employers to hire persons with disabilities shows that employers still view persons with disabilities through medical model of disability trajectory that views disability as a pathological condition, and whose proponents argue that persons with disabilities are in need of rehabilitation. In addition, the unemployment of persons with disabilities due to their disabilities is contrary to social model of disabilities that argues that through social model, the disability movement has made milestones in by removing discrimination practices basing on disability. Employers' reluctance in hiring persons with disabilities is a clear indication that discrimination basing on disability still prevails.

Testimonies given by participants show that unemployment makes life hard for persons with disabilities. As a consequence of the challenge of unemployment, persons with disabilities face a myriad of challenges. In line with the consequences of challenges associated with unemployment, one participant with physical disabilities revealed that:

*nenyaya yekuti handiende kubasa ndinotoraramiswa nevehukama asi kuramba wokumbira vanhu vanotoona sekuti ndinenge ndichivanetsa(because I am unemployed I depend on my relatives for survival but continuously looking up to them is very hard they end up seeing you as a burden)*

On the same issue of consequences of unemployment, one male participant with physical disability said due to unemployment it was hard for him to pay school fees for his children, to pay rentals and the needs of his family. He narrated that:

*Ini hupenyu hwakandiamera nenyaya yekuti handiende kubasa. Ma school fees eveen handichatombozive kumabhadhara. Vana vangu vanzwa nekudzigwa apa kwandogara ndatove nema months ndisina kubhadhara rent. Nyaya yekushaiwa basa inoita tiomerwe iyi. Pamwe pachu*

*ndinototadza kutenga chikafu chevana nenyaya yekushaiwa mari nekuti handiende kubasa ( Life is hard for me because I am unemployed. I don't know when I last paid school fees for my children. My children are always chased away from school, where I am staying it's been months since I paid rent. Being unemployed make life hard for us. At times I fail to buy food for my family because I don't have money and this is due to my employment status)*

Narrations given by participants show that unemployment is one of the economic challenges facing persons with disabilities. Though this may not be generalized to the whole population as it is not in line with the characteristics of interpretivist inquiry, the researcher discovered that lack of education and employees preference of non-disabled people lead to marginalisation of persons with disabilities in the labour market. Taking the issue of lack of education as a cause of unemployment, this thesis contents advocating for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the labour market will not yield any results if they remain uneducated hence there is need to take measures aimed at ensuring that persons with disabilities are educated as this prepares them for the working world. This in line with “transformative” core tenets of critical disabilities that contend that, for persons with disabilities to be to be emancipated, there is need to change the prevailing situation (Hosking, 2008; 2011). In line with one of the core tenets critical disability theory, one can observe how due to lack of education, persons with disabilities lack power as they find it hard to participate in the labour market.

This section confirms what was highlighted in the literature review that unemployment is very common among persons with disabilities especially due to lack of education. Education and lack of education precipitates unemployment among person with disabilities. Due to lack of education, persons with disabilities are marginalised from the labour market thereby trapping persons with disabilities into poverty.

Without discouraging persons with disabilities from losing hope of participating in the labour market, the sentiments given by the participants show that if the issue of lack of education among persons with disabilities is not addressed, persons with disabilities will continue marginalised in the labour market. Most job opportunities have requirements most of them educational qualifications. Thus, for them to participate in labour market,

persons with disabilities must improve their education qualifications lest they will continue marginalised in the labour market.

To have a clear understanding of why unemployment among persons with disabilities is an economic problem, it is paramount to highlight some of the benefits of participating in the labour market. Discussing benefits of participation in the labour market helps to understand why it is paramount for persons with disabilities to participate in the labour market. A male participant with physical disabilities contented that it is paramount for one to participate in labour market as it enables him or her to meet needs. He said:

*..nenyaya yekuti handiende kubasa zvakandiomera,,, dai ndiri kubasa dai zviru nani ndaizokwanisa kubhadharira vana fees in time, kutengawo chikafuu chemhuri, kubhadhara rent in time, nekugarawo pamba parinane.(because I am unemployed, life is hard for me...if I was employed I was going to be able to pay school of my children in time, buy food for my family, pay my rentals in time and stay in a decent house)*

Adding to the benefits of participation in the labour market, a female with visual impairment narrated that if she was employed her children would not have dropped out of school. She said:

*Ini dai indaienda kubasa vana vangu vaikwanisawo kuendakuchikoro. Mwanasikana wangu wekutanga ingadai pamwe atovevwo ne degree pawe aizondichengetawo asi nenyaya yehurombo nekuti handiende kubasa, mwana wangu haana kuzoenda mberi nechikoro. ... mwana wangu mumwe mukomana aifanira kunyora form four this year asi ndakamushaira mari yeschool fees nenyaya yekuti handiende kubasa.(If I was employed my children would be going to school, Maybe by now my first born could have a degree and she was going to take care of me but because I am not gainfully employed my child could not continue with her studies.... One of my children was supposed to write O level exams this year but I couldn't pay registration fee because I am unemployed.)*

Asked on the benefits of participation in the labour market, a male with visual impairment narrated when he was employed life was easy as he would send his schools at boarding schools like Kutama. This made sure that his children got better results. However, due to unemployment, he cannot even afford to pay school fees for his children let alone at government school. He narrated that

*Ini pandaienda kubasa hupeenyu hwaiendeka vana vangu ndaivaendesa kuma boarding umwe wacho ndakamuendesa kwa Kutama uku nekuti ndaienda kubasa ais ikozvino ndisingaende kubasa ndakudzwa kubhadhara school fees pa government school chaipo.(Life was very good during the days I was employed my children used to go to boarding schools one of*

my children went to Kutama because I was gainfully employed but now that I am unemployed I can't even pay school fees at a local government school)

There are several benefits associated with formal employment, chief among them, getting medical aid, transport allowance and loans. Hence there is need to empower persons with disabilities by ensuring their participation in the labour market as this emancipate them from shackles of poverty. World Report on Disability (2018) argues that unemployment is a very common among persons with disabilities. According to Royce (2009), scarcity of job opportunities causes poverty among people because people depend on jobs for their survival. The study shows that some participants are not gainfully employed. This implies that those who are not gainfully employed do not have access to crucial benefits associated with participating in the labour market therefore they do not have anything to cushion them in times of contingencies such as sickness. Hence, they have to fork out money to pay for their services, something that very predicament considering the nexus between poverty and disability..

During focus group discussions and in-depth interviews, persons with disabilities echoed that they suffer from different social challenges associated with disability. Participants told the researcher that they suffer from low self-esteem due to name calling, discrimination and stigma. In line with objective number 2, this section presents social challenges faced by persons with disabilities.

One of the participants with physical disabilities perceive negative attitude towards persons with disabilities as the main cause of exclusion of persons with disabilities in the labour market and makes it hard for them to access loans. The participant said:

*ini ndakadzidza hangu kusvika pakuita degree asi kuti ndiwane basa zvinonetsa nekuti vemacompany havadi kutora vanhu vane hurema. Kubva zvandakabva kuchikoro handina kumbowana basa asi pamwe unenge watoona paine vacancy totoenda ku interview asi handimbowane basa nekuti ndine hurema vanofunga kuti sezvo ndine hurema handikwanise kuit basa rinoitwa nevanhu vasina hurema (I pursued my studies up to degree level but it is hard for me to secure a job because companies do not want to employ persons with disabilities. Ever since I*



completed my studies I have never been formally employed but at times you would have seen a vacancy and go for an interview but they never consider me for the post simply because i have a disability they assume that I can't perform at par with non-disabled people.)

Narratives echoed by participants show that negative attitudes towards persons with disabilities precipitate poverty among persons with disabilities. Most if not all participants concur that negative attitudes directly or indirectly trap them in shackles of poverty. World Bank (2011:262) argues that negative attitudes precipitate a disabling environment across all spheres. Through focus discussions and in-depth interviews, the researcher discovered several negative attitudes towards persons with disabilities and how these precipitate poverty and marginalisation of persons with disabilities. Negative attitudes towards persons with disabilities precipitate poverty among persons with disabilities. Due to negative attitude towards persons with disabilities, persons with disabilities are excluded in the labour market, they face difficulties to secure loans to start projects, find it hard to be enrolled at mainstream schools. Through focus group discussions and in-depth interviews, the researcher discovered that negative attitudes towards persons with disabilities precipitate poverty among persons with disabilities as they are excluded from mainstream economic activities. In addition, negative attitudes precipitate exclusion from school thus making them ill-prepared for the working world as they lack human capital. The sentiments echoed by participants resonates with social model of disability that argues that barriers inhibit participation of persons with disabilities.

This sub-section presents negative attitude towards persons with disabilities as a cause of poverty among persons with disabilities. Most if not all participants attributed poverty and high level of unemployment among persons with disabilities to negative attitudes towards persons with disabilities. Negative attitude towards persons with disabilities precipitate poverty among persons with disabilities. negative attitudes of school heads towards enrolling persons with disabilities, employers' attitude towards hiring employees with disabilities were discovered as one of the chief causes of poverty among persons with disabilities whilst negative attitude of micro-loans towards persons makes it hard for persons with disabilities to start income generating projects, in addition, due to negative attitude, it hard for

the few who are employed to be promoted. Therefore, it can be noted that negative attitude towards persons with disabilities beget high unemployment, poverty and exclusion of persons with disabilities as participants consistently blame negative attitude as the precursor of poverty among persons with disabilities.

In addition, in the above testimonies, some of the participants revealed that they are not hired due to perception that they cannot perform at par with non-disabled people this shows that economic model is still used to explain disability. Through economic model, impairments are seen as a hindrance. The narration given by participants are also in tandem with Johns Tone (2012:16) who argue that through medical model of disability, persons with disabilities are viewed as inferior to their non-disabled counterparts. Therefore, viewing persons with disabilities using economic and medical model of disability lances, employers are likely to have a negative attitude towards hiring persons with disabilities thereby precipitating unemployment among persons with disabilities.

Through in-depth interviews, participants revealed several attitudes that hinder persons with disabilities from getting educational qualification. Attitude of parents of guardians towards educating children with disabilities is one of the key determinants of school attendance. During in-depth interviews, One of the participants said :

*Ndakakura ndichigara na gogo na sekuru vaiti hatingatengese zvipfuyo kuti munhu akaremara aende kuchikoro saka ndakagumira chikoro ndiri grade 6 pakafa vabereki. Pandakatanga kugara na gogo na sekuru ndakamboenda hangu kuchikoro asi ndakazosiya sezvo vaisabhadhara fees saka ndaingodzingwa(I grew up staying with my grandparents he used to say I can't sell my livestock for a person with disability to go to school so I dropped-out of school when I was in Grade six when my parents passed on. When I started staying with my grandfather, I continued going to school but I eventually dropped-out since my grandparents were not paying school fees so I was always turned away from school)*

The narration shows the importance attitude of parents and guardians towards children with disabilities. if parents or guardians have positive attitude, children with disabilities have chance of going to school while those with negative attitude further lessens the chances of attendance among children with disabilities.

Through in-depth interviews, the researcher finds out that some school heads have negative attitude towards enrolling children with disabilities. One of the participants with visual impairment echoed that :

*kwatainotsvaga nzvimbo kwese ma headmaster vaingoti kuna mai hapana nzvimbo pano. Asi uringobva mu office wotoona mumwe munhu akupiwa nzvimbo asi head vabva kuti hapana nzvimbo. (Where we went to look for a place school heads could tell my mother that they no longer have places. But after you have left the office you could see someone being offered by the same head who would have said there are no places to enrol new students.)*

Stigmatisation of persons with disabilities is in line with religious model. The sentiment given by the participant with physical disability is a clear indication that people still view disability through religious model of disability trajectory. This model precipitates marginalisation of persons as they are regarded as a curse. These two models precipitate stigmatisation of persons with disabilities. Literature review shows that through religious model of disability, disability is associated with shame hence persons with disabilities are likely to be hidden by their families as they fear to be stigmatised and discriminated. Sedeto and Dar (2019:5) argue that societal beliefs associated with disability have implication on inclusion.

In addition, one of the participants with physical disabilities narrated that when she was young her parents used to hide her especially when there is a gathering. She narrated that the Religious model of disability associates disability with shame thereby making families of persons with disabilities hide them due to fear of stigma and discrimination (Niemann, 2005). According Rimmerman (2013), families of persons with disabilities are often marginalised in societies where people view disability through religious model lances. This model has detrimental effects to persons with disabilities as it promotes their exclusion in society, school or in the working world. Through focus group discussion, the participants echoed that they are always stigmatised and due to stigma, persons with disabilities are economic challenges (Sedeto and Dar.2019:5). The study employed critical disability theory that challenges negative attitudes towards persons with disabilities that are precipitated by non-disabled persons. The challenges facing persons with disabilities is a clear indication that negative attitudes precipitating vicious cycle among persons with disabilities must be challenged.

Through documentary analysis, the researcher discovered that stigma and stereotypes precipitate discrimination of persons with disabilities. Lack of awareness, misconception about the concept of disability especially in developing countries make people view disability through religious model lenses whereby disability is viewed as a curse or punishment. Misunderstanding of disability also contributes to discrimination of disability. Misunderstanding of disability contributes to discrimination of persons with disabilities as disability is viewed as inability.

Participants revealed that non-disabled people pass derogatory comments to them because they have impairments. Participants revealed that due to derogatory terms passed to them by non-disabled people they have low-esteem. One of the participants said:

*Kuchikoro vanhu vaindisika vachindipa mazita akasiyana siyana. Vainditarisira pasi saka ndakange ndisina confidence muclass pamwe pachoda itonyara kusimudza maoko muclass nekuti ndaizosekwa. Pamwe pachoda itonyepedzera kurwara kutira kuti ndisaende kuchikoro nekuti kuchikoro ndaisekwa nekuwanzirwa. ndakazongopedzisira ndakufoira...*

(At school people used to laugh at me and call me with different names. People looked down on me so I did not have confidence to participate in class because other pupils could laugh at me. Some days I would fake illness to avoid going to school because people mocked and laughed at me. I eventually failed...)

Language used by non-disabled have implication on the self-esteem, during focus group discussions, persons with disabilities revealed that non-disabled people used derogatory language that will in a long run affect their performance at school. One of the participants who is visually impaired revealed that:

*... Vaindideidza nemazita akasiyana siyana nenyaya yekuti ndine hurema. ndakapedzisira ndisingachasimudze maoko and zvakatozondiita nditize chikoro (They used to call me with derogatory names because I have a disability... I ended up not participating and this led me to abscond lessons)*

The sentiments echoed by participants show the power of language when dealing with persons with disabilities. This is in resonance with critical disability theory that emphasised on the power of language. According to Hosking (2008), persons with disabilities are sensitive language that used to address them. The language that is used by other people has implication on the survival strategies employed by persons with disabilities. The narration given above shows that the person with disability ending dropping out of

school due to language that was used by non-disabled pupils to address him. It has been mentioned earlier on that lack of education have implication on participation in the labour market hence dropping out of school due to language used to address persons with disabilities have implication on the survival strategy employed by persons with disabilities.

The study employed critical disability theory, a theory that emphasises the importance of language when dealing with disability issues. Language determines thoughts of people. Through focus group discussions and in-depth interviews, participants lament that people call them with derogatory language. Although all participants revealed that they were now used to derogatory language, they were not comfortable with most terminology used by non-disabled people. The use of derogatory language shows that medical model is still used by many to understand the concept of disability. Hence the need to make awareness campaigns for communities to have a better understanding of the concept of disability by employing social model of disability. The use of social model of disability is paramount as it emphasises on the need to use proper terminology.

The preceding section reflects that negative attitude towards persons with disabilities precipitate poverty, exclusion and unemployment among persons with disabilities. One of the persons with physical disabilities emphasised that employers must not have negative towards persons with disabilities as they can perform at par with non-disabled people. The participant narrates that:

*ini hangu ndinofunga kuti vema company vanofanira kungotiona sevamwe vanhu vasina hurema ava. Kana pamakanzi panodiwa munhu ane O'level, ngapatorwe munhu ane O level kwete kutarira kuti anehurema here akana kuti haana hurema. Pavanoita job advert paye kana munhu achingori nema qualifications munhu ngaangorwe as long aine am qualifications not kuita discriminate basing on disability(I think employers must just see us the way they see non-disabled people. If there is a vacancy that needs a person with O level, a person with O'level must be hired not considering if the person have a disability or not. When there is an advert for a vacancy if a person has qualifications he or she must be hired as long that person has qualifications not discriminate him or her basing on disability)*

One of the participants revealed that:

*pakutora vana kuchikoro ngavangotore mwana not kutarira kuti anehurema here , kushandisa wheelchair, madondoro hazvitadzise mwana kudzidza. ini ndakatadza kuenda kuchikoro nekuti*

*ma head aisada kundipa nzvimbo chionai nhasi handina kana subject rimwe ndiani anondipa basa ini ndisina kudzidza at least dai ndakapiwa mukana wekudzidza manje maschool head aiti kungondiona hapana nzvimbo.* (When enrolling school children they must just enrol all children and not consider the disability of the child, using wheelchair, clutches do not hinder a child from learning. I didn't get a chance to go to school simply because school head did not want to enrol me look at the situation now I don't have any subject who can hire me for a job when I am not educated if I should have been given a chance to go to school but school heads did not give me a chance.

This section discusses how persons with disabilities survive in the middle of economic depression. Though economic have impact on all people, both persons with disabilities and non-disabled people, the prevailing economic situation in Zimbabwe is likely to have detrimental impact on persons with disabilities as compared to non-disabled people. Mtetwa (2015: 32); and World Report on Disability (2018) concur that there is strong relationship between disability and poverty. In the middle of economic depression, the rate of poverty increases. Therefore, considering that persons with disabilities are prone to shackles of poverty, the prevailing economic meltdown is likely to have more impact on persons with disabilities. However, persons with disabilities do not just sit folding their hands while languishing in poverty. Persons with disabilities employ different strategies in the middle of economic depression to survive or at least remain alive. Through focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, key-informant interviews and documentary analysis, the study discovers some survival strategies employed by persons with disabilities and these include vending, begging, support from relatives and friends and income generating projects. Tamukamoyo (2009) observes how people venture into informal sector whereby they are involved in different activities such as cross-border trading, DVD and video game trading as some of the most common survival strategies employed in Zimbabwe in the middle of collapsing economy. These are however dominated by non-disabled people and due to several barriers. PWDs rarely employ same survival strategies with those employed by non-disabled people in the middle of collapsing economy. The study confirms the inequality between persons with disabilities and non-disabled people. Non-disabled people employ better and lucrative survival strategies such as cross-border trading, income generating projects such as piggery and poultry. However, survival strategies employed by most persons with disabilities are both unsustainable not lucrative.

During the in-depth interviews, some participants revealed that they survive through begging. Participants describe how they employ begging as a survival strategy reveal how they beg. One of the participants reveals that she goes to the CBD where she spent the whole day on the street corner, singing and pleading with passer-bys to help her.

One of the participants reveals that he goes to the roads that connects Harare CBD with leafy residential areas such as Chisipite, Borrowdale Brooke. He narrates:

*ndinowanzoenda kumaroada anobva mutown achienda kuma sabhabha akaita seChisipite,  
Borrowdale Brooke and Mt Pleasant...Vanhu veikoko vane mari saka mukana wangu wekupiva  
mari unenge wakati kureiwo*

(I normally go to roads that connects Harare CBD with low density areas such as Chisipite, Borrowdale Brooke and Mt Pleasant. Residents of those areas are generally well-up so I have high chances of getting something from them.

Begging is one of the most common survival strategy employed by persons with disabilities. Begging has been there since time immemorial. Though it is difficult to come up with the period when begging started, there are several factors that lead one to become a beggar. Khan *et al.* (2013); Khan (2018:1) identify several factors that causes one to become a beggar chief among them poverty, disability and national disaster. Chapter two of the study demonstrates that there is a nexus between poverty and disability. Due to poverty, persons with disabilities fail to satisfy some basic needs such as food and clothing. Hence they employ whatever possible and whatever survival strategy for them to remain alive.

Street vending has been done since time immemorial. It is crucial to observe how vending plays a pivotal role in an economy characterised with high unemployment rate. Vending is not only employed as a survival strategy by persons with disabilities. A tour of Harare Central Business District shows that vending is now a very common activity in Zimbabwe. In Harare Central Business District, both persons with disabilities and non-disabled people vend several items such as fruits, vegetables and freezits to make ends meet. Vending as for survival in almost every country across the globe and this has been done since time immemorial even in the biblical times (John 2:14... *he found people selling...*). Locally, people vend in different places such as on the streets, at shopping centres, at school gates and in cars.

Key-informants revealed that persons with disabilities are entitled to income generating projects loan facility that is offered by the government through the Ministry of Public Labour and Social Welfare. During interviews with key informant, she revealed that although PWDs are entitled to loans, the prevailing economic situation do not make the situation better. Due to the prevailing economic situation, prices are always increasing thereby making it hard for persons with disabilities to start projects. One of the key-informants revealed that:

*...vanogona kusubmitter proposal ine maquotation but painobhadharwa mariyacho ma prices ari pama quotation anenge atochinja* (Beneficiaries can submit a proposal with quotations but by the time funds are released, prices would have changed).

*...kuno tinopa vanhu ma loans ekutanga maprojects. Poultry ndiyo imwe yema projects anonyanyoitwa nemabeneficiaries asi challenge yavepo ndeyekuti maprices anyanyokwira zvekuti mainputs anodiwa papoultry akudhura zvekuti mari yacho haitokwane kuti munhu atange project sezvo mainputs akakwira* ( ...here we give loans to start projects. Poultry is one of the main projects done by participants however, one of the challenges is that prices have skyrocketed such that inputs required for one to start a project are now too expensive such that the amount one is entitled is insufficient for one to start a project as prices of inputs have skyrocketed)

One of the key-informants echoed that most of the people who benefited through the loan facility are failing to reimburse the funds they get through the loan facility, something that she attributes to the prevailing economic situation. Due to inflation, some projects have failed. After selling their products, beneficiaries are failing to continue with their projects as they are incurring losses in their projects. The sentiments by key-informants show that income generating projects are severely affected by the prevailing economic situation.

Venturing into income generating projects shows that persons with disabilities are not charity cases as argued by the charity model of disability. Employing the same survival strategy with that employed by non-disabled people is also contrary to the economic model that argues how impairments hinder performance of persons with disabilities. This is line with critical disability theory and social model of disability that argue that persons with disabilities can perform at par with non-disabled people if barriers that hinder their participation are removed.



Through focus group discussion and in-depth interviews, some participants revealed that they have received aid from different organisations. Focus group discussion with persons with disabilities and focus group discussion with persons with physical disability find out that both persons with visual impairment and persons with physical disability have received food and non-food hand-outs from different organisations. Different organisations as churches and the business community through corporate social responsibility give persons with disabilities food and non-food items. Participants revealed that churches and different organisations give them food items such as rice, cooking oil and sugar. Non-food items given to persons with disabilities include clothes, washing and bathing soaps.

*... tinombopiwa magrocery akaita sesipo dzekuwachisa nedzekugezesa, surf, mafuta ekubikisa, hembe nemachira nemachurch arimuno nemamwe maorganisation arimuno mu Glenview nenzimbo dzaka poteredza(... sometimes we get groceries such as washing soaps, bathing soaps, surf, cooking oil, clothes and blankets from churches and organisations in Glenview and other neighbouring areas.)*

Hence different organisations play a pivotal role in ensuring that persons with disabilities access some basic needs therefore the aforementioned organisations are paramount for the survival of persons with disabilities in the middle of economic depression. The testimonies given by above shows that persons with disabilities are still viewed through charity model trajectory. The charity model argues that persons with disabilities are people in need of help from well-wishers. What organisations and churches are doing is in tandem with charity model of disability.

Through focus group discussions and in-depth interviews, the study discovers that depending on relatives and friends is one of the survival strategies commonly employed by persons with disabilities in the middle of economic depression. Helping each other have always been there especially among shone people and this is in line with Ubuntu philosophy. Some said they depend on support from relatives and friends for their survival. The participants said they get support from friends and relatives every month. Those who received support from relatives and friends echoed that they mainly depend on support from friends and relatives for their survival.

Adding on the getting support from friends and relatives for survival, One of the participants revealed that :

*Hama neshamwari vaisimbondipawo mari nemagrocery asi nekukwira kurikuit zvinhu uku vakutoomerwawo. Mukoma wangu ndiye anosibhadharira vana vangu fees asi ma term maviri apfuura havana kutobhadharirwa nenyaya yekuomerwa kwaakaitwa... asi tinodawo kuti tivandudzwe tikwanisa kuita zveduwo ( Relatives and friends used give me money and groceries however, due to increase in prices of goods , it is hard for them. My brother is the one who used to pay school fees for my children but the schools fees for the past two terms is yet to be paid as my brother is struggling to make ends meet...we need to be empowered for us to be independent)*

Although participants who took part in the study revealed that they were thankful to their friends and relatives who support them in different ways, they generally echoed that what they need most was to be empowered. Empowering persons with disabilities is paramount as it removes dependency syndrome and by being empowered, participants echoed that they will cease to be seen as “burden”. The idea of the need to be empowered in tandem with Choruma (2007:12) who argues that empowering persons with disabilities is the best way to alleviate poverty among persons with disabilities.

Public assistance is one of the main sources of income among persons with disabilities. Public assistance is non-contributory in nature and is provided by the government through the Social Welfare Assistance Act (Chapter 17: 06. Key-informants highlighted public assistance as one of the main sources of income among persons with disabilities. One of the key-informants said:

*Vanhu vane disability vanopiwa chibage ku social welfare iripedyo navo (they are given grain at the nearest social welfare office)*

The programme is run by the government through the Ministry of Public Service, Labor and Social Welfare. Through focus in-depth interviews, some participants said they are benefiting from the programme. They however lamented that the income they get through public assistance is too small. One female who is visually impaired said:

*tinombopiwa mari ye public assistance ma \$20-00 asi mari yacho haina hayo chainokwana (we receive monetary benefits through public assistance amounting to \$20-00 but the amount cannot buy anything)*

The sentiment given by the key-informant and the participant shows that public assistance is one of the survival strategies employed by persons with

disabilities. The prevailing economic situation even makes the situation worse considering that the rate of USD/RTGS is now at 1:5 on parallel market. Inferring from the prevailing rate, one can observe how beneficiaries of public assistance are getting USD\$4-00. The figure is far below poverty datum line. Hence persons with disabilities continue to languish in poverty despite benefiting from a social protection programme.

Participating in the labour market is one of the survival strategies that is employed by persons with disabilities in the middle of economic depression. One of the participants who was interviewed by the researcher revealed that he is gainfully employed. Answering to the research question on his occupation, a male who have a physical disability revealed that :

*Ini hangu ndinosevenza. Kunyangwe hangu basa rangu ndisingagutsikane naro at least ndinowanawo salary. (I am gainfully employed. Although I am not satisfied with my job at least I have a source of income.)*

The sentiment given by the participant shows that persons with disabilities also participate in labour market. This is contrary to the charity model of disability that argues that persons with disabilities are people in need of charity and they must be taken care of by their non-disabled counterparts. The participation of persons with disabilities in the labour market is in resonance with the critical disability theory that argues that person with disabilities can perform at par with non-disabled people.

This sections presents the effectiveness of participation in the labour market, income generating projects, begging, and street vending, depending on family and friends for survival and other survival strategies discussed in the preceding section.

Answering the question of efficacy of survival strategies employed by persons with disabilities, one of the participants who is visually impairment narrated that the income that she get through begging is insufficient for her to meet needs. The participant said:

*..ini mari yandinowana mukukumbira haitombo kwane kana chinhu . mari yechiokafu chaiyo inotomboshaikwa pamba (...the income that I get through begging is cannot buy anything, at times I fail to buy food for the family.)*

Adding on to issue of effectiveness of survival strategies, one of the participants with physical disabilities echoed that:

*Ini vana vangu vatove nemakore vasina kubhadharirwa fees. Kamari kandinowana pamusika kanongokwana mari yechikafu yezuva iroro. Ini ndine mwana ave ku secondary asi tinongoshandisa one room ndozvongo ratidza kuti zvakatiomera. Dai ichikwana taaigarawo kana mu one room. (it has been long since I paid school fees for my children. The income that I get through street vending is only sufficient for me to buy food. I have a child who is now at secondary level but we still share the same room that shows thing are not well for us. If the income was enough I would not be staying in one room.)*

Testifying on the same debate, one of the persons with visual impairment narrated that it was hard to depend on family and relatives as they also face challenges hence they can are not always able to meet my needs. The participant said

*Zvekunyanyo tarisira kubva kuhama neshamwari izvi zvinonetsa nekuti pamwe pachu ndinewo zvandinenege ndichida asi vanogina kutoomerwa nekuti vanewo vana vanenge vachida kuchengetwa saka mamwe mazuva kutomborara nenzara. (You cannot entirely depend on family and relatives for support because at times I am in need of something but they may fail to provide me because they have a family to look after sometimes I sleep without eating anything.)*

On the contrary, one of the participants revealed that his survival strategy was effective as it enables him to meet his needs. The participant narrated that

*ini ndine project yehuku hangu... handizoshayewo yechikafu nekuchengeta mhuri. (I have a poultry project...the income that I get through the project is sufficient to meet the needs of my family.)*

Adding on the view that some of the strategies, one male participant who is formally employed narrated that although he is not satisfied with the income that he gets, the income is sufficient for him to meet his basic needs and live a decent life. He narrated that:

*Ini hangu mari yandinowana kubasa handingatiki yakawanda zvekundifadza kana kuti zvekuti ndigutsikane, Mari yandinowana inokwana hayo chikafu nekuendesha vana kuchikoro. (I can't brag that my income is very much or that it satisfies me. My income is enough to buy food and pay school fees for my children.)*

The testimony by this participants with a poultry project and the one who is gainfully employed contradicts Groce *et al.* (2014); Mtetwa (2015)'s argument that disability is synonymous with poverty. Though poverty is a multifaceted concept, in evaluating the effectiveness of survival strategies, absolute poverty was the bench mark used in evaluating effectiveness of the strategies. World

Bank (2017) defines absolute poverty as deprivation of human needs. In identifying human needs, Maslow hierarchy of needs was used to evaluate if the income accumulated through one's survival strategy enables one to meet physiological needs. The testimony shows that some of the strategies although they may not necessarily eradicate poverty, some of the strategies are effective in poverty alleviation. They are effective in poverty alleviation because they ensure persons with disabilities meet their needs hence they are efficacious.

One of the participants with visual impairment narrated that she depends on donations and from friends for survival. She said:

*Ini ndinototemba chikafu nemagumbeze atinombopiwa nevemachurch. Pamwe pachovanombotadza kutipa vema church tinotoshaiwa todii. Pane gore ravasina kutipa machira munguva yechando. (I depend on food and blankets that I get from churches. At times they do not give us and this leaves us wanting. There was a time when they didn't give us blankets in winter season)*

The sentiment shows that disability is still viewed through charity model trajectory. The narration further shows that the model is not developmental and creates depends among beneficiaries hence the need to use developmental approaches in addressing the needs of persons the disabilities.

The above presentations show that persons with disabilities are not passive recipients of economic vows as they engage in several activities to make ends meet. This section presents some of the survival strategies employed by persons with disabilities in the middle of economic depression. One participant is gainfully employed while those who are unemployed engage in activities such as begging, vending and income generating projects. Family and relatives also play a pivotal role in the lives of persons with disabilities as they help them through several ways. Churches and other organisations also play a pivotal role in the lives of persons with disabilities. Ten out of fifteen participants mentioned that churches and organisations operating in Glenview and surrounding areas always give them food and non-food items.

During the study, the researcher asked participants on their level of satisfaction with the income that they get through survival strategy that they employ. Only two persons with disabilities expressed satisfaction. One of the participants who expressed satisfactions gave the following testimony:

*ini hangu handinga complainer, ka project kehuku kangu karikundiwanisa cheuviri. Ndokwanisa kubhadharira vana school fees kuburikidza neka project ikako. I can't complain*  
(I have a small poultry project that is giving me something for survival. Through the project, I am able to pay school fees for my children.)

Through focus group discussions and in-depth interviews, the researcher finds out that most survival strategies employed by persons with disabilities are ineffective in alleviation of poverty. One of the participant who survives through begging lamented that:

*mamwe mazuva ndogona kutoshaiwa kana yebhazi yekudzokera kumba. Mhuri kumba yotorara nenzara ... uku mari yerent panopera mwedzi inenge ichidiwa ye school fees panovhurwa inenge ichidiwa but mari ycho yandinowana haitombokwani . Ndinotogara pamba pasina mvura nemagetsi nekuti magets nemvura handingambozvikanisi...*  
(Some days I can fail to raise money for transport. My family will sleep without eating anything... I also have to pay rent at the end of the month, I also have to pay school fees but the income that I get is insufficient. I stay at a house with no electricity and tap water because I don't afford paying electricity and water bills... )

Although persons with disabilities employ different survival strategies to make ends meet, the study shows most participants do not afford nutritious food and decent accommodation. Failure of persons with disabilities to live a decent life is due to levels of income they get from their survival strategies. The study finds that most of the income is far below poverty datum line. Due to low levels of income, persons with disabilities fail to afford nutritious meals , reduce the number of meals per day and live in unsuitable accommodation. This is in tandem with literature that argues that there is a strong relationship between poverty and disability.

Some participants lamented that they were extremely dissatisfied with the income they get through survival strategies that they employ. The income obtained through public assistance is extremely low one of the participants echoed that:

*kamari kacho keku social welfare uku kashoma hatikwanise kutenga kana chikafu nako* (the money we get through social welfare is insufficient such that we cannot afford to buy food).

The sentiment echoed by the participant concurs with Groce et (2014) who argued that ideally persons with disabilities must be able to meet their needs

through social protection scheme, the benefits can be insufficient for persons with disabilities to meet their needs. The participants lamented that the benefits they are entitled to are inadequate for them to meet their basic needs thus using the definition of poverty given by UN that defines poverty as deprivation of basic needs, one can observe how the participants continue to languish in poverty despite being entitled to those benefits.

Low-income among participations is in line with literature that was reviewed in chapter two that argues that there is a strong relationship between low-income and disability ( Groce *et al.*, 2014). The sentiments given by the participant shows that street vending is not a sustainable survival strategy as vendors are often banned in doing their business. Therefore there is need to empower persons with disabilities for them to employ better and dependable survival strategies.

The chapter has managed to present, analyse and discuss findings that were obtained through different research methods that were employed by researcher to conduct the study on survival strategies employed by persons with disabilities in the middle of economic depression. These were discussed in line with theoretical frameworks that guided the research literature that was reviewed in chapter two of this monograph. The chapter has highlighted the employment status of persons with disabilities. Factors that bring about unemployment among persons with disabilities were presented, analysed and discussed in the chapter. Several survival strategies that are employed by persons with disabilities in the middle of economic depression, chief among them, vending, begging, support from relatives and friends, have been presented. Participants expressed dissatisfaction on the survival strategies that they employ citing that most of the survival strategies are unsustainable and unreliable.