Australian women living with disabilities and employment from 2014 to 2018

By

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CONTENTS

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ABS: Australian Bureau of Statistics

ACDA: Australian Cross Disability Aliance

ADEs: Australian Disability Enterprises

AFDO: Australian Federation of Disability Organisation

AHRC: Australian Human Rights Commission

DDA: Disability Discrimination Act

DEA: Disability Employment Australia Organisation

DES: Disability Employment Services

DPO: Disabled People's Organisation

DPO: Disabled People's Organisations Australia

DSS: Department of Social Services

FWA: Fair Work Act

GOA: Government of Australia

ILO: International Labor Organisation

LGBTQA+: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer/Questioning, Asexual and many other terms

MWD: Men living with disabilities

NDIA: National Disability Insurance Agency

NDIS: National Disability Insurance Scheme Act

NDS: National Disability Strategy

NGO(s): Non-profit Organisation(s)

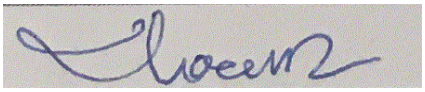
OECD:	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PWD:	People living with disabilities
pwd:	people with disability organisation
UN:	United Nations
CEDAW:	The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CRPD:	The Convention on the Right of People with Disabilities
ICESCR:	The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural rights
WB:	The World Bank
WGEA:	Workplace Gender Equality Agency
WHO:	The World Health Organsiation
WWDA:	Women with Disability Australia Organisation
WWDACT:	Women with disability ACT
WWDQLD:	Women with disability Queensland
WWDSA:	Women with disability South Australia
WWDWA:	Women with disability Western Australia
WWD:	Women living with disabilities

SUMMARY

Research and statistics show that Australian women living with disabilities (WWD) are facing multiple layers of disadvantage with regards to labour force participation, compared to women without disability, or men with disabilities (MWD). The Government of Australia endeavours to improve the employment of people with disabilities (PWD) through legislative change. However, there is a lack of research assessing NGOs (Non-profit Organisations) roles in supporting WWD into work in Australia. The purpose of this research is to assess how two NGOs, namely Women with Disabilities in Australia (WWDA) and Disability Employment Australia (DEA) have supported WWD to secure employment during the period of 2014-2018. This analysis is informed by Marxist Feminism, Intersectionality and Feminist Disability Theory, and analysed the NGOs across 7 key themes: 1) awareness raising to strengthen employment opportunities for WWD, 2) inclusion WWD in their activities, advocacy and reports, 3) intersectionality in diverse cultural and social background groups 4) partnership development to strengthen their voice and results, 5) discrimination against disability in employment, 6) telling WWDs' stories: mapping the importance of employment for WWD 7) types of disability with different barriers in employment. In the thesis, I argue that while NGOs have been partially successful in their strategies to support WWD to gain employment, WWD in Australia are not sufficiently supported through this work by NGOs and continue to be disadvantaged due to a lack of gender responsive action. Further focus on gender, disability and employment of NGOs, representative of the various disability groups is needed, to boost the labour rates for WWD in Australia.

DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Signed: 

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This chapter will introduce the thesis through four main sections. The first section outlines the research problem, explaining why the issue of employment for Australian women living with disabilities (WWD) is important as a focus of study. The second section provides the social and political context for the issue, providing the most recent statistics about Australian WWD and their work and employment status, along with the hurdles that impede their participation in the labour force. The third section provides a brief overview of the government's employment aid measures for Australian people living with disabilities (PWD), and more specifically for WWD, including both legal frameworks and employment support programs. In this section, there will be a discussion about NGOs' (Non-profit Organisations) roles in implementing programs supporting employment opportunities for PWD. In the final two segments, my research questions and the objectives of the study are elucidated and clarified. The last section will outline the structure of the thesis.

I.1 Research problem

> *'The sad reality is that there are many employers who just won't employ us- they see us as a burden and a 'cost'. I have been to so many job interviews in my life- I have qualifications, but I always miss out. I'm always old that its 'merit based' but I don't believe this. It is demoralising when you go for interview after interview and you know you can do the job- but you are never given a change. I am certainly not 'unemployable'- but how am I supposed to change discriminatory attitudes'*
>
> (WWDWA 2014, p.10)

By opening with this statement from a case study, it is clear that the issue of work and employment for WWD is crucial and essential to study due to a number of important issues. First and foremost, it addresses a social issue: WWD universally, are among the most vulnerable, marginalized and disadvantaged groups. Globally, women have higher incidences of varying disabilities and they also endure double vulnerabilities or handicaps on the grounds of their gender and disability (Schur 2004, p. 253; WHO & WB 2011, p. 262; Disabled World 2019). Compared to men with disabilities (MWD) and women without disability, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) (2019a) notes that WWD have lower employment and income levels, higher poverty rates (Schur 2003, p.56) and high rates of unemployment. This is replicated in findings discovered by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries (UN n.d.). For example, in Australia, the disability employment rate (53.4%) is much lower than that of the non-disability employment

rate (83.2%) and the proportion of WWD (49.4%) in employment is lower than that of MWD (57.8%) (ABS 2016a).

Secondly, it addresses a theoretical gap: employment for WWD historically, has been largely ignored by disabilities studies, gender scholarship and feminist movements (Traustadottir 1990, p.1; Pokempner & Roberts 2001 p. 425; Harriss-White 2003, p.2). According to Margaret A. Nosek and Rosemary B. Hughes (2003, p. 225), despite their greater numbers, WWD have been particularly neglected in much of the research about disability and work, (Jans & Stoddard 1999, p. 15). While the general issues of gender inequality in employment have been noted since the 1980s (Tong 2009, p. 53), WWD are too often left out of such discussions when addressing, for example, feminism and equal wages (Kim 2019). Explicating this problem, Sarah Kim (2019) suggests it may be a lack of awareness by non-disabled feminists about the intersections of feminism and disability that are causal to inattention to the issues faced by WWD.

Finally, this thesis addresses an issue of social justice: work and employment are vital to advance independence for WWD, since this helps generate income, and build social networks to prevent material hardship, poverty and isolation (Lonsdale 1990, pp. 89-90). On a larger scale, not only do WWD derive benefits from employment, but businesses, governments and the economy also gain financial and social advantages (AHRC 2016, p. 50). Without employment, the effects of 'double discrimination' for WWD may also bring about 'severe depression and despair' which then become further impediments to work (Halib 1995, pp. 50-51). Hence employment opportunities should include WWD to ensure their equal rights with others in society.

As such, more studies are needed that provide a comprehensive understanding about the barriers WWD face regarding employment and, most importantly, focus on solutions that the government and NGOs in Australia are needing to or are currently undertaking.

We can see that the government have developed and adopted policies or programs on employment for PWD, but the research here will show that it is NGOs who do more to monitor or implement such policies. Currently, NGOs directly implement most of the disability employment programs, hence understanding how NGOs function in this area is crucial for comprehending the quality of implementing policies and relevant programs. It is hoped that further studies of these NGOs and these programmes will lead to finding solutions for a further increase in participation in Australia labour markets by WWD, in order to improve inclusion in society and financial independence.

I.2 Australian women with disabilities and their employment issues.

According to the survey conducted by the ABS in 2015 and released in 2016, there were 4.3 million Australians living with one or multiple forms of disability, accounting for 18.3% of the total population. Women have slightly higher incidences (18.6%) compared to their male counterparts (18.0%) (ABS 2016a).

Employment statistics, in Australia, show that 2.1 million PWD are in the working age range. As discussed above, the percentage of WWD in employment is lower than MWD. Breaking this down further, WWD have higher rates of employment on a part time basis (WWD 26.2%, MWD 15.7%) with lower rates of full-time employment compared to MWD (WWD 18%, MWD: 38.1%) (ABS 2016a). This differentiation may correlate closely to the lower income rates for WWD and a higher risk of gender and disability discrimination than that experienced by their male counterparts. These experiences, encountered by Australian WWD in employment, are similar to other WWD worldwide.

In summary, in Australia, PWD in general, have lower job rates and lower income rates than people without disabilities. Among these disadvantaged groups, WWD in Australia, are the most vulnerable, have somewhat higher incidences of disabilities, higher rates of profound core activity limitation, lower job rates and suffer a higher risk of discrimination compared to MWD.

I.3 How women with disabilities are supported to access work.

In Australia, both the government and NGOs play a key role in successfully aiding PWD to be included in society. The government of Australia have developed some specific support measures in terms of both legal frameworks and employment support programs, while NGOs are more active in the delivery of these policies under government instructions or other advocacy activities.

The Government of Australia

In terms of legislation; policies, relevant to human rights, disability services, equal opportunities and disability, were formulated to protect PWD from discrimination in employment. These include the Human Rights Commission Act (1981), the Disability Services Act, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Act (1986) and the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) (1992). These Acts, as James O'Brien and Ian Dempsey (2004, p. 132) argued, aimed to strengthen the environment in terms of politics and legislation for the enhancement of disability employment opportunities in Australia. In respect to

employment, The Fair Work Act (2009), the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) (CRPD), the Workplace Gender Equality Act *(*2012) and the National Disability Strategy (NDS) (2010–2020) also aim to advance disability employment strategies and increase equal employment opportunities for WWD.

The most recent National Disability Insurance Scheme Act (2013) (NDIS) has been a significant development within the government, for supporting equal work rights for PWD (Kayess, Sands, & Fisher 2014, p. 383; AHRC 2016, pp. 408-411; Xu & Stancliffe 2019, p. 51). The NDIS focuses on increasing social and economic participation for PWD. Through this scheme, PWD are to receive both direct and indirect support for taking part in the labour force, through individual and customized plans developed by PWD and Disability Service providers, in which personal goals, the steps to reach these goals and the monitoring of these are clearly indicated (NDIS 2019).

Regarding employment support programmes, PWD in both the long and short term, are able to access vocational training or training on job seeking and retention skills through Australian Disability Enterprises (ADEs) which focus on sheltered employment (DSS 2019). In addition, there are the Disability Employment services (DES) which focus on open employment (DEA 2019c). PWD may access the ADEs through their NDIS registration or DES through JobAcess websites (DSS 2019).

In addition to paying direct attention to PWD, the government was also alerted to the necessity of creating accessible working environments, by funding employers who recruited employees with disabilities. This ensured accessibility for PWD, including fair physical working conditions, working tools and devices (Job Access 2019).

Australian Non-profit Organisations

Where the government, in order to better assist PWD, set up legal frameworks to protect their rights, creating a platform for further job opportunities and a fund for employment support programs (DSS 2009), NGOs are 'on the ground'. They provide other indirect support (such as advocacy activities, contributions to policy development) or direct support (on-the job training, job seeking and job matching). NGOs collaborate with government's agencies to deliver the activities supporting PWD in employment and to also advocate for policy reform (Kayess, Sands, & Fisher 2014, p. 385) to provide better conditions for PWD in employment.

In this research, therefore, two specific NGOs will be assessed, these are Women with Disabilities Australia, representing WWD in Australia (WWDA n.d.b) and Disability Employment Australia (DEA), being the peak organization of Disability Employment Service (DES) providers (DEA 2019a). These NGOs have been selected due to their representation of WWD and of the disability employment sector, which are the most relevant to the research area. Both of them focus on disability and employment in different ways. WWDA focuses on a broad range of issues including employment for WWD in particular, while the DEA pays attention to PWD in general, with their specific focus being 'disability employment services'. As I discussed above, while we know something about government support, very few studies have been undertaken to explore how NGOs support WWD into work. The numbers of WWD assisted into work may depend largely on the quality of implementation of policy and supporting programs of a particular NGO. Hence, these NGO's have been selected as the focus of this study.

I.4 Research questions

As previously discussed, PWD have become a focus of government policy and service provision. However, as I have also argued above, the rates of employment for WWD are low compared with MWD and women without disability. In addition, little research has been undertaken to assess how NGOs support WWD into work. Hence, the research question is: How have Australian NGOs intervened in the needs of Australian WWDs in relation to employment in the five-year period from 2014-2018?

I.5 Research aims and objectives

In order to address the research question, this thesis focuses on the work two NGOs – the DEA and WWDA – and aims to assess the ways in which they support Australian WWD into work, through analysis of their annual reports from 2014-2018. The objectives are as follows:

- To outline to support programmes and activities provided by DEA and WWDA;
- To discover the strength and weaknesses of DEA and WWDA's approaches in supporting WWD into work;
- To propose practical recommendations.

I.6 Thesis structure

The remainder of the study will be structured as follows. Chapter 2 will provide definitions of gender and disability and how these understandings are informed by Marxist Feminism, Intersectionality and Feminist Disability Theory. Chapter 3 will review the current literature on employment for PWD/WWD and gender internationally, and within Australia. Chapter 4 presents an overview of the operations of two NGOs (DEA and WWDA). Chapter 5 will cover the research methodology selected to collect and analyse data. Chapter 6 will demonstrate the findings and present the discussion of the study. The final chapter will present an overview of the findings, recommendations to NGOs, the research limitations and the recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

This chapter contains three key sections. Firstly, it will outline and define the two key concepts which will flow throughout and shape the research: gender and disability. In the following section, I will explore how these understandings of gender and disability are informed by the theoretical frameworks that underpin the analysis, namely Marxist Feminism, Intersectionality and Feminist Disability Theory. These theories will be employed to scrutinize and understand how and what assistance is given to WWD to participate in the labour force through the work shown in the case study, the NGOs and their roles.

II.1 Main concepts

II.1.1 Gender

Since the early 1970's, 'gender' as a term and as a specific theory has been utilized in a number of scholarly fields (Jackson 1998, p. 131) as means to understand gender inequality. There is no room in this thesis to explore the many different theoretical approaches to gender across the different scholarly fields – as such. For the purposes of this thesis, I will draw on theories that broadly argue that gender is a social construction. In particular I draw on the insights from sociology, which argue that gender is described as the cultural, psychological and social practices that construct the distinct roles of men and women in specific contextual circumstances (West & Zimmerman 1987, p. 125; Giddens 1997, p. 91 and Lindsey 2011, p. 4). Gender, then, is considered socially constructed through learned practices and, as argued by West and Zimmerman (1987, p. 126), people are 'doing gender' through daily mutual interactions. In her research, Anna Mary Harewood (2014, pp. 9-10) revealed that gender is produced under structural and institutional practices where its conceptualization disadvantages women and advantages men. As a result, gender definitions are regarded partly as mechanisms of inequality between men and women. John J. Macionis (2001, p. 326) also maintains that this social construction of gender affects both the 'opportunities and constraints' of males and females in daily life. More specifically, in 2015, David Knights (p. 203) argued that gender distinctions that are simply binary (male/female as two distinct genders) reinforce 'discriminatory and hierarchical judgements,' particularly in the employment context. In these environments, Gemma Wright (2015, p. 6), states that it is hard to change 'dominant gender work cultures' that particularly affect women working in management positions, in 'masculine' dominated fields. The meanings ascribed to gender regulate men and women and bring about more drawbacks for women. When

employing this term in the workplace environment, women tend to be more discriminated against and face more barriers as members of the labour force.

II.1.2 Disability

The term ‘disability’ has been interpreted through three different perspectives in disability studies, known as the medical, social and social relational models (Longtin 2009, p. 11, Martin 2013, pp. 2030-2031, Wright 2017, pp. 11-14). Firstly, (historically one of the first ‘models’ used to define PWD), to the medical model, ‘disability is conceptualized as a physiological condition that requires correction through appropriate rehabilitation and/or medical treatment’ (Areheart 2008, p. 186). Expanding on this medical model approach, Katie Wright (2017, p. 11) argues that PWD are then ‘seen as ‘broken’ or ‘defective’, ‘pitied’ therefore need to be ‘fixed’ or ‘cured’’. As a result, many scholars critique this model, in particular because they overlook the social and environmental factors (Pearson 2012, p.13). However, globally, in legislation, this medical model still often seems to be applicable; such as through ‘Americans with Disabilities of 1990 (Office of the Legislative Counsel n.d., p. 4) and the Australian Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Australian Government - Federal Register of Legislation n.d., pp. 4-5). Other research posits the social model of disability. It elucidates disability as a ‘social construction shaped by societal forces’ rather than simply a medical condition (Pearson 2012, p. 6). According to this model, ‘disability is a form of oppression created by social institutions such as: education, family, housing, finance, employment, culture, and the built environment,’ (Pearson 2012, p. 6). This model sheds light on the differentiation of disability, referring to the socially generated system of discrimination that oppresses PWD because of their impairment, instead to ‘functional limitation’ for PWD (Longtin 2009, p. 12). Thus, this framework shifts focus away from the biological condition requiring ‘correction’ to external factors of physical environment in institutions such as components related to society, economies, politics, history, culture and education (Pearson 2012, pp. 12-13).

In response to critiques of the medical and social models, a social relational model of disability proposes that the physical difficulties and barriers in terms of society and environment are impairments that all occur concomitantly (Martin 2013, p. 2031). In 1999, Carol Thomas (p. 60) defined this model, stating it “is a form of social oppression involving the social imposition of restrictions of activity on people with impairments and the socially engendered undermining of their psycho-emotional wellbeing”. Hence, applying this definition, according to Thomas Carol (2007) disability is recognised as: 1) ‘barriers to doing’,

2) ‘impairment effects’, and 3) ‘barriers to being’ (cited in Wright 2017, pp. 13-14). This model is more reasonable and logical since it integrates both the medical and social models but adds lived experiences and context to these, and as a result is more comprehensive (Martin 2013, p. 2031).

II.2 Theoretical frameworks

As already indicated, this study will highlight how the two NGOs, WWDA and DEA, support WWD to access job opportunities and will look at the specific initiatives and information from 2014-2018. To do that, several theoretical frameworks including Marxist Feminism, Intersectionality and Feminist Disability Theory will be employed to explore, understand and analyse the discrimination experienced by WWD in employment. Hence, in the following section, I will outline how these theoretical frameworks are helpful to this study.

II.2.1 Marxist feminism

There are several advantages to using Marxism to elucidate gender inequality in employment. Firstly, Marxism is the first theory that questioned women’s oppression or gender inequality in capitalist societies. Marx helped to identify how capitalism oppressed women through its structures, processes and contradictions, resulting in furthering inequalities between men and women (Gimenez 2005, pp. 11 -18). Strongly focussing on ‘the social relations of economic oppression and exploitation’(Acker 1999, p.46), Marx proved gender inequality was rooted in the structure of capitalism. This was further demonstrated by Engels, who indicated that capitalism actually intensified ‘male domination in three ways: creating more wealth therefore conferring more power on men; turning women into consumers; and freeing men to work in factories and assigning women to housework’ (Macionis 2001, p. 334).

Using Marxist methodology, Martha Gimenez (2005, pp. 23-24) scrutinized how production determined and subordinated reproduction and how this affected the subordination of women. In particular, in her understanding of Marx’s writing, capital accumulation turned male workers into the main source of economic survival through wages, whereas their female counterparts took on both paid work and unpaid domestic work. She also further argued that the structure of capitalism allocated women primarily to the domestic sphere or reproductive labour and only secondarily to paid (waged or salaried) labour. By this, the differences in economic, social and politic power were established.

Hence, Marxist feminist insights are helpful because they shed light on gender inequality and employment. However, women are not all affected in the same way in relation to employment. So, this thesis draws on a further theoretical framework to analyse how women differ in terms of social location, race, and class, in particular, how gender intersects with disability causing double disadvantages for WWD access to the labour market.

II.2.2 Intersectionality

As the human experience is complex and diverse, there is a need to take into account the factors that influence the social position and social locations of women in differing ways. While Marxist feminism focuses on 'women' and class/inequality, this thesis draws attention to the particular experiences of disabled women. As such, this study draws on how the intersections of 'disability' and 'women/gender' affect employment and therefore class location. These different parameters of identity interact to contribute to the ways social inequality affects different women in different ways (Loeb et al. 2013, p. 172). Thus, intersectionality is useful because it comprises the "interlocking oppressions," (Peter, Alem & Knabe 2018, p. 269; Haegele, Yessick & Zhu 2018, p. 209). Intersectionality, as Naples, Mauldin and Dillaway (2019, p. 5) stated, teases out the complexities of the intersections among race, gender, class, sexuality and ability along with other dimensions including factors of society, culture, politics and economy.

Furthermore, intersectionality is regarded as a very valuable framework for analysing marginalization, exclusion, and the oppression experienced by WWD. This framework recognizes the pervasive effects of gender inequalities that affect all women, and the other factors such as disability, that contribute to multiple layers of discrimination (Moodley & Graham 2015, p. 31; Erevelles & Minear 2010, pp. 141-142; Nguyen & Mitchell 2014, p. 330). Intersectional theory, according to Harewood (2014, p. 10) strengthens the comprehension of gender differentiation and gender inequalities that are mutually constructed by other forms of difference and inequality including race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, and age.

Finally, this theory also assesses the construction of power relations. Using this analytical tool, the attention to "inequality, relationality, power, social context, complexity, and social justice" are all centred upon, and show that not all women's experiences are the same (Hill & Bilge 2016, pp. 27-29). Hence, by drawing on this framework, the themes of race, ethnicity, class, sexuality and age generally contribute to an understanding of how multiple identities (femaleness, disability) have influenced disadvantages in employment (Haegele, Yessick & Zhu 2018, p. 306).

Through this theory, it is true that diverse forms of power and inequality are incorporated into the analytical framework. However, according to Naples, Mauldin and Dillaway (2019, p. 10), disability tends to be neglected in most contemporary intersectionality studies. Hence, it is essential to apply a further theoretical framework, such as Feminist Disabilities Studies, to enhance the understanding of these issues.

II.2.3 Feminist Disability Theory

In order to strengthen the study of the experiences of WWD in employment, Feminist Disability Theory is indispensable, since it probes identity, theorizes intersectionality, and investigates embodiment (Garland-Thomson 2005, p. 1559). Firstly, while feminism critiques how women are understood and disadvantaged, disability studies describe how PWD are disabled by exclusion due to inaccessibility. Building on the strengths of both scholarships, feminist disability theory probes the identity of both women and those with disabilities (Garland-Thomson 2011, p. 14). Secondly, because it interweaves gender and disability, Feminist Disability Theory helps to reimagine both disability (Garland-Thomson 2005, p. 1557) and gender (Kim 2011, p. 1). As such, this theory consolidates WWD' experiences into both scholarly fields but also transforms the two studies (Garland-Thomson 2011, pp .13-18). Thirdly, this theoretical framework reveals how people with various differences (physical, mental and emotional) were viewed as defective and excluded from society (Knoll 2012, p. 49). Disability instead defined as a vector of identity constructed by society and a form of embodiment, (Garland-Thomson 2005, pp. 1558-1559; Knoll 2012, p. 49). Lastly, Feminist Disability Theory contribute to a vast body of 'critical cultural work' to comprehend how disability has been excluded by the whole system and discriminated against due to human differences and how thus disability can be framed 'as an effect of power relations' (Garland-Thomson 2005, p. 1557). To sum up, Marxist feminism is an important tool to unpack the social inequalities caused by capitalism and the particular effects on women, while intersectionality and feminist disability frameworks explore and elucidate why women living with disabilities face a double burden of discrimination in terms of both embodiment and employment. Hence, feminist disability theories are crucial for analysing race, gender, class, sexuality, and the body and can provide crucial insights into the myriad forms of gendered oppression (Kim 2011, p.1).

CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter will canvass the current research on disability, employment and gender, both internationally and within Australia. The current gaps in research on WWD in employment will be revealed. In particular, it will show how the roles of NGOs are under-researched. By exploring the findings from the current literature, I aim to discover and comprehend the experiences and issues WWD encounter in trying to obtain job opportunities in the Australian labour market.

II.1 Global findings – Disability and gender in employment

Across the globe, approximately one billion PWD accounts for 15% of the world's population (WHO & WB 2011, p. 29). According to ILO (2015), about 785 million PWD are of working age, but most of them have no job. Those who do participate in the labor force earn less than people without disability, and WWD in particular, have incomes lower than MWD.

II.1.1 Gender in disability research

As discussed in the Chapter 2, throughout most of the 20th century, disability research focused mainly on men, based largely on male norms and male traditional social roles, which was then applied to research about women without strong consideration of their specific and different contexts (Nosek, Hughes & Robinson-Whelen 2008, p. 165). It was not until the 1980's that WWD began to receive the attention of feminist disability scholars. When comparing WWD to both MWD and women without disability, they were more disadvantaged across all economic, social and psychological factors (Schur 2004, p. 253; Moodley & Graham 2015, p. 24). From the 1990's and onward, research examining the realities of WWD has expanded greatly to examine these factors.

II.1.2 Women with disabilities and their employment opportunities

There is a broad range of literature researching the intersectionality of gender and disability in employment that proves the unique disadvantages experienced by both MWD and WWD (Pettinicchio & Maroto 2017; Vick & Lightman 2010). Several of the most relevant studies (such as one from Saudi Arabia) suggested that WWD are more likely to experience 'occupational ghettoization', being placed in unstable and nonstandard work arrangements and in work that stereotypically may be seen as 'suitable' for their 'skills and status' (Peter, Alem & Knabe 2018, p. 269). These findings are supported by Pettinicchio and Maroto (2017, p. 8) in America. In terms of employment rates relevant to types of disability, people living with mental health or cognitive disabilities have lower employment rates than those

with physical disabilities (Jones 2008, pp. 409-410; Jones 2011, p. 1008; Camp 2013, p. 123; Peter, Alem & Knabe 2018, p. 269).

These findings assess the wide variety of and multiple disadvantages that WWD experience in employment. At first glance, it shows that most WWD internationally and American WWD in particular are excluded from education and vocational training and employment opportunities (ILO 2015; Schur 2004, p. 253), and that WWD in South Africa fare worse than their male counterparts in education outcomes and access to social assistance (Moodley & Graham 2015, p. 31). Access to education, for these women in particular, has been found to correlate strongly to their lower employment rates.

As such, in addition to the above-mentioned factors, findings by the International Labour Organisation conducted in 2019, show that WWD in 53 countries have double the median unemployment rate compared to those without disability (ILO 2019b, p. 66). Other researchers in South Africa have argued that it is because they appear to be economically inactive that they earn the lowest median income (Moodley & Graham 2015, p. 31). Therefore, WWD living in South Africa are more likely to earn less, demonstrating the many ways in which disability and poverty compound one another (Moodley & Graham 2015, p.31). Furthermore, American WWD, in the paid labor force, have remained concentrated in non-union and low-wage jobs (Schur 2004, p. 254). In 2005, in her literature review of the meaning of workplace discrimination for WWD, Diane Smith Randolph (2005, p. 372) synthesised that the earnings of WWD working in full-time jobs were only 65% of the earnings of MWD even when WWD education levels were higher affirming that "discrimination related to disabilities related to gender and vice versa". The ILO (2015) findings support this global phenomenon – showing that PWD generally are at a higher risk of poverty in every country and this is linked to their very limited opportunities for education and skills development (ILO 2015).

Hence, it seems that this research has thus far paid some attention to work and does demonstrate the cycle of how inaccessibility to education, for example, leads to lower job rates and lower incomes. It shows that this creates a higher risk of poverty for PWD in general and for WWD in particular. These are seen as some of the more significant barriers but there are several other factors to address and to research more comprehensively, including inadequate awareness and understanding of disability, accommodation, disability costs and competence; these will now be discussed.

II.1.3 Employment impediments

There are several further impediments to labour force participation for PWD. First and foremost, Peter, Alem and Knabe (2018, p. 269) in Saudi Arabia, identified a lack of awareness and understanding of disability and accommodation issues as critical barriers to employment. Also, before getting a job, it was found that American PWD were discriminated against at the very first step of screening applications (Dykema-Englade & Stawiski 2008, p. 263). Mason Ameri (2014, p. 86) further discovered that employers were reluctant to hire PWD due to perceptions of greater risk and potentially higher costs. Other stereotypical attitudes employers have about potential employees with disabilities include: low productivity, high absenteeism, inability to perform certain tasks, increased healthcare costs and risks of legal liability (Chan et al. 2010, pp. 407 -409; Kaye, Jans & Jones 2011, p. 534; Pearson 2012, p. 20 and Peter, Alem & Knabe 2018, p. 269).

II.1.4 Discrimination in the workplace

In work settings, workers with disabilities may face social barriers such as hostile or 'benevolent' attitudes from their co-workers or bosses, with these prejudices influencing the expectations of PWD in the workforce (Dykema-Englade & Stawiski 2008, p. 261). This behaviour may explain why PWD may not receive the same level of respect as other adults in the workplace, limiting their expectations of what work they can perform, and feeling that they are less capable than people without disability (Dykema-Englade & Stawiski 2008, p. 260). However, in terms of employer's perceptions of PWD, research conducted through 201 small-medium enterprises in East Malaysia, found that only a few employers had favourable attitudes to WWD in terms of absenteeism and supervision but that more of these employers lacked a belief in WWD's loyalty and their quality of work delivery (Hwa & Ang, 2017, pp. 4-5). Hence, these employer biases and discrimination overall, seem to be fundamental obstacles to employment for both MWD and WWD (Peter, Alem & Knabe 2018, p. 269; Draper 2012, p. 34).

II.1.4 The solutions

For better inclusion of PWD into the workforce, the ILO and the OECD research recommends stronger government efforts in regards to legislation and policies (ILO & OECD 2018, pp. 9-10) through on- the-job -training (for people with intellectual disabilities); individual placement and support (for persons with psychosocial disabilities and persons with more severe mental health conditions); and sheltered employment (for persons with intellectual disabilities). However, research in Canada proved that national legislation, and employer policy, is not sufficient for ensuring workers' rights. Positive action legislation, on

the other hand, that includes tools such as public awareness, standards development, timelines for implementation and compliance, and enforcement are considered more effective (Jones, Finkelstein & Koehoorn 2018, p. 86).

In addition, a Saudi Arabian research finding argued that support for WWD in terms of welfare benefits should be the same as the support required for women without disability. This should be combined with additional support such as job accommodation, accessible transportation, rehabilitation services, peer support and caseworker disability awareness training. It was also thought that individual empowerment strategies to improve self-confidence could be added (Peter, Alem & Knabe 2018, p. 269).

Lastly, several studies conducted in India, Germany and Spain recommended that measures that allow for and encourage diversity in the workplace should be implemented (Kulkarni, Boehm, & Basu 2016, p. 409) and should be undertaken by each organization through employment programs to include people with physical disabilities (Villanueva-Flores, Valle-Cabrera, & Bornay-Barrachina 2014, pp. 234-235).

II.2 Australian women with disability and their job opportunities

II.2.1 Australian women with disability in employment and its statistic

Australian women in general have lower labor force participation rates (67% of women compared to 78% men aged 20-74) (ABS 2018) and lower average weekly earnings (women earn $241.50 per week less than men) (WGEA 2019). However, being a woman and living with disabilities means Australian WWD are experiencing multiple disadvantages compared to MWD (Kavanagh et al. 2015, p. 195) and women without disability. In 2013, Kavanagh et al. found that women with milder disabilities tended to fare worse than men with disability (p. 73).'. As noted in Chapter 1, and discussed further in the following paragraphs, women with higher rates of profound core activity limitation or those who experience a higher prevalence rate of disability also experience lower labour force participation than men (female 3.6%, male 2.6%) and much lower full-time job rates (female 18.8%, male 35.8%) (ABS 2016a).

However, types of disability may also lead to further discrimination and the multiple layers of disadvantage. Among those living with disabilities, people living with intellectual disabilities for example, are more likely to be unemployed and work fewer hours by comparison. In particular, in 2012, about 39% of people with intellectual disabilities participated in the labor force compared to 55% of people with other types of disability and

the 83% of people living without disabilities (ABS 2014). Kavanagh et al. (2015, p. 191) or Meltzer, Robinson and Fisher (2019, p.11) support the finding that people living with intellectual and psychological impairments and acquired brain injuries were the most disadvantaged. Hence, women living with intellectual disabilities may face more disadvantages in employment compared to other disability groups.

II.2.1 Hurdles preventing Australian women with disabilities into work

Alongside the barriers noted by international studies discussed above, there are several other barriers experienced by Australian WWD. Firstly, according to the ABS (2016a), WWD tend to be discriminated against more than MWD (female 8.9%; male 8.3%). In addition to the discrimination that their male counterparts experience in both full and part-time jobs based on age, type of disability, the severity (or perceived severity) of disabilities, WWD experienced added discrimination due to stereotypes about their disability and their gender (AHRC 2016, p.184; Kavanagh et al. 2015, p. 191). Furthermore, the types of discrimination revealed by AHRC (2016, p.183) include “disclosure of disability, recruitment bias, accessibility, workplace adjustments, and career progression”. The AHRC also highlighted how other factors such as gender, cultural background, sexual orientation and geographic location also contributed to shaping the nature and consequences of discrimination. However, there is a clear distinction between the sources of discrimination that MWD and WWD face. While MWD found that employers were the main perpetrators of discrimination (28.3%), WWD felt they faced more discrimination from service and hospital staff (41.1%). In addition, however, 20.8% of WWD felt the discrimination they faced from employers equaled that of their male counterparts (ABS 2016a). In a workplace case study, conducted by Vickers (2009, p.225), on a woman diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, it was discovered that she, as a WWD was bullied, leading to leaving her workplace (Vickers 2009, p. 225)

In another study, undertaken by Elizabeth Hemphill and Carol T.Kylik (2016, p. 537) it was found that there were very few employers with a positive view about employing PWD or who regard them as ‘productive and reliable employees’. The AHRC (2016, p. 183) discovered that the lack of confidence and knowledge about PWD among employers contributes to such bias and discrimination. The concerns of employers seem to centre on the potential costs of hiring employees with disabilities; such as workplace adjustment, accommodation, meeting legal and regulatory requirements (AHRC 2016, p. 138) or absenteeism, training and other reactions to employees with disabilities (Hemphill & Kylik 2016, pp. 538-539). However, as noted in a study by Temple, Kelaher and Williams (2018, p. 9), employers were largely unaware of government subsidy programs that assist

enterprises in creating workplace accessibility for workers with disabilities. This is where the lack of awareness by the general population, but more specifically workplaces and employers become problematic. These ideas will be discussed further in the next section.

II.3 How women with disability are supported into work

II.3.2 Legal frameworks to encourage employment for PWD in Australia

As outlined in Chapter 1, The Government of Australia has created a comprehensive legal framework to enhance employment for PWD in Australia. However, this legal framework has thus far proven to be insufficient and needs further amendments to fully support PWD in employment. More specifically, according to Disabled People's Organisations Australia (DPO Australia) (2019), the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) should be amended to ensure PWD can make complaints about denial of reasonable accommodation. As noted in a study by Allen (2018, p. 846), the inadequate definition of disability in the Fair Work Act (FWA) means the courts do not have adequate means for interpreting the laws and therefore cannot adequately encompass the complexities of workplace discrimination. These definitions also mean there is a lack of knowledge or an adequate policy to solve discrimination issues or make workplaces more inclusive for PWD (Allen, 2018, pp. 869-870). However, Alastair Mcewin (2008, p.72) argues that even a commitment to incorporating CRPD into national laws and policies may not help to completely eliminate discrimination. The NDIS, as it is currently implemented, is gender or disability neutral (Kayess, Sands & Fisher 2014, p. 384), and is therefore inaccessible for all PWD. This principally applies to people living with intellectual disabilities asking for complex support needs (Collings & Dowse 2016, p. 272) or for those living in remote areas or in diverse cultural and linguistic communities (McEwin 2008, p. 72). Women with psychosocial disabilities have particular difficulties accessing the NDIS (AWAVA 2018). According to AIHW (2017, p. 309), the number of PWD receiving disability support services are difficult to discover since they 'are provided through multiple avenues including under the NDA, NDIS, Basic Community Care, and Disability Employment Services'.

II.3.2 Employment disability support program

As noted in the introduction, some employment support programs do currently exist for PWD: vocational training, job accessibility and other training initiatives, designed to assist in obtaining work in both sheltered employment (through Australian Disability Enterprises (ADEs) and open employment (through DES). There have however, been some critiques of the quality of ADEs and DES because of potential inefficiency or further bias. As argued by

the DPO Australia, the ADEs may get jobs for or employ PWD but at much lower wages than other people, with fewer than 1% of them having opportunities to transit into mainstream employment (DPO Australia 2019). Similarity, the DES also delivers poor employment outcomes for PWD with only one out of ten PWD entering the DES program getting and retaining that job for at least 12 months (DPO Australia 2019). Furthermore, the DES staff tend not to have adequate skills to support the complicated needs of their clients who have different types of disabilities, especially those with mental illnesses. This also influences the quality of support given (Byrnes & Lawn 2016, pp. 46-47). In the Willing to Work Report (AHRC 2016, p. 183), it was revealed that "some government programs, policies and federal laws including those relating to social security; the disability employment framework; JobAccess and the Employment Assistance Fund and workers compensation can impact negatively on the workforce participation of Australians with disability".

In Australia, there has been some research focusing on assessing the quality of training programs to support PWD. Lewis, Thoresen and Cocks (2011), when evaluating three research projects in 1999, 2002 and 2003 conducted by a DES provider – Edge Employment Solutions, affirmed their successes in placing and supporting apprentices and trainees with disabilities as improvements in the approach of employability for PWD (p. 17). The Transition to Work program in New South Wales however, as another example, indicated that there has been poor performance in employment outcomes over a 5-year period (Xu & Stancliffe 2019, p. 61). Karen and Helen's nine case studies from across Australia discovered that some WWD are in fact "coerced to participate in a range of workforce programs that are highly bureaucratised, sanitised and moralized", (2012, p. 139). This research therefore is not indicative of overall programme success.

Undeniably, the above studies are useful for framing a picture of the particular disadvantages WWD encounter when in work, however, no research has focused on how WWD are actively supported and encouraged into work.

II.3.3 Gender, Disability and Non-profit Organisation

We can see then, that the current literature focuses on the barriers to employment and the experiences in work of WWD in Australia and internationally. As per the discussion in Chapter 1, the role of Australian NGOs is seen as crucial to successfully support WWD into work, but there is lack of research focusing on this issue. One study, assessing an NGO - EDGE Employment Solutions, for example, (of their three-project implementation on employment for PWD), proposed 'a number of strategies' such as 'undertaking and completing apprenticeships' to improve disability employability and sustainable

employment. They have no specific proposals however, to advance WWD in employment (Lewis, Thoresen & Cocks 2011, p. 188).

II.4 Research gap

As has been discussed earlier, while some general research about issues faced by PWD exists, there is a lack of research with a particular focus on gender and disability in employment in Australia or how WWD are supported or encouraged into work through NGOs. This inadequate attention by scholars to date may in fact exacerbate the existing adversities WWD face, further negating their opportunities to live independently. As argued in the introduction, filling this research gap may help the government, and in particular, NGOs, to construct better resolutions for WWD in employment and prevent the failure of international conventions or the treaty commitments of governments.

Hence, this thesis is driven by exploring the intervention of NGOs to support Australian WWD in employment.In the following chapter, I will present an overview of the methodology for analysis, and in particular, how the themes were identified.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHODS

This chapter will outline the research method, data collection and data analysis. Firstly, I will outline and define thematic analysis and the rationale for using thematic analysis as the method of exploration for this research. The second section will demonstrate the sources of data collection. The last section will discuss how the themes related to WWD and employment were identified and analyzed.

V.1 Thematic analysis

According to RE Boyatzis (1998, pp. 4-5), thematic analysis is ‘a way of seeing’, ‘a way of making sense out of seemingly unrelated material’, and ‘a way of analyzing qualitative information’. It is also ‘a way of systematically observing a person in interaction, a group, or a situation, organization or culture’ and ‘a way of converting qualitative information into qualitative data’.

Thematic analysis has been selected for this research for several reasons. Firstly, compared to other methods, thematic analysis is beneficial as it can effectively describe theories while still emphasizing ‘reality’ (Braun & Clarke 2006, p. 81). Additionally, ‘thematic analysis can be used within different theoretical frameworks’ (Braun & Clarke 2006, p. 81). Specifically, in this study, multiple theories including Marxist Feminism, Intersectionality and Feminist Disability Studies (as discussed in Chapter 3) can be applied to the themes. Furthermore, due to the fact that the data collection for this thesis is textual and the research is conducted without observation, communication or interaction with research objects, thematic analysis is considered as the most effective for capturing the complexity of meaning, helping to identify and depict ‘both implicit and explicit’ ideas hidden in the data and useful for discovering information that may be hidden or unnoticed by others (Boyatzis 1998, pp. 3-10). Hence, as the primary sources used for my thesis research are textual, thematic analysis is the optimal option. However, theory-driven thematic analysis also has disadvantages. Due to the influences of theory, it may cause biases in ‘generating themes and wording of the code’ or the themes generated by my limited value since they may be out of context (Boyatzis 1998, p. 36). To minimize this limitation, the stage of data familiarization is repeated to generate new themes based on data in addition to the themes generated from the theory and literature review.

V.2 Data collection

Due to some constraints in terms of time and data accessibility, this research will use secondary data collection as the main source of analysis to address the research question. The main data sources are the annual reports of two NGOs - WWDA and DEA over the five-year period from 2014-2018. The annual reports are available and accessible on their websites. In particular, the links to access annual reports of the WWDA are wwda.org.au/papers/wwdarepts and the DEA disabilityemployment.org.au/about-us/annual-reports

V.3 Stages to develop thematic analysis

Thematic analysis was applied to the reports to investigate the ways in which they support WWDs into work. It facilitated a detailed analysis of the reports relevant to gender and disability.

Developing theory driven codes is 'the most frequently used approach in social science research'. It starts with theoretical frameworks (Boyatzis 1998, p. 33), which in this case included Marxist feminism, Intersectionality and Disability Feminist Theory. During this stage, I explored how Intersectionality was addressed in diverse cultural and social background groups, the issue of employment importance to WWD, and the types of disabilities in employment were also discovered.

Next, based on prior research on employment opportunties for PWD and WWD as outlined in the literature review, other themes were further discovered. These have been discrimination in employment and inclusion in their activities and in the reports, awareness raising to strengthen employment opportunities for WWD and partnership importance to strengthen their voices and enhance the results.

From these themes, "the codes are developed to represent the identified themes and applied or linked", to data sources for analysis in the later stages (Boyatzis 1998, p. 9). The coding process was conducted on the annual reports of both NGOs.

During the coding process, I did find that the codes of each theme were sometimes interlinked - for example 'co-submission' may be used in both themes of partnership and inclusion. Co-submission of policy among NGOs may indicate how relationships among NGOs develop and how they collaborate to strengthen the voice of PWD. However, co-submission of policy with NGOs representing different disability groups also describes how PWD are included in this activity. Hence this required me to comprehensively understand data sources to categorize them appropriately into separate themes. This also required skills

of inference and understanding the meaning of each activity, in order for them to be included consistently in themes.

In conclusion, thematic analysis is useful and suitable for the use of the textual data in this research. In the next chapter, I will pay particular attention to DEA and WWDA in order to analyse how they support WWD in employment through reviewing their reports.

CHAPTER FIVE: WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES AUSTRALIA AND DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AUSTRALIA OVERVIEW

This chapter will briefly discuss the two NGOs selected, in order to analyse their contributions and support for WWD in employment.

These are 'Women with Disabilities Australia' (WWDA) and 'Disability Employment Australia' (DEA) who represent WWD and the disability employment services sector in Australia. The chapter consists of two main sections in which I will present information about how these NGOs were established, how they operate, their memberships, the benefits they provide, mandates, functions and most recent strategies. Most importantly, their approaches for supporting PWD or WWD into work will be demonstrated.

IV.1 Women with disabilities Australia overview

IV.1.1 Establishment

Women with Disabilities Australia (WWDA) is 'the peak organisation' for women living with different forms of disabilities in Australia (WWDA 2017, p. 4). In 1995, WWDA was "incorporated as an independent organisation" for WWD, run by WWD and located in Tasmania (WWDA n.d.a). It was established to support the needs and rights of WWD to raise their voices and to improve their lives and life chances. Since 1998, WWDA has received an annual operational fund from the Australian Government. Over the past 20 years, WWDA has developed from a small WWD's group focused on the development of individual confidence and self-esteem, to a Disabled People's Organisation (DPO), representing the variety of interests and concerns women and girls living with disabilities face and advancing their rights and freedoms (WWDA 2017, p. 4).

IV.1.2 Operations and management

WWDA was initially governed by a Management Committee of 12 women with disabilities, representing the six Australian States and two Territories. In 2000, WWDA undertook a major change in its governance structure, to better reflect the role and function of a national peak NGO for WWD. Through this change, the knowledge and skills to manage a community-based NGO of WWDA members became more vital than its geographic location (WWDA n.d.a). Now, WWDA's National Management Committee consists of 8 WWD committee members who are elected annually at the Annual General Meeting. They also take responsibility for controlling and managing the affairs of WWDA. Meanwhile, an

Executive Director is in charge of daily operations and reports to the National Management Committee.

IV.1.3 Membership

Membership is free for all. There are two classes of membership; full and associate. Full membership is open for WWD residing in Australia, while associate memberships are for individuals, including family members, support persons, advocates or friends, or for organisations in Australia who support the aims and objectives of WWDA. Full members have the right to vote at general meetings while associate members have a right to attend the meetings but not to vote (WWDA n.d.b).

IV.1.4 Mandate and functions

WWDA's roles and activities are performed through several main functions: systematic advocacy, research, developing and publishing communication materials, project design and implementation, and network building.

WWDA bases its work on a human rights framework, connecting gender and disability issues to other rights such as civil, economic, social and cultural rights. By applying this framework, WWDA plays a coordination role between Governments and other stakeholders for 'expertise', 'collaboration', 'consultation' and 'engagement' with Australian women and girls with disabilities. WWDA also demands "accountability and other responsibilities from the Australian Government to solve issues related to this disadvantaged group", (WWDA 2017, p. 4). WWDA complies with principles such as: 'universality', 'inalienability', 'indivisibility', 'interdependence, equality and non-discrimination', 'participation and inclusion and accountability' (WWDA 2017, p. 6).

The most recent plan for 2016-2020 has WWDA focusing on 5 strategic goals relevant to a human right's legal framework and women and girls with disabilities. Also relevant to this thesis, the first two goals are directly relevant to WWD and employment, including the 'right of participation' and the 'right of employment' (WWDA 2017, pp. 10-18).

IV.1.5 Women with Disabilities Australia's approach to assist Australian women with disabilities in employment

To answer the research question, the thesis focuses primarily on WWDA operation and activities in relation to WWDs in employment. Since 2009-2010, WWDA has consolidated its role as a human rights-based organisation and undertook work to advocate for the rights of WWD using human rights treaties and conventions as their basis for pursuing feminist and disability rights. To support WWD in employment, WWDA has endeavoured to assist

WWD indirectly through a wide range of activities to achieve its systematic advocacy target. WWDA has targeted entities such as Agencies of United Nations (UN), Government of Australia and its agencies, international and national NGO's, WWD and communities. All of these elements have different roles and functions to facilitate employment opportunities for WWD. Multiple activities are undertaken to ensure WWDA reaches its targets as explicated below.

Agencies of United Nations

Given the fact that Australia is a party to seven core international human rights treaties (Australian Government- Attorney- General's Department 2019), WWDA has specifically engaged with the treaties such as The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural rights (ICESCR), The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD) in their grounded work, to advocate directly with UN agencies for full rights for Australian WWD in employment. Over the research period 2014-2018, that forms the basis of this analysis, through nearly 40 different advocacy activities, WWDA has performed their task of monitoring and providing expert input into the processes of consultation for these conventions and treaties. Forty percent of these have been targeted by the UNCRPD mainly by consultation, submissions, lobbying and representation. More specifically, WWDA represented the views of PWD to the Committee on their rights in Australia, focusing on 'the right to meaningful employment, wages and conditions for people with intellectual disabilities' in the CRPD Committee's 10th session in 2013 (WWDA 2013-2014, pp. 15-16). WWDA also presented submissions to the CRPD committee about the right of PWD 'to live independently and to be included in the community' (WWDA 2015-2016, p.16). The 'List of Issues' in respect to Australia's compliance with the UNCRPD, included articles strongly related to WWD and their employment; such as Article 6: WWD, Article 19: inclusion, and Article 27: right to work (WWDA 2016-2017, p. 19, WWDA 2017- 2018, p. 16).

Furthermore, in 2013-2014, WWDA wrote a submission for the Office for Women to provide input into the GOA priorities for the 58th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women. This is a functional commission of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Submissions aimed to provide an overview of the rights of women and girls with disabilities, focusing on their issues of participation in economic and social life, inclusion and decision making in 2014 and post 2015 (WWDA 2013-2014, pp. 23-24). Recently, in 2017, WWDA was granted a Special Consultative Status with the UNECOSOC in order to be legitimately recognised by the UN and other key stakeholders, for WWDA's expertise in 'advancing the human rights of women and girls with disabilities' (WWDA 2016-2017, p. 13).

The Government of Australia

WWDA has centred on advocating for policies relevant to disability and employment. Most recently, it has focused on the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and National Disability Strategy (NDS) with approximately 50% of WWDA activities being relevant to the NDIS and undertaken through their submissions, consultations and advice as well as active involvement in developing, amending and monitoring relevant policies.

In terms of the NDIS, WWDA has carried out a substantial amount of work such as developing legislation, rules, operating guidelines and safeguards (WWDA 2013-2014, pp. 52-53). In particular, WWDA presented submissions for the 'NDIS Quality and Safeguarding framework' that protects the rights and interests of PWD and the employment framework of UN CRPD (WWDA 2014-2015, p. 33; WWDA 2015-2016, p. 16). Other submissions include the NDIS Quality and Safeguards 'Draft Code of Conduct for Service Providers Paper' (WWDA 2017-2018, p. 12) and the 'Draft Practice Standards' (WWDA 2017-2018, p.12). Additionally, WWDA contributed to DPO Australia's Submission to 'the National Disability Insurance Scheme Savings Fund Special Account Bill 2016 Inquiry' (WWDA 2017-2018, p. 12). In 2017, a WWDA submission for the Productivity Commission inquiry into the ongoing cost and sustainability of the NDIS was also undertaken (WWDA 2016-2017 p. 26; WWDA 2017-2018, p. 12)

Furthermore, being a proactive member of 'NDIS Independent Expert Advisory Group and NDIS Practice Standards Technical Advisory Group' (WWDA 2017-2018, p. 13) WWDA also consults to Department of Social Services (DSS) on all elements of 'the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Framework' (WWDA 2017-2018, p. 13).

In terms of NDS, WWDA presented a submission, entitled 'Gender Blind, Gender Neutral: The effectiveness of the National Disability Strategy in improving the lives of women and girls with disabilities. This aimed to assess and prove how the NDS seems to neglect women and girls with disabilities. The submissions covered a wide range of issues and themes in which inclusive and accessible communities and economic security specifically relating to employment for WWD were revealed (WWDA 2013-2014, pp. 39-40). The WWDA also contributed to the development of the NDS second implementation plan (WWDA 2015-2016, p. 16), assisted DSS staff to build the 2017 online NDS progress Report Stakeholder Survey (WWDA 2017-2018, p. 13), the NDS Third Implementation Plan, the New Disability Framework Beyond 2020 (WWDA 2017-2018, p .16), and the Third National Disability Strategy (NDS) Progress Report to the Council of Australian Governments (WWDA 2017-

2018, p. 16). In collaboration with other DPOs, the WWDA also contributed to the NDS progress report.

The WWDA also designed and implemented some projects relevant to employment for WWD. In particular, in 2013-2014, WWDA implemented the National Disability Employment Services project. WWDA organised forums with WWD in four states of Australia including Queensland, South Australia, ACT and Western Australia. These forums were the grounds used to help WWD advise GOA about 'the needs of WWD in the context of the DES', and looked at 'ways to improve future DES' (WWDA 2013-2014, pp. 40-41). In 2015-2016, WWDA also ran other projects to develop a WWDA Position Statement on Key Human rights issues including the rights to work and rights to participate in social life, for women and girls with disabilities (WWDA 2015-2016, p. 18). These project results were crucial grounds for the further activities of WWDA in later years.

WWDA has also conducted various activities including representation in international and nationally relevant events, and contributions to co-submissions of policies and other reports with NGOs. They also used lobbying to advocate for other issues such as human rights, disability employment frameworks, disability employment services, women's issues, job access, federal budgets, national disability advocacy programs and gender equality issues.

Other stakeholders

WWDA has also developed partnerships with other Australian NGOs. Being a member of DPOA, WWDA collaborates with the National Ethnic Disability Alliance, First People Disability Network, People with Disability Australia, Children with Disability Australia, and National Ethnic Disability Alliance to write submissions or organise other advocacy activities. These types of partnerships with organisations in other countries such as Chile and Korea (2016-2017) on WWD and employment have also been built, in order to share and exchange experiences. Lastly, WWDA has taken advantage of the mass media (for example the WWDA website, WWDA Instagram, WWDA Facebook, WWDA Twitter, WWDA youth network and the circulation of information to deliver 'awareness raising' to their members and the broader community, on the human rights issues relating to participation and employment.

IV.2 Disability Employment Australia overview

IV.2.1 Establishment

The Disability Employment Australia (DEA) is ‘the peak industry body for Australia's Disability Employment Services’ (DES) providers (DEA 2019a). Being a membership organisation, DEA represents ‘the interests of DES at a national level to government and other stakeholders’ including job seekers with disabilities and employer groups. Historically, the DEA began operations in 1986 and operated only at the state level. It was then formally established in 1996 as the Association of Competitive Employment or ACE National network (DEA 2011). Over the three decades of its development, DES has remained ‘closely aligned with the purposes and objectives of the Disability Services Act 1986’ to ensure PWD receive the essential services needed to enable them to achieve their maximum potential as members of the community, as well as to increase their independence, employment opportunities and integration into the community (DEA 2019b)

II.2.2 Operation and Management

The DEA operates as a non-profit organisation, and although it may receive funding from different sources (Australian Government, membership fees and training) it does not have “dividends, bonuses or profits paid to Members”, (DEA 2013, p. 4). The Board members include a Chairman, Vice-chairman and members, who manage and control all DEA’s affairs. Other DEA staff members, including the CEO and other functional officers, perform daily tasks and have responsibility to report to the Board members. The DEA also holds annual general meetings which comply with the Corporation Act. In these meetings, affairs such as resolutions, decisions and votes are discussed and approved (DEA 2013, pp. 7-13).

II.2.3 Membership

Membership fees are required to be paid to be a DEA member – these could be DES providers or organisations working within the disability employment services sector. There are several advantages to being a member of DEA, such as receiving up-to-date information, support, DES operation bulletins and regular policy bulletins, access to capacity development training (with reduced training registration rates), attendance at disability employment services conferences (at member pricing) and National Leaders’ Forums. Furthermore, DEA’s members are also made up of potential members groups relevant to DES such as Disability Employment Service providers, Job Capacity Assessors, Ongoing Support Assessors, Registered Training Organisations, Group Training Organisations, JobActive providers and Providers of services to the DES sector (such as IT or recruitment).

IV.2.4 Mandate and function

The goals of the DEA are to promote and 'advocate for the sustainability of a distinctive DES program' (DEA 2019d) or to stimulate employment for PWD in general through awareness building in the community. This extends to a wide range of stakeholder groups.

The DEA has specific objectives, such as promoting the interests of DEA members to the Australian government and funding institutions; identifying the opportunities and strategic stakeholders who will contribute to the sustainability of open employment outcomes for PWD; and generating discussions and consultation about issues that impact the employment and training pathways of PWD (DEA 2013, p. 3).

To achieve its objectives, the DEA undertakes a wide range of functions including assisting their members to provide 'best practice' services in order to obtain employment outcomes for PWD through advising, advocating, training, providing information and holding events to promote the disability employment services sector. Moreover, the DEA also focuses on government policies that are directly related to employment for PWD. The DEA also contributes to efforts to remove barriers to prevent the participation of PWD into the labour force and promotes best practice to support PWD to get meaningful jobs. By working closely with the government of Australia and its agencies, the DEA has contributed significantly to consultations and performed reviews of disability and employment. Thus, the DEA has performed an active role over three decades to contribute to the increased employment rate for PWD and has become the only organisation that focuses on the nexus of disability and open employment (DEA 2019a).

Strategy 2019 has been well centred on PWD and employers. From this, other key features such as UNCRPD, Empowered Choice, National Disability Strategy, Market Model and Service quality are shown, together with employment, career, natural supports, community, schools, DES providers, best practice and training. The DEA states they are all 'intrinsically connected and linked to DEA's roles to assist DEA to better support PWD in employment and reduce the disability labour force gap compared to the labour force of people living without disabilities', (DEA 2019b).

IV.2.4 Disability Employment Australia' s approach to assist Australian women with disabilities in employment

Unlike WWDA, the DEA tends to focus solely on employment for PWD, and all their activities are aimed at strengthening and promoting the disability employment services sector. Unlike the WWDA, throughout their work the DEA focuses on PWD in general and does not tailor the focus to different target groups such as WWD. The DEA do present photos of WWD and

make some mention of the difficult situations WWD participants in DES are facing. However, it is important to note that in DEA work, WWD are an assumed target population under the umbrella PWD.

To support PWD, which as noted above included both MWD and WWD, the DEA has been found to undertake a wide range of activities to promote disability employment services sector. DEA has prioritized their activities to assist DES providers who are mainly DEA members, in order to improve their capacity and their quality of services in employment. To enhance the sustainability of disability employment services, the DEA has advocated with the Australia government and changed the awareness of related stakeholders. These have included advising disability advocates and the community about employment opportunities for PWD. The specific activities of DEA will be divided into distinct targeted factors as outlined below.

Disability Employment Service providers

During 2014-2018, DEA's main activities were aimed at strengthening capacity through training, workshops, webinar development, star ratings and the organisation of events such as roadshows, leaders' forums and annual conferences for Disability Employment Service (DES) providers and stakeholders. Among these various activities, the most prevalent were DEA members' 'capacity development', through training and events such as the 'DES Contractual Compliance Train the Trainer Kit' (DEA 2013-2014, p. 6; DEA 2015-2016, p .12), DES 'essentials package' (DEA 2015-2016, p.12) and 50 webinars in 2014-2015.

In addition to training, in 2015, 2016 and 2017, the DEA organised roadshows across Australia to discover all of the barriers related to DES and to discuss timelines and milestone moments for the new DES and the new federal budget in 2017. The results collected in these roadshows have been important vehicles for DEA's responses to the Disability Employment framework issue papers or presentations to DSS (DEA 2014-2015, p.19; DEA 2015-2016, p. 20; DEA 2017-2018, p.8).

Furthermore, national leaders' forums have been organised to discuss new department assessment tools, NDIS alignment and ongoing support (DEA 2013-2014, p.19), wage subsidies and mental health issues (DEA 2014-2015, p. 19), 'star ratings', 'person-centred best practice', and 'employer engagement' (DEA 2015-2016, p. 21). They have also been important for strategies regarding employer engagement and the NDIS, the strategic direction of the NDIS, the new DES (DEA 2016-2017, p. 26) disability employment programs beyond DES (DEA 2017-2018, p.26). Other activities allow for regular contact with member

organisations such as meetings, bulletins, webinars and websites (DEA 2017-2018, p. 24; DEA 2015-2016, p. 12).

Advocating to the Australia Government

To promote the disability employment services sector the DEA has undertaken various activities to advocate with the GOA through submissions, the implementation of projects, consultation, contributions and surveys. More specifically, submissions have been made for improving Australia's Disability employment performance, through Disability Management Services business allocation and the federal budget (DEA 2013-2014, p.10), DES reforms 2018- industry information, and the DES reform discussion paper (DEA 2016-2017, p. 10; DEA 2017 -2018, p.8). Additionally, the DEA have consulted with GOA agencies in a 'red tape reduction' taskforce (2013-2015), in operational guidelines (2013-2014), DES-ESS relocation, the McClure Welfare review, the National Disability Framework (2014-2015) and 'headspaces' digital work and study steering committee (2017-2018). DEA also contributed to the Green Army program to include PWD (2013-2014), and the NDIS related to employment and other related support quality safeguards. It also looked at DSS pilot innovative approaches for job seekers experiencing mental illnesses, digital brokerage solutions for employers and jobseekers (2014-2015). It also assisted the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), budget analysis (2015-2016) and DES 2018 grant offers to help NDIA promote the best outcomes for NDIS participants. Lastly, the DEA also implemented projects funded by GOA related to employment such as; the 'DES contractual compliance train the trainer kit', the National Disability Employment Initiative project funding (2013-2014), trialed $5000 career accounts for DES participants with mental ill health (2015-2016), and the diversity field office project in collaboration with Australian Federation of disability Organisation (AFDO) (2017-2018).

Other stakeholders and community

Internationally, through regular communication, the DEA maintains and develops relationships with New Zealand, the United Kingdom, the United States and other countries and by presenting at their national conferences to share and exchange employment issues for PWD. Nationally, since 2016, the DEA has developed partnerships with AFDO, Deakin university and Australian HR Institute (2014-2015) to undertake research on employment for PWD, along with the universities of Queensland, Melbourne and Sydney.

In the community, DEA has created 'disability employment graphics' (2013-2014), raised awareness of disability and unemployment and illustrated how the DES model works. It has

also increased its media presence that has become active social media platforms (2015-2018) and developed a DEA employer book featuring stories for DEA's members or for employers engaging with DES and wanting to recruit PWD.

In conclusion, this overview of WWDA and DEA has highlighted both the similarities and the differences of these organisations. In general, they both have similar commitments to WWD in employment – however, the WWDA focuses on WWD specifically, while the DEA aims to address the needs of WWD through a general focus on PWD. Building on the overall context I have provided here, in Chapter 6 I will assess the ways in which these two organisations provide job opportunities to WWD through a set of themes: awareness raising, inclusion, intersectionality, partnership, discrimination, importance of employment and type of disabilities.

CHAPTER SIX: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter will reveal the results of the analysis which explores how WWDA and DEA assist WWD in employment. The first part outlines the seven main themes including awareness raising, inclusion, intersectionality, partnership, discrimination, importance of employment and type of disabilities. The second section will elucidate the strengths of the current work undertaken by the WWDA and the DEA and suggest further activities should be considered by these organisation to boost the employment opportunities for Australian WWD.

VI.1 Findings

VI.1.1 Awareness raising to strengthen the employment opportunities for women with disabilites

The overall strategic intervention undertaken by both WWDA and DEA is ‘awareness raising’, particularly in regard to disability employment services. Over the past five years, in relation to employment and women with disabilites, these organizations have aimed to change the understanding of employment for PWD for many stakeholders including the UN agencies, the Australia government and its agencies, DES providers and the wider community. This has been through activities such as advocacy, writing submissions, consultations and contributions. The main legal frameworks used to raise awareness include UNCRPD, NDS, NDIS. Furthermore, both featured organisations are proactive in presenting at meetings or events related to employment for PWD/WWD, rights to work or the rights for WWD to participate in full and meaningful lives. Finally, they consult and implement projects on DES, create forums and media platforms and develop public campaigns about employment for PWD/WWD and human rights related to employment.

This awareness raising work is targeted to multiple stakeholders with different expectations and through various interventions. UN agencies, for example, are expected to learn and then monitor, through this work, about the implementation status of human rights related to gender, disability and employment in Australia. These UN agencies can then propose specific recommendations to the GOA for specific resolutions. Some of these positive activities found in WWDA that helped to change awareness were; in 2013-2014, WWDA consulted UN regarding the CRPD, the UN Committee CEDAW and the UN committee ECOSOC about relevant human rights’ and how they should be implemented in Australia

(WWDA 2013-2014, pp. 16-24). Additionally, WWDA also hoped the GOA and its agencies would understand the gaps in policies to encourage employment for WWD and then to take adequate action to amend and develop new coherent policies. In particular, the WWDA commented on the NDIS support and services in 2013 before the roll out (WWDA 2013-2014, pp. 52-53), the NDIS quality and safeguard frameworks in 2014 (WWDA 2014-2015, p. 33),

‘Recognising that women with disability face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination that will require gender specific measures and actions to be incorporated throughout the design, implementation and evaluation of the Q&S framework. (WWDA 2015, p.4)

the National Disability Employment Framework Consultations- Stage one (WWDA 2014-2015, p. 38), the NDS second implementation plan (WWDA 2015-2016, p. 16), and the National Disability Advocacy Program Reform (WWDA 2015-2016, p. 17).

‘Service/agreements/funding contracts of NDAP agencies must include specific, targeted measures and actions to address the urgent gaps and issues where NDAP has failed and continues to fail women and girls with disability. These issues include: The right to work and economic security’ (Australian Cross Disability Alliance (ACDA) 2016, p.6)

The DEA have contributed twenty succinct policy recommendations on promoting open employment first, positioning DES, supporting businesses and acting affirmatively (DEA 2013-2014, p.10). It also included NDIS employment and related support, quality safeguards (DEA 2014-2015, p. 6), reforming a new DES (DEA 2016-2017, p. 10, DEA 2017-2018, p.8) and NDIS employment and outcomes (DEA 2017-2018, p. 8). They hope to improve the skills of DES providers and improve the quality of their disability employment services support. To strengthen this belief, DEA has undertaken training and capacity development for their members over 5 years including DES contractual compliance and other topical webinars (DEA 2013-2014, p. 6), DES Contractual Compliance Train-the-Trainer packages (DEA 2016-2017; p. 9, DEA 2017-2018, p. 24), bespoke disability awareness training and DES Essentials Train the Trainer sessions (DEA 2013-2014; p. 14; DEA 2015-2016, p. 12), DES Star Ratings workshop roadshows (DEA 2013-2014, p.7) and establishing a ‘news bulletin’, focusing on NDIS (DEA 2017-2018, p. 8). Apart from the measures for businesses and governments, these are also important for PWD/WWD, as they are believed to improve the confidence and belief in themselves about their competence to enter the Australian labor force.

Finally, it is also thought to be of the utmost importance, that the broader community and society change their mindset about employment to welcome PWD/WWD into work and this can be achieved through forum discussions (WWDA 2013-2014, pp. 40-41); development of human rights toolkits for Women and girls with disabilities (WWDA 2016-2017, p. 14), Disability Employment Infographics (DEA 2013-2014, p.10) and increased media presence, including TV interviews (DEA 2015-2016, p. 8; DEA 2016-2017, p. 9).

As I argued in Chapter 2, Marxist Feminism helps us to understand the relationship between gender inequality and employment. The work of WWDA and DEA rests on addressing this inequality, whereby a lack of awareness about employment for PWD/WWD is evident from the international (UN agencies) to the national (disability employment stakeholders) scopes and from the central (GOA and its agencies) to the local levels (community and WWD/PWD). As a result, the differences in economic, social and political power are further revealed because both NGO's reveal how PWD/WWD are marginalized and vulnerable groups who have a lack of power to access or request for changes in society.

As can be seen in my analysis above, these two NGOs seek to address this lack of awareness in their work. Specifically, in 2017-2018 (p. 24) WWDA stated that:

> *'Due to power imbalances and multiple forms of discrimination, they have had fewer opportunities to establish or join organizations that can represent their needs as women and person(s) with disabilities'.*

They continue by stating that it is necessary to "strengthen the normative and policy frameworks for equality and the full participation of women and girls with disabilities in society and development", (WWDA 2017-2018, p.24). Similarly, the DEA have co-operated with agencies from the UK to share with and draw on their experiences for people with disabilities, to encourage peer support and the achievement of 'a new balance of power' (DEA 2015-2016, p. 9).

Furthermore, each NGO argues that the lack of awareness about employment for WWD by governments and international stakeholders may be caused by the invisibility and minority status of these WWD. According to Marxist feminism, "social structure is based on the dominance of some groups over others and … those groups in society share common interests", (Lindsey 2011, pp. 14-17). Marxist feminism therefore argues that society needs to address the needs of all citizens, whether sick or healthy (ability and disability), all ethnicities (eg: Indigenous and non-Indigenous people), all sexualities and all genders. As

such, WWDA and DEA try to undertake this in their work and stress the point that PWD/WWD as minority groups, face additional challenges in entering the workforce that mainstream Australians do not face. Thus, WWDA chooses awareness raising to help increase the equality of opportunities and an equality of outcome (WWDA 2017-2018, p. 17; WWDA 2016-2017b p. 23.)

VI.1.2 Inclusion of women with disabilities in their activities, advocacy and report

In addition to awareness raising, the organizations also focus on 'inclusion'. In this theme, three sub-themes will be clarified below.

Inclusion in implementation of activities

The term 'inclusion' in this context is used to reveal how both NGOs aim to include and involve PWD or WWD in their activity development and implementation. Inclusion here means an aim to 'include' PWD and WWD so that they can comprehensively understand the issues, raise their voices to the GOA and have specific actionable measures in place to help them to resolve their problems in relation to employment. WWD are fully represented in WWDA over the wide range of activities implemented during the research period. This full representation in meetings or events with UN CRPD, UN CEDAW or GOA and its agencies is expected since WWDA is a peak organization, run by and for WWD. Hence, the participation of WWDA members is obvious in their activities.

However, the involvement of WWD at a grass roots level in activities related to employment is quite low or there are just not that many activities that facilitate participation at the community level. The only activity found was the WWD forum run by WWDA to discuss the DES, conducted across 4 states (ACT, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia in 2013,2014) (WWDA 2013-2014, p. 41).

Since 2013-2014, WWDA has also created online platforms for communication, such as WWDA's Facebook fan page, Twitter, Member E-list, and websites (p. 54) to allow for an exchange of experiences or for individual advocacy to better understand the current situation and experience of WWD in employment. However, this activity may not be adequate for collecting all representative information to bring WWD opinions to other stakeholders at higher levels. Since many women are living in more vulnerable circumstances, such as in remote areas where it may be difficult to access the Internet, their experiences may not be counted.

The DEA does provide some inputs to include PWD in employment such as: Green Army program (DEA 2013-2014, p.10), or the Mc Clure Welfare review (DEA 2014-2015, p.6). Additionally, DEA expresses that through their consultation with PWD advocates, they had developed strong networks with some PWD organizations such as: WWD in Victoria, Australian Federation of Disability organizations, Brain Injury Australia (DEA 2016-2017, p. 16), Australian network Disability, and People with Disability Australia (DEA 2015-2016, p. 15). However, there were only two activities involving the participation of WWD; these were the Disability Employment Discussion in 2014, and the National Leader's forum in 2017-2018 (DEA 2017-2018, p. 26) which focused on presenting choice and control in a person-centrered practice. However, in the DEA, there has been no particular focus on WWD in their consultation work with job seekers with disabilities over these 5-years of activities.

Inclusion in advocacy

Moreover, WWDA also strongly advocates for the inclusion of WWD in treaties, policy implementation (such as the CEDAW review) (WWDA 2013-2014, p. 17), CRPD implementation (WWDA 2016-2017, p.15), NDS review (WWDA 2013-2014, p.39) and NDIS consultation (WWDA 2017-2018, p.13). Their views about the inclusion of women in relation to employment are specific and presented as:

> *'Women and girls with disabilities must be meaningfully involved in all decision-making processes of the new development agenda and frameworks. … Women with disabilities must be viewed as agents of development in their own right'* (WWDA – 2013-2014a, p. 6)

As the peak body of DES, the DEA advocates strongly for the inclusion and participation of PWD in open labour markets.

> *'We believe in the right of every member of society to be included fully in the community, and to have control over their own life choices. Participation in the open labour market is a crucial factor in recognizing this goal'* (DEA 2013-2014, p. 23).

This commitment continued and remained in place over the following years from 2015-2018 as the core message of DEA's goals.

Inclusion in their annual report layout and content

The annual reports of WWDA are naturally relevant to WWD, with photos of women living with disabilities on the cover page of reports, for example the report of 2015-2016, and the

2014-2015 report. In WWDA's reports, they discuss issues of gender and employment for WWD, such as in the reports of 2013-2014, 2015-2016 and 2016-2017.

In contrast to WWDA, however, the DEA has separate pages where member's stories are discussed, with images of WWD only included when alongside MWD. Notably, MWD who are DES providers' clients appear more often than WWD. In terms of multiple disadvantages, in contrast to the WWDA, the DEA only mentioned WWD by coincidence, mainly through two member's cases stories, (DEA 2014-2015, p. 17; DEA 2017-2018, p. 19). In the first case, the story is about a single mum living with mental health issues and receiving the support of a DES provider to get a job and maintain financial security for her family. In the second case, a hearing-impaired woman, who is an immigrant as well as a parent, was supported in finding a job with a commercial restoration and cleaning company by the DES.

While the DEA aims to address the needs of WWD through their general focus on PWD, the risks are that this will result in the exclusion of WWD/PWD from 'the equal place' (Knoll 2012, p. 49). As Feminist Disability Studies argue, the experiences of WWD should be of particular attention since their experiences are very different to MWD or people without disability.

VI.1.3 Intersectionality in diverse cultural and social background groups

In addition to awareness raising and inclusion, the NGOs seek to be intersectional in their work. In their annual reports, both NGOs proved that 'intersectionality' should include more than just disability and gender. WWDA also supports LGBTQA+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning, asexual and many other terms) and Indigenous groups:

> *'The MDGs (Millennium Development Goals) do not take into account women's diversity: women with disabilities, indigenous [sic] women and other – who generally belong to the poorest groups, have less access to health, education and other services, and are subject to multiple discriminations'* (WWDA 2013-2014a, p. 3).

The DEA, seeking a more intersectional approach, have also focused on single parents and job seekers with diverse cultural and social backgrounds in their discussions on the future of generalist employment services with the Department of Job and Small Business (DEA 2017-2018, p. 10). Furthermore, through their members' stories, the DEA revealed that job seekers are diversified. For example, they could be a mother with a disability who

immigrated (DEA 2017-2018, p. 19), a woman with a disability and who is a Trans woman (DEA 2016-2017, p. 14) or a single mum with a disability (WWDA 2014-2015, p. 17).

As such, the NGO's are cognizant of the fact that a woman with multiple disadvantages such as disability, being a lesbian, an immigrant, or a single mum (or all of these) may face enormous difficulties getting into work, and that if intersectionality is not paid attention to, barriers may not be adequately addressed. They recognize that the difficulties WWD face are often because they are women, and include discrimination in workplaces, lesser chances of promotion, or weaker physical health and capacity. In addition, they acknowledge Indigenous WWD, who may experience the triple discriminations of racism, disability and gender. Thus, intersectionality as an idea is connected to the work of these NGOs. All dimensions of marginalization are referred to in reports including race, gender, sexuality and ability as the multilayers of drawbacks and how these multiple identities (femaleness, disability) affect employment opportunities (Haegele, Yessick & Zhu 2018, p. 306).

VI.1.4 Partnership development to strengthen their voice and results

In addition to the above themes, forming partnerships are also crucial for both the DEA and WWDA. Partnerships can be established with governments, national and international NGOs, universities, and other stakeholders - to address employment issues. In order to achieve this, both organizations, firstly, collaborated with the GOA and its agencies to design and implement projects that would contribute to positive changes in employment for PWD. For example, over 5 years, the DEA implemented 4 key projects with the GOA including the DES Contractual Compliance –Train the Trainer package (DEA 2013-2014, p.6), the National Disability Employment Initiative Project (in partnership with ten member organizations) (DEA 2013-2014, p.10) and trialed the $5,000 'Career Accounts' initiative for DES participants with mental ill-health (DEA 2015-2015, p.8). Likewise, the WWDA implemented several projects related to the promotion of human rights, in which a right to work was also focused upon (WWDA 2015-2016, p.18; WWDA 2016-2017, p.17). It also included the National Disability Employment Services (DES) Project (WWDA 2013-2014, p. 40; WWDA 2014-2015, p. 38). This DES project aimed to "facilitate provision of consumer advice to the Government about the needs of women with disabilities in the context of the DES, and look at ways to improve future disability employment services" and "to lift consumer engagement and knowledge of the DES program", (WWDA 2013-2014, pp. 40-41). For both WWDA and DEA, these partnerships with the GOA are crucial for advocating

for adequate legal frameworks in order to facilitate the development of disability employment services.

Additionally, there is evidence of collaboration with other organizations to co-develop their writing submissions or projects, such as the National Disability Employment Framework Discussion Paper Survey (external stakeholders and DSS taskforce) (DEA 2015-2016, p. 11), the National Disability Employment Initiative project funding (in partnership with 10 organizations), and a Disability Employment Infographic, in partnership with Jobs Australia (DEA 2013-2014, p. 10). Moreover, they are key stakeholders in the NDS reporting framework reviews, the DPO submissions to issues related to NDIS (WWDA 2017-20018, p12), the CRPD Committee - Draft general comments on CRPD (WWDA 2015-2016, p 16), the NDIS (WWDA 2014-2015, p.34) and the CEDAW shadow report (WWDA 2013-2014, p.25). This helps consolidate and strengthen their voices to leverage their influence over the GOA.

Furthermore, partnerships with WWD/PWD through creating discussion in media platforms, or through forums and events are optimal ways to document their 'voices', and to build evidence and case studies that are used for submissions or advocacy. Furthermore, to improve advocacy work, the DEA collaborated with universities such as Deakin University (from 2014-2016), the Queensland University, the University of Melbourne, the Center for Disability Studies and the University of Sydney (from 2016-2018). This collaboration aims to conduct evidence-based research on PWD and employment. This research can then be used as a tool to convince the GOA to take adequate steps and make decisions on employment for PWD. The WWDA consulted with the Advisory Steering Committee of the National Research Project held by the Centre for Disability Research and Policy at Sydney University (WWDA 2013-2014, p.48) and also developed 'a longitudinal study on the social and economic participation of PWD', together with the University of Melbourne (WWDA 2013-2014, p. 49). Lastly, by maintaining partnerships with international NGO's in New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States, the organizations are able to share their experiences about employment for PWD. Thanks to this, the lessons learnt from other countries will be helpful to boost employment opportunties for PWD in Australia.

VI.1.5. Discrimination agaist PWD in employment

The NGOs confirm and reveal the types of discrimination faced by PWD in employment. While WWDA discusses more specifc problems in employment faced by WWD, DEA tends to refer to difficulties of both MWD and WWD. For example, WWD tend to be directed to

more training, since it is believed that they do not have sufficient skills to find a job. As stated by WWDA:

> *'When Maria became a client with DES she was enrolled in Train the Trainer training. She felt this training was inappropriate because she already held higher qualifications. She also felt frustrated or set up to fail because she was not proficient enough with the English language to succeed' (WWDACT 2014, p. 10).*

WWDA also argues that the system of disability support such as that examined through Centrelink is problematic. When WWD do get a job, they are not able to ask DES for support to change this if the job proves to be unsuitable. They firstly must resign before asking for support to find new, more suitable work: it appears to be a presupposition that WWD will be happy with any job, but not that they require decent work. When getting a job, PWD may then also face barriers of inaccessibility such as transport to commute, the infrastructure of the building, or even the work environment.

> *'…So, I went to Disability Works Australia and said can you help me to find a job close to home that is suitable for my skill set. No, we can only help people that are unemployed, currently," (Sharon). …unless she quits her current job, DES will not assist her because they only assist people into employment'* (WWDSA 2014, p. 3).

> *'It is no point just assuming that WWD can get a job without the recognition and proper understanding of the structural issues that prevent women with disabilities from finding and securing employment'* (WWDWA 2014, p. 6).

> *'And David certainly is passionate about working there, navigating his wheelchair through two hours of public transport each morning just to get there'*, (David – Member story) (DEA 2017-2018 p. 6).

> *'Infrastructure such as transport systems and the built environment need to be accessible and affordable so women are able to move about freely and independently and get to work'* (WWDQLD 2014, p.2).

Furthermore, in the workplace, they may be discriminated against or bullied by employers and co-workers. They may not have the chance for further professional training for promotions. It is assumed that WWD especially, are not able to be parents and carers, thus they will not need flexible working hours or childcare support. Others, perhaps unable to find a job but still working as volunteers will also be exploited:

'I have worked places where I wasn't treated right and had to leave' Karen (DEA 2016 -2017, p. 25).

'…when I began my employment, I wasn't given an orientation or induction and I never felt part of the team. In the whole time that I was employed, I was never once offered any training to further my career', (WWDWA 2014, p.5).

'…there is an assumption within DES that women with disabilities aren't parents and/or carers, but many of us, are this means we also need access to flexible working hours and conditions, including access to affordable child care', (WWDWA 2014, p. 7).

'I think volunteering should be put on this and not positive but as a negative here in South Australia because through, you think, ok I will go back and do volunteering and they will see that I am a good worker and that I am creative and that I have skills, no what they do, is they exploit you' (WWDSA 2014, p. 9).

Across these cases, it is evident that the NGOs are compiling and highlighting issues of discrimination. They are also attempting to document and expose these serious issues through their awareness raising activities. As argued in Chapter 3, feminist disability theories reveal how WWD/PWD are excluded from society due to inaccessibility. With regards to discrimination, the NGOs are making a great effort to prove that the exclusions around disability, work as a system, stigmatizing human differences (Garland- Thomson 2005, p. 1557). Furthermore, the NGOs are seeking to address the issues noted in the literature review, that discrimination in employment is a big issue in Australia, and PWD tend to quit their jobs, not because of their incompetencies, but due to the bullying they endure daily in their working lives (Vickers 2009, p. 267).

VI.1.6. Telling women with disabilities' stories: mapping the importance of employment for women with disabilities

Throughout the process of my analysis, it was clear that getting into work is crucial to WWD. In the submission to UN CRPD 10th Session in 2013, WWDA affirmed that:

'Work is essential to an individual's economic security and is important to achieving social inclusion. Employment contributes to physical and mental health, personal wellbeing and a sense of identity' (WWDA 2013, p. 42).

Similarly, DEA also argued:

'Employment is powerful narrative for a PWD to find their voice, their confidence and their determination' (DEA 2014-2015, p. 8).

Through member's stories in the DEA reports, the significance of employment for PWD tends to be even clearer when it is seen directly through the lens of participants. In particular, for WWD, getting working is meaningful in terms of contribution, pride, values, happiness, enhancement of social skills, and confidence boosting. For example:

'Having work feels likes I am really contributing to something now. I 've gained a sense of pride about myself, a sense of worth, something which I lacked in myself prior' (DEA 2014-2015, p. 17).

'(s)he feels values at Mercy CQ' (DEA 2014-2015, p.16).

'Bronwyn's confidence has skyrocketed since starting in the role. Bronwyn is an absolute joy to work with and Ellie's noticed an enormous impact on the workplace since she's joined the team', (DEA 2016-2017, p. 9).

Furthermore, once a person has a job, there is sound proof of an improvement in overall health, in relationships, financial security and independence. For instance:

'Now that I've got a job and am working in a team I feel less anxious in other situations. I'm a bit more outgoing and chatty, and I think I'm happier too', (DEA 2015-2016, p.13).

'As a result of gaining employment, Gyan has expressed an improvement with her overall health, relationships, financial security and independence' (DEA 2016-2017, p. 14).

'Mandy has been at Sticky Date for over nine months and continues to really enjoy the work, growing her confidence motivation and financial independence' (DEA 2016-2017, p. 19).

'To watch them go from mild, quiet workers, to solid and social members of the team has been lovely to see. It has been rewarding for everyone involved' (DEA 2016-2017, p. 29).

As shown above, the work of NGOs is important for the telling of stories and for mapping experiences. It can be argued that this 'gives voice' to the idea that employment is vital to

WWD and has a range of positive impacts. Specifically, it argues that employment assists WWD to build up their financial security, strengthens their confidence and self-esteem and by that, it extends their social networks. Thanks to that, it contributes considerably to independent living and social and economic inclusion for WWD.

VI.1.7 Types of disability with different barriers in employment

There are a wide range of forms of disabilities discussed and mentioned in the report of DEA and WWDA. These are important to delineate when considering issues of employment, since different types of disability may create or exacerbate different difficulties in employment. In DEA's reports, mental health seems to be their priority across various activities. In particular, they developed plans to focus on mental health (DEA 2014-2015, p .22; DEA 2017-2018, p. 30), centering on mental health reforms in terms of policy (DEA 2015-2016, p. 9). They implemented activities relevant to mental illness such as: DSS pilots innovative approaches for job seekers experiencing mental illness (DEA 2014-2015, p. 6), and the trial of $5,000 'Career Accounts' for young DES participants with mental ill-health (DEA 2015-2016 p. 8). Furthermore, the DEA also co-organized activities relevant to mental health for example; the ACCI sponsored launch of the OECD report, 'Mental Health and Work: Australia' Orygen, the National Centre of Excellence in Youth Mental Health, , Mental Health Australia (DEA 2015-2016, pp. 14-15). They also organized their internal activities around mental health discussions. For example, in their conference in 2018 (DEA 2017-2018, p. 20), they urged delegates to help employers see the value and skills of people living with mental health challenges and spoke of the many benefits of mentally healthy workplaces. In addition to that, the DEA has also participated in activities of different groups of disabilities including autism, physical, and hearing and vision impairments since 2014-2018. However, their ongoing research in collaboration with the Universities of Queensland focuses strongly on physical and neurological disabilities (DEA 2014 -2015, p. 12, DEA 2015-2016, p. 15, DEA 2016-2017, p. 17; DEA 2017-2018, p. 18). In addition, through member's stories, they reveal types of disabilities for WWD including mental health issues (DEA 2014-2015, p. 16), autism (DEA 2015-2016, p. 17), down syndrome (DEA 2016-2017, p. 9), physical disabilities (DEA 2016-2017, p. 14), deafness (DEA 2017-2018, p. 19) and language difficulties (DEA 2017-2018, p. 27).

As a member of DPOA, WWDA was a proactive participant in the co-submissions to the Department of Treasury priorities for the 2017-2018, Federal budget (2017-2018), the productivity commission issues paper: National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) cost. The WWDA also broadened their collaboration with other NGOs to submit to the UN

Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; review of Australia's Fifth Periodic report under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

The WWDA seems focused on WWD in general rather than on any specific type of disability, per se, although, through their case studies, some various disability groups have been at least mentioned. These are the cognitive, blind and mild intellectual disability groups (WWDA 2014a, pp. 46-48). Also mentioned , but not focused upon , are, through their forums on DES conducted in 4 states (Queensland, ACT, SA and WA) mental illness, physical disability (WWDQLD 2013, p. 10, WWDSA 2014, p7), brain injury, multiple disabilities (WWDSA 2014, p. 2), and blindness (WWDSA 2014, p. 9), Asperger's Syndrome and Epilepsy (WWDACT 2014, p. 9), dyslexia (WWDACT 2014, p. 16), and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (WWDWA 2014, p. 3).

VI.2 Discussion: Strengths and Weaknesses

VI.2.1 Strengths

In general, both the DEA and WWDA have contributed considerably to supporting WWD into employment in Australia. Firstly, as outlined above, both the DEA and WWDA provide indirect support to Australian WWD in employment through awareness raising activities with the purpose of changing attitudes. In addition, they use a range of approaches to access multiple-stakeholders to help them reach their target audiences. They understand their member's difficulties such as discrimination faced, the need for intersectionality and inclusion, the different types of disability and the importance of employment for PWD. They have also become very proactive in engaging with issues related to WWD or disability employment. For instance, DEA is a pioneer of advocacy for disability employment for PWD in new supporting programs such as NDIS and DES. Furthermore, DEA and WWDA both utilize media as effective communication channels such as Facebook, Twitter, website, newsletters, bulletins and forums, roadshows, leader's forums, national conferences and webinars; to exchange, share and raise their members' voices about their issues in employment for PWD. In this way, they both encourage their members to communicate and to openly talk about their issues and provide their members with up-to-date and relevant information about employment. The feedback from their members is then documented as proof for their follow-up advocacy work.

They, also, build strong partnerships nationally and internationally. Nationally, they collaborate with other organizations or universities to co-submit policies or to co-implement research. Internationally, they lobby, discuss, and share cases about employment for PWD

with other countries such as the United Kingdom, New Zealand, China and Italy. Their partnership results are also used to strengthen their evidence-base in advocacy work. Additionally, the WWDA meet with UN agencies or UN committees to report on issues about the implementation of relevant Australian member treaties, so as to better influence the Australia government in terms of policy development and policy implementation.

Finally, they both undertake significant advocacy directly to the government to develop specific support programs for WWD based on all collected information from the variety of activities mentioned above. They play the important role of the 'middleman' who endeavors to understand the barriers their members face and to influence GOA with improved policies and support for PWD in employment. Hence, they have contributed significantly to the development and amendment of policies such as the NDS plan, the NDIS and DES.

VI.2.2 Suggestions to enhance employment opportunities for WWD

In addtion to the value of both NGOs' work has been discussed, this research offers some sugestions that should be taken into consideration.

Disability Employment Australia

Firstly, the DEA's focus is entirely on disability employment services but their approach is gender blind or gender neutral through their use of the umbrella approach to PWD. While they do undertake programmes and strategies for disability and employment for WWD as outlined above, the DEA does not often single out WWD as needing specific attention. As also noted above, while they do sometimes mention women specifically in their reports and through their member stories, in this way, women can be assumed to be a PWD focus, rather than being named explicitly. As such, the DEA is at risk of not realizing and understanding the differences and particular needs WWDs' experience in employment compared to MWD. As this thesis has argued, WWD experience added burdens based on gender such as; sexual harassment in the work place, being pregnant or being carers. Without consideration of gender issues in employment for PWD, the DEA may promote the cause for PWD but miss the needs of WWD as they are not counted in any disability support programs. Furthermore, DEA members may not be aware of how to better support women who are job seekers with disabilities.

Secondly, the DEA makes significant efforts to strengthen members' capacity but it seems there is a lack of training topics on how to efficiently work with, support or provide services to WWD. This supports what is noted in the literature – often, DES providers simply did not know how to work with and support WWD.

Lastly, the DEA does not focus adequately on the improvement of 'quality support' measures for job seekers with disabilities, delivered by DES's members. The numbers of DES participants getting into work has not been revealed in DEA reports which may lead to difficulties in to measuring the success of their members in assisting PWD and WWD into employment.

Women With Disability Australia

At first glance, the WWDA supports a wide range of WWDs' issues. At present WWDA prioritizes issues of violence as they argue that 'violence is the root cause in the social, economic and political inequality experienced by WWD'' (WWDA 2014b, p. 24). Undeniably, due to be the representative organization for WWD, WWDA must pay attention to all relevant issues of WWD. It is more significant if WWDA could design and organise more activities related to employment as the forum to discuss DES for WWD in 4 states in 2016-2017.

Employer awareness

Both the DEA and the WWDA understand that the discriminations that relate to employment for PWD/WWD are often due to the attitudes of employers generally, as noted in Chapter 3. However, neither the DEA nor the WWDA have activities to advocate for or raise awareness about employment for PWD/WWD for employers in private businesses. If employer awareness is changed, it may mean a change to their internal policies to allow for recruitment of WWD. These changes might create more inclusive working environments for their employees and an understanding that this is essential for influencing employee job retention. However, these potentially important stakeholders have not been adequately considered by these two organizations.

Types of disability

Lastly, although different types of disabilities are mentioned in advocacy, policy and through member's stories, no specific supports, programmes or strategies are mentioned that attend specifically to different type of disabilities. Obviously, different types of disabilities may require different support measures which may mean further barriers experienced by DEA members. This would mean there would be a need for changes in policy to improve service quality for different disability groups.

In conclusion, 7 themes have been used to explore the work of NGOs to assist WWD in employment. These themes proved that both the WWDA and DEA are aware of the prevalence of discrimination, the nexus of intersectionality in employment as well as the

importance of partnership development, employment and different types of disabilities. They both use indirect approaches such as awareness raising to change the attitudes of relevant stakeholders and advance employment for PWD/WWD. However, in short, the DEA is gender-blind in employment and the WWDA should have more activities designed for WWD in employment. Hence further actions are recommended to foster the participation of WWD into the Australian labor force and will be discussed in the concluding chapter.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

VII.1 Conclusions

In this thesis, I employed three theoretical frameworks - Marxist feminism, Intersectionality and Feminist Disability Theory and applied thematic analysis to answer the research question: How have Australian NGOs intervened in the needs of Australian WWDs in relation to employment in the five-year period from 2014-2018?

As outlined in the previous chapter, there are seven themes used to address this question: 1) awareness raising to strengthen employment opportunities for WWD, 2) inclusion WWD in their activities, advocacy and reports, 3) intersectionality in diverse cultural and social background groups 4) partnership development to strengthen their voice and results, 5) discrimination in employment for PWD/WWD, 6) the stories of WWD: mapping the importance of employment for WWD 7) Types of disability with different barriers in employment. Overall, I argued that the WWDA and the DEA are aware of the prevalence of discrimination in employment, the importance of disability inclusion, employment of WWD and intersectionality. In addition, they have built strong partnerships to support WWD into employment mainly through awareness raising for multiple stakeholders. These include UN agencies, GOA and its agencies, DES providers, WWD/PWD and the broader community.

Due to the gaps outlined in the previous chapter, further recommendations will be proposed to each organization in the coming section.

VII.2 Recommendations

VII.2.1 Women with Disability Australia

- WWDA should focus more on employment for WWD in their advocacy, partnership, project design and implementation and research.
- WWDA may consider organizing more activities related to employment for WWD in the community to better understand and collect the different experiences and barriers WWD face in employment; and campaign to increase the awareness of DES amongst women with disabilities and the wider community.
- WWDA may need to pay attention to private enterprises or businesses in their advocacy in order to change discriminative attitudes at the different stages of recruitment to promotion.
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VII.2.2 Disability Employment Australia

- Urgent action around gender integration should be undertaken by the DEA in their advocacy work. This may be done through training and internal activities to help their member's better support and communicate effectively with DES participants to provide improved quality of services. There are WWD from diverse cultural backgrounds and different disability groups. Awareness about issues such as violence, sexual harassment, unfair treatment, unfair pay, unfair dismissal, equal access to promotion, parental leave, representation of WWD and meaningful jobs should be recognized, to help DEA members be more gender responsive in their service provision.

- Private business and enterprises should also be included in DEA's targets to raise awareness about employment for WWD/PWD in order to welcome them into their labour force;

- Quality of service provided by DEA members should be included through reports. The number of PWD getting into work should be disclosed and there should be consultation with PWD job seekers.

- Awareness raising about the different difficulties faced by women from different disability groups should be included.

VII.3 Limitations of research and other research recommendations

There are several limitations in this research as below:

VII.3.1 Data accessibility

Disaggregated data in employment for PWD is inaccessible. The available data revealed by ABS collected in 2015 is quite general and insufficient for understanding the employment rates of WWD among different industries in different disability groups. This causes difficulties by clounding a clear picture of the barriers in employment for WWD.

VII.3.2 Data Source quality, accessibility and policy changes

In terms of data source quality, due to the difficulties of time and data accessibility, selecting two NGOs based on their data source availability was most convenient for this analysis. However, annual reports by the two NGOs may be subjective and not politically neutral with little recognition of their weaknesses or failures. Thus, the data may be inadequate for the full recognition and assessment of support or the lack thereof for WWD in employment.

In terms of accessibility, in the DEA website, there were some inaccessible elements only allowed to their members. This may limit my findings, especially those related to webinars about training for DEA members.

Finally, the data collected is from the fiscal years 2013 to 2018. However, the GOA have made some amendments and started their new DES from 1st July 2018 (DSS 2019). Hence, some of the recommendations of this research may have already been considered and begun to change but yet to be reported.

VII.3.3 Research object and scope

In some ways, the research object could be viewed as too broad, since there are different types of disabilities, and each form of disability may have distinct difficulties, capacities and strengths.

By grouping all types of disabilities into one, the results may not be applicable to all disability groups. However, due to the lack of research specifically related to gender and disability in employment, it is impossible to get enough literature on WWD in employment with specific types of disability.

It could also be argued that the research scope is too broad. While the focus could have been more specific (to one state or territory), due to the similarity of issues faced in the research objective, this thesis needed to look at the whole of Australia to have sufficient data for analysis.

VII.4 Recommendations for other research

Due to the inaccessibility on disaggregated data on employment (eg; different disability groups, different industries and different genders), more research is needed to explore how WWD should be better supported into employment and how NGOs could do better to support WWD in this process.

In brief, the successes of both NGO in their awareness raising efforts at including WWD and PWD into the broader community through employment is acknowledged. Recognisably, some improvements in terms of implementation of policies for advancing employment for PWD/WWD are due to the influences of these NGO's. However, more attention by both organisations to get WWD into work is crucial for WWD, to secure their financial status, to extend their networks and increase their confidence to ensure independent lives. Furthermore, it also helps the GOA to reduce its economic burden through disability support pensions. It recommends further research directly about WWD to better understand their

perspectives for support them into employment and how the support by NGOs could be improved.

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