TRAINING WA
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Breaking down the barriers: An examination of the factors and underpinning strategies that contribute to the unit of competency completion of apprentices with a learning disability.

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Presenter

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Research Purpose

To investigate teaching and learning strategies that contribute to unit of competency completion rates of apprentices with a learning disability.

Consideration of the wider application to apprentices in general and offer lecturers strategies that comply with current equity legislation.

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Session Overview

- Research question
- Relevance within the broader context
- Methodology
- Findings

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Review of Literature

- Broader studies into completion and non completion of apprentices

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Methodology

- Qualitative approach using mixed methods
➢ Questionnaire
➢ Focus groups
➢ Interviews
   Research sample

Learning Disability

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- A learning disability is identified under the Disability Discrimination Act, (1992) and Disability Standards for Education (2005) as a disorder or malfunction, which results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction, and, therefore, places an obligation on education and training providers to make 'reasonable adjustments' to accommodate these students (Shaw, 2004).

Learning Disability

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Findings of Reis and Colbert (2004) confirm that students with a learning disability often have coexisting conditions such as anxiety, depression, and low self-concept and self-efficacy.

Findings of Barriers

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Participants identified difficulties with :
reading, spelling and writing
Coexisting behaviours:
- Anxiety
- Distractibility
- Withdrawal
- Disruptiveness
- Poor organisational skills
- Retention of information

Barriers as a result of LD

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These barriers may include poor reading, comprehension and writing, anxiety and or depression and negative self-image.

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Difficulties experienced	Students Reponses	
Difficulties	Response Percent	Response Count
Understanding texts	73.7%	14
Reading	78.9%	15
Writing	52.6%	10
Maths	42.1%	8
Assessments	57.9%	11
Organisation	11	2

Factors for success

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Lecturers and apprentices acknowledged:
- Work satisfaction
- Pay and job availability
- Completion of VET in schools
- Holistic instructional approaches
- Supportive learning environment
- Family and peer support

Strategies

Apprentices found mentoring and tutoring as being most important by:

- simplifying terms and clarifying concepts
- mind mapping
- task analysis
- use of equipment and visual representations to present abstract concepts
- Use of technologies

Factors and Strategies that Address the Barriers Experienced by Students with a Learning Disability

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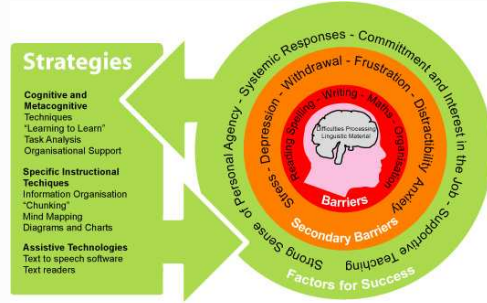
Summary

- In spite of barriers, these apprentices have the hands on aptitude and conceptual ability to be successful
- Apprentices who have been disenfranchised by the education system, with the implementation of strategies, can overcome the barriers to achieve competency