Chapter 5

Recommendations

5.1   Employment Strategy Framework

As mentioned in my literature review, underemployment of people with disabilities costs the economy hundreds of thousands of rupees a year in lost earnings and social welfare. Not only in monetary terms, it is an enormous waste of talent and skill.

The interviews, surveys, analysis, data gathered together with the literature review helped me to formulate a strategic framework as outlined below to get the elderly and differently abled to the economic workforce. In the context of currently prevailing high and persistent unemployment in the differently-abled sector, it is clear that we need an Employment Strategy Framework which gives an overall direction on the way forward. Since it will take some time to overcome the unemployment problem among the differently-abled, this Framework identifies the short and long term strategies to follow. These strategies are primarily based on the following sections.

- Education and Training
  Improve the level of basic and post-secondary education and work-related skills for persons with disabilities
- Employment Opportunities and Participation
  Expand the availability, accessibility and quality of employment opportunities for less-able persons, in partnership with business and labour. Improve the labour market situation and independence of persons with disabilities through employment-related activities.
- Connecting Employers and Persons with Disabilities
  Enhance awareness of the abilities and availability of persons with disabilities and strengthen persons with disabilities' knowledge of labour market opportunities
- Building Knowledge
  Enhance the knowledge base, which contributes to continuous improvement of labour market policies and programs for persons with disabilities.

Short term strategies

- Education and Training

  o Differently abled
  As a whole in Sri Lanka there is no strong educational system built for differently-abled people. Hence in the long run, we need to focus on the ICT training for those people targeting on the market requirements. Currently the

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Social Services Department handles eight training centers, and there are many more training centers governed by private companies. As an immediate solution, I suggest the training programmes should be prepared according to the currently available ICT courses and the standard evaluation systems should be applied where ever possible. For example, if a differently-abled person follows training on Programming in Java, at the end of the course he should be ready to take the Sun Certification Tests, which will make him employable around the globe.

o Elderly

Training wise, elderly people will not have much difficulty in grasping the concepts of ICT and how to use ICT. But through the interviews I held in my research, I found out that most of the senior citizens were not given proper ground knowledge on using computers. They were directly trained on the applicability area (for example, banking applications) and they lack the fundamentals. Hence I suggest all the ICT training courses should include a fundamental section unless the participants have covered it before. In addition to this I also experienced that older people are less willing to learn from youngsters. The preference for elders is learning from friends and family. In order to get the best out of the elders, the trainers should be 'friendly' with accessibility training, gentleness, patience and an ability to ask and listen before leaping in.

• Employment Opportunities and Participation

o Differently abled

At present, only a handful of differently abled people can be found who can be considered as ICT experts. Most of the differently abled people who go for training in ICT lack the relevant resources to practice them in their daily life. Because of these conditions, it doesn't show a considerable participation of the differently abled in the ICT industry employment.

▪ Customer Service Representatives

As an initial step towards employment participation in ICT, most of the differently abled people can work as telephone operators or customer service representatives (CSR). These CSRs can respond to customer inquiries by phone in cases where the inquiries do not involve the use of customer information. This system can create part-time employment for hundreds of employees.

▪ Increase access to affordable, individualized, portable, employment-related disability supports.

There are already many assistive technologies developed for the differently abled in other countries such as software for screen readers, screen magnification, text readers and so on. As short term measures, we can concentrate on less expensive solutions such as TDD (Telecommunication Device for the Deaf). With a basic computer training deaf or people with hard hearing can be made to work in

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places such as call centers providing these less expensive devices connected to the computers.

- Increase and support work and volunteer placements.

As my research shows, most of the companies in Sri Lanka today have a negative perception towards employing differently abled and elderly people. Volunteer placements will help to tone down this feeling and employers will look for ways to employ these people once they identify the talent and commitment in them.

- Enhance job coaching and mentoring services.

Social services department of Sri Lanka should take an active role in finding employment opportunities for differently abled. As the differently abled are not an integrated part of the general employed community, conducting programmes for job coaching and mentoring becomes essential. These are the initial steps the department can take over before investing on assistive equipments to make the differently abled improve their self-determination, self-respect and dignity.

o Elderly
  - To overcome the major limitation of resources (computers and other ICT devices) in employment participation from the part of elderly people, we can use the outdated personal computers (PCs) passed on by many companies as a start. Once the elderly people learn to use and work with the systems, they can be given new PCs and a targeted task.

- Connecting Employers and Persons with Disabilities

  - In the short run, direct contacts are the most practical way of getting employed. Directly contacting differently abled persons to assess their abilities and skills and guide them towards available jobs that suit the nature of their handicap will generate successful results. Currently there are many NGOs working for the differently abled people who are not linked with the department of social services. I suggest that social services department should have links with these NGOs and the department should overlook the programmes held by these NGOs. As the department has direct contacts with the government, they can take an active role in promoting the differently-abled people through campaigns, press releases and mainly I believe that government must take a leadership role and set the norm for including people with disabilities in the workforce.

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Long term strategies

- Education and Training

    o Improve digital literacy

    By interviewing principals and teachers of several schools for the differently abled, I found out that there is neither a proper curriculum nor trained ICT teachers to teach ICT for the differently abled. With the advancement of ICT and technology, digital literacy is identified as a basic skill after literacy and numeracy. Hence social services department together with the NGOs should work towards establishing a proper curriculum and a network of trained teachers based on the industrial requirements for the differently abled. When the differently abled people are trained in ICT and other technical areas their confidence will be boosted and these technologies will give them enough room to prove their capability.

    Professional elders seems to have a basic level of digital literacy and show a keen interest in improving their level while the retired professionals elders seems to lack digital literacy and they are not willing to participate in ICT. This might be mainly due to the perception they have about ICT and educational and awareness programs through mass media can contribute a lot in attracting these elders to the ICT field.

    o Expand pre-employment training and skills upgrading opportunities (e.g. technical aids and equipment).

    In addition to education system, there should be a proper training framework which takes a step by step approach to an exhaustive level. This type of training will not restrict the differently abled people in clerical work but will show more opportunities for them to work with. Training should be considered as a vehicle to employment. By working with national state agencies and other NGOs, we should ensure that their trainee and internship programs are open to qualified people with disabilities. These can be started with on-paid internships and can be enhanced to paid traineeships by stressing the companies as a positive action measure aimed at facilitating the integration of differently abled people in the workplace

    Most of the schools for the differently abled still carry out cane and basket weaving and other outdated training courses as their vocational training courses. Instead of these less productive courses, social services department should take the initiative to introduce more market demanding training courses. Even though ICT training initially requires a monetary

investment, negotiations can be made with the private sector to produce ICT experts on the condition that they do the initial investment.

- Employment Opportunities and Participation

  o Elders
  As per my analysis it shows that most of the elders are willing to be re-employed in the same area where they worked, through ICT. For example a banking manager with his expertise in banking can engage in banking related activities through ICT. These people can be good candidates for business processing outsourcing (BPO) companies. Having the expertise in the relevant field, the elderly employees can contribute a lot if Sri Lanka partners with other companies to develop BPO operations.

  o Differently abled
    - Appropriate assistive technologies are key for people with disabilities

    Differently abled people will often use something called adaptive or assistive technology to access ICT applications. In the recent past, technological progress has been phenomenal. Today, screen-reader software converts computer text into speech for people with visual impairments (For example Jaws, Hal and Window-Eyes are popular examples of screen readers.). Puff sticks and other assistive devices enable people without fine motor skills to use a PC. Improvements in speech-recognition software will soon enable people who are deaf or hard of hearing to participate in meetings by using a laptop instead of a sign-language interpreter.

    Most of the time, these technologies are costly and are implemented in English. In Sri Lanka, as there are many software companies, there is a huge opportunity to build those systems in house in Sinhala language. For example, Sri Lanka Institute of Information Technology is currently developing a system for the Council for the Blind to convert Sinhala text to Braille and Sinhala speech to Braille. This is cost effective and can be used by most of the visually handicapped people in Sri Lanka.

  o Software Application Development
  Software giants are the best organizations to understand the societal needs by providing the required placements. The software industry is a "Mind Industry". The main resource in these software industries is the intelligence and the logistic attitudes. These can be provided in abundance by differently-abled staff. My survey data shows that most of the differently abled and elderly participants show a keen interest in following

training on software development, specially the web development. The communication technologies have evolved in such a way that most of the differently abled people can become experts in software development if they have the commitment even in a country like Sri Lanka without most of the infrastructure facilities for differently abled.

o Enhancing Telework
Rather than merely becoming telephone operators, with proper training differently-abled and elders can be made to be take more advanced roles through telework. This can be easily applied to the software development where teleconferencing and a network connection will remove the daily commuting to work. In addition to the transportation, telework solves many issues for the differently abled. Rearrangement of the premises to make room for wheelchairs, change in meeting rooms are no longer needed, instead the employees can be directly given the tasks and the results can be downloaded from the office.

In order to get this practiced, the only concern is that telework requires the individual to be organized and able to work independently, which means that it can only constitute a long-term solution. A proper training and volunteer placements will give the necessary start for the employment of differently abled through telework.

o Improving accessibility
ICT Accessibility consists of building and distributing a hardware or software product whilst ensuring that its content and application are available to the broadest possible audience, independently of the fact of whether individuals are using assistive technology or not.

ICTA is contributing a lot towards improving accessibility in Sri Lanka for the general community. This should be extended to the disable community, not in an ad-hoc manner but rather in an organized way after a proper analysis on individual differently abled needs and the outcome. Mere internet connections or a computer will not improve the differently abled capability or skills, but it might boost their confidence and encourage them to take new leaps in their life. Low-cost purchase schemes, donations, low cost internet connections will be the tools to improve   accessibility particularly in disadvantaged communities such as amongst the elderly and differently abled persons.

• Connecting Employers and Persons with Disabilities
    o Providing interface
    ICT not only introduces new areas of employment, but enhances current employment opportunities. The differently abled and the elderly who are not willing to take up a career in ICT can use ICT as an interface to market

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their products to the rest of the world. Customers all around the globe will be attracted to the products of the differently abled through a proper on line website.

o Introduce investments on differently abled

Organizations for the differently abled can introduce training in ICT as investments for the companies. The companies will do the initial investment on the equipment and training and in return the trained differently abled will work for the company for a number of years depending on the investment. As differently abled employees are more loyal and committed to work, companies can get a better return through training the differently abled rather than the ordinary employees.

o Enhance education and awareness strategies to address employer concerns related to hiring persons with disabilities.

As my research shows most of the employers have a negative perception about employing the differently abled in their company. These should be addressed by the governmental and non-governmental organizations working for the differently abled and this information should be published through the media (written press, audiovisuals and multimedia),publications (brochures and leaflets), seminars and exhibitions and fairs

o Policies for the employability

Enacting a policy to employ a specified number of differently abled people or more is already done in Sri Lanka, but cannot be seen practiced by even the governmental organizations. In my view, employing differently abled cannot be done merely through force, but educating and making the employers aware of the benefits they gain will make them employ the differently abled. Companies should understand diversity and having differently abled employees in the work force encourages the management and workers to develop a positive work culture of innovations and flexibility.

- Building on the Existing Knowledge Base
  o Build a comprehensive knowledge base through research and reporting on best practices.

  Number of researches and surveys are done on differently abled and elders through out the country. These researches are done by various parties on their interests and there is no one place or a point person to contact regarding these researches. Social services department should take the responsibility of building a comprehensive knowledgebase with these researches with the assistance of university staff and other NGOs. Not only this database be built, but it should share research findings and promising practices through out the globe.

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o   Improve data collection systems and program evaluation to better assess program effectiveness.

It is a known fact that neither the social services department nor any other organization keeps track of the data and the programmes conducted for the differently abled and the elderly. A system should be implemented to keep track of the data at least from the new programmes to be done for the differently abled. This can be simply done by registering the NGOs and governmental offices working for the differently abled into the system and asking them to update the database whenever there are new programmes or additional data about the differently abled.

A person's physical abilities often cannot be changed, but the attitudinal and physical environment in which they live certainly can. The above mentioned employment strategy framework is my contribution from my research on how to change the attitudinal and physical environment for the differently abled and elderly through ICT.

5.2   Future Research

This research represents a preliminary study of the "Economic inclusion of the elderly and differently-abled through ICT". A more in-depth study should be carried out in each section to get the clear and precise view and the way to go forward.

In this paper I have detailed the analysis of the first factor of the theoretical model which was introduced in chapter 2. Similar analyses should be carried out on all the influencing variables. These variables will have a varying degree of effect on the "Feasibility of elderly inclusion in the economic workforce through ICT". To represent this varying degree, the theoretical model can be extended by assigning weightings to each of these influencing variables. For example, "willingness to learn and work in ICT" should have more weight than "accessibility", reason being that accessibility can be improved fast by providing the necessary equipment, but it will take more time to change the level of "willingness to learn and work in ICT" as it should be addressed through more training, awareness campaigns and media contributions. By having this weighted model, the relevant organizations can give the highest priority for the most weighted influencing variable, when they are going take action.

In the area of differently abled, further research and actions should be taken in various aspects. As per my analysis, in order to bring the differently abled "on-board" to the economic stream, they should have a sound education and training. The prevailing educational and training systems are neither organized nor futuristic. An extensive study should be done to organize the education system for the differently abled so that they can be "marketed" to the future organizational needs. In addition, a research should be done on how best we can use ICT to train and make the less abled sector "able".

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5.3 Conclusions

As a country Sri Lanka is emerging as a potential destination for ICT outsourcing resulting in a boost of career opportunities in ICT. These expanding career and business opportunities can be used to harness the capabilities and the potential of elderly and differently abled communities in Sri Lanka. In this research I analyzed the feasibility of getting the elderly and differently abled segments of the society to the economic work force through ICT.

The research included a hypothesis analysis on the "willingness of ICT usage among the elderly people in Sri Lanka". The analysis of the sixty participants of the elderly community resulted in a Z-score value of 0.197 which was below the critical values, hence showing that most of the elders are not willing to use ICT. How ever the extended hypothesis analysis with the employed elders resulted in an exception. The Z-score value being 1.502 resulted in rejecting the null hypothesis, thus concluding that elderly people who are currently employed are willing to use ICT. Interviews with "non-users" reveal that the main reasons for not using ICT are the lack of awareness of the potential benefits of this technology and the anxiety about whether they can manage to learn and use ICT at their age. ICTA and other related organizations can take the main streams of interest for elders in ICT, which I have shown in Chapter 4, as the base and plan further training and career opportunities for the elderly community.

People with disabilities are perhaps the single segment of society with the most to gain from the new technologies of the electronic age. Yet the governmental and none governmental organizations in Sri Lanka have not taken any major steps even to lay the foundation for the differently abled community to reap out the most from technology. Only active involvement and proper organization between the organizations caring for the differently abled can make this happen through restructuring the education and training system for the differently abled.

The employment strategy framework sections, elaborated under Chapter 5 takes into account most of actions which are lacking and can be taken as a guideline to increase the productivity of the"less-able" through ICT. The recommendations discussed in the above sections of the paper are not onerous, but they need the commitment and proper planning of the governments and social partners working for the differently abled and elderly communities.

Thus this research shows "economic inclusion of elderly and differently abled in Sri Lanka through ICT" can be achieved through proper education and training with the commitment of government; intergovernmental, private and civil society organizations.

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Abbreviations:

ICT	Information and communication Technology
PDA	Personal Digital Assistant
IT	Information Technology
ICTA	Information and Communication Technology Agency
BPO	Business Processing Outsourcing
MS	Microsoft
NIBM	National Institute of Business Management
CSR	Customer Service Representative
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
TDD	Telecommunication Device for the Deaf

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Appendices

Questionnaires

Three questionnaires were developed for the elders, differently abled and the organizations which are attached below.

Questionnaire for Elders

Questionnaire for MBA Research

Study of identifying how Information and Communication Technology (ICT) can be used to improve the productivity of differently abled and elderly.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a postgraduate student of University of Moratuwa, engaged in a research study on *"Identifying how Information Technology (IT) can be used to improve the productivity of differently abled and elderly"* as a partial fulfillment of the Master of Business Administration (MBA in IT) program.

This questionnaire is a part of the research study. I would appreciate if you could spare few minutes of your precious time to fill the questionnaire.

Information contained in this questionnaire will remain completely confidential and be used solely for the academic purposes. Further, I am not requesting you to provide your name, Company name etc, as I want to assure your anonymity.

Thank you,

D.P.Samarasinghe.
gunadp@yahoo.com

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Personal Information:

1. **Age:**

Between 40-50		Between 61-70	
Between 51-60		Above 70	

2. **Gender:**

Male		Female	

3. **Highest Level of Education:**

Year 5		Ordinary Level		Undergraduate		Post Graduate	
Year 8		Advanced Level		Graduate		Other	

If any other qualification, please specify:

4. **Employment:**

Employed Full Time		Employed Part Time	
Retired		Other (Pls. Specify)	

5. **If you are employed:**
   - Your Employment type

Government owned		Self employed	
Private enterprise		Other (Pls. Specify)	

   - What is your post?

   - Do you have any difficulty in performing your duties at your workplace due to your age?

Yes		No	

If **Yes**, please describe the difficulties you face in your workplace:

   - When you leave your current employment what are your plans?

Find another job opportunity		Stay at home	
Do part time work		Other	

If "Other" please specify in detail

| |
|---|
| |

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6. **If you are not currently employed:**
   - Please tick one or more of the following that best suits your current situation.

I feel satisfied with the way I spend the life	
I want to be socially interactive working with people	
I like to spend a totally leisured life	
I feel I can work for some more years	

I like to work full time	
I like to work part time	
I like to work alone	
I like to work with people	
I like to work at home	
I like to work in an office	

I like to work with new technical devices	
I like to take similar responsibilities what I have taken earlier	
I like to perform an analytical job	
I like to perform a routine job	

|	
I have to work because I have to find money for my expenses	
I have to work due to my personal commitments	
I like to work because I want to be medically fit	
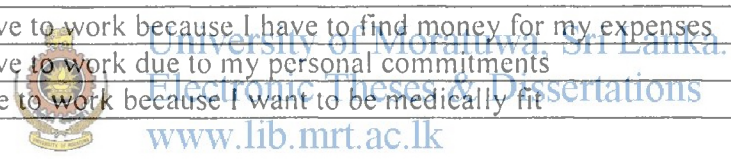
Information and Communication technology related Information:

7. **Indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements.**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I like to work with computers as a hobby.					
I like to work with computers and other ICT devices, as it is a new technology.					
I like to learn and work in ICT as I like to get new experiences.					
I like to learn and work in ICT because then I feel I am young.					
I like to learn and work in ICT, but I have other personal commitments.					
I do not think working with computers will give me any value at this age.					
I like to learn and work in ICT if that gives me an additional income.					

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	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I do not like to learn and work in ICT because I don't think the time I spend on that will give me enough return.					
I like to learn and work in ICT because then I feel I am an important person.					
I do not like to learn and work in ICT as I feel I am not competent as the young workers.					
I think learning ICT is a waste of time as it is a large area, which I cannot cover within a short time period.					
I like to learn ICT, but do not like to take ICT as a job at this age.					
I do not like to learn and work in ICT as it is too "technical".					
I like to learn and work in ICT in an area of my interest.					
I do not like to learn and work in ICT for other reasons not mentioned here. (If you agree, please specify few reasons)					
I like to learn and work in ICT for other reasons not mentioned here. (If you agree, please specify few reasons)					

I get the services of a computer operator					
I have access to a computer at office.					
I have access to a computer at home.					
I cannot afford to buy a computer.					
I use the computer at least once a day.					
I have not used a computer.					
I have experience in working with computers.					
I use a computer in my daily work.					

I find it difficult to use the computer, as I have not given a proper training.					
I find it difficult to use the computer, as all the instructions are in English.					
I cannot work with the computer in the speed that young people do.					

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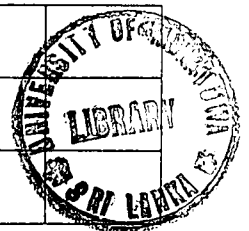
8. **Please specify the functions you carry out most with the computer daily:**

Documentation (MSWord, Excel)	
Data loading	
Accounting (Excel, QB, Sage, Accpak)	
Software application development	
E-mail / Internet browsing	
Company packages	
Other	

9. **Do you think computers/ ICT devices can help you to do your daily functions better and faster?**

Yes		No	

If **Yes**, in which way?

10. **If you were given the opportunity to learn and work with a computer**
   - What kind of obstacles would you face?

   - What is the area you would like to work in?

Documentation (MSWord, PageMaker,Excel)	
Data loading	
Accounting (Excel, QB, Sage, Accpak)	
Software application development	
Games	
Any area	
Mention any specific areas not given above	

11. **Have you followed any Information and communication Technology (ICT) course?**

Yes		No	

If **Yes**, please provide some details about the most interesting course you have followed in ICT

Course Name	
Institute	
Duration	
Why do you find it interesting?	

- Did you get any opportunity to apply/experiment the knowledge/experience gained in the above course?

Yes		No	

If **No**, please specify in which way you need help to get the experience:

- Do you think the course added value to your life?

Yes		No	

12. Are you satisfied with the opportunities you have got so far to work with ICT technology?

Yes		No	

If **No**, please specify in which way you need help:

13. Any other Comments:
Please use the space below to write any comments on how Information and Communication Technology can help you to improve your career and personal life.

Thank you for your participation.

Questionnaire for Differently-abled

Questionnaire for MBA Research

Study of identifying how Information and Communication Technology (ICT) can be used to improve the productivity of differently abled and elderly.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a postgraduate student of University of Moratuwa, engaged in a research study on *"Identifying how Information Technology (IT) can be used to improve the productivity of differently abled and elderly"* as a partial fulfillment of the Master of Business Administration (MBA in IT) program.

This questionnaire is a part of the research study. I would appreciate if you could spare few minutes of your precious time to fill the questionnaire.

Information contained in this questionnaire will remain completely confidential and be used solely for the academic purposes. Further, I am not requesting you to provide your name, Company name etc, as I want to assure your anonymity.

Thank you,

D.P.Samarasinghe.
gunadp@yahoo.com

Personal Information:

14. **A Differently abled person is defined as someone with a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term impact on their ability to carry out day-to-day activities. This excludes situations where sight can be corrected by glasses or contact lenses.**

Having read this, do you consider yourself to be covered by the definition?

Yes		No	

If **Yes**, and would like to, please indicate (using the boxes below) the nature of your disability (tick as many as are applicable)

Dyslexia (Difficulty with reading and writing)		Deaf/hearing loss		Mental health difficulty		Progressive disability /chronic illness (e.g. Cancer)	
Visually handicapped/partially sighted		Mobility (physical disability)		Learning disability		Other	

15. **Age:**

Between 18 – 30		Between 41-50	
Between 31-40		Above 51	

16. **Gender:**

Male		Female	

17. **Highest Level of Education:**

Year 5		Ordinary Level		Undergraduate		Post Graduate	
Year 8		Advanced Level		Graduate		Other	

If any other qualification, please specify:

18. **Highest level of Information Technology education (eg: Certificate level, Diploma level):**

Employment Information:

19. Post:

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20. What are your employment responsibilities?

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21. Do you have any difficulty in performing your duties at your workplace?

Yes		No	

If **Yes**, please describe the difficulties you face in your workplace:

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22. Do you think that you can handle more responsibilities than the ones you are assigned with?

Yes		No	

If **Yes**, what additional responsibilities can you take over?

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23. Are you satisfied with the work you are assigned with?

Yes		No	

If **No**, what changes could be made to improve your job satisfaction?

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24. Are there any special devices that you know which will help you in performing your job?

Yes		No	

If **Yes**, Please give details of the device/s:

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Information and Communication technology related Information:

25. Do you get any services of a computer operator?

Yes		No	

If **Yes**, please specify the services:

Documentation (MS Word, PageMaker, Excel)	
Data loading	
Accounting (Excel, QB, Sage, Accpak)	
Other	

26. Do you have any experience in working with computers/ ICT devices?

Yes		No	

If **Yes**,

- Please specify the devices that you have used other than the computer:

If **No**, do you like to learn how to work with such devices?

Yes		No	

27. Do you use a computer in performing your daily work?

Yes		No	

If **Yes,** please specify the functions you carry out with the computer:

Documentation (MS Word, PageMaker, Excel)	
Data loading	
Accounting (Excel, QB, Sage, Accpak)	
Software application development	
E-mail	
Internet browsing	
Other	

28. Do you think computers/ ICT devices can help you to do your daily functions better and faster?

Yes		No	

If **Yes**, in which way?

29. **What kind of obstacles do you face when learning/using Information and Communication Technology?**

30. **If you are given the opportunity to learn and work with a computer do you like to take that opportunity?**

Yes		No	

If **Yes**, what is the area you like to work in?

Documentation (MSWord, PageMaker,Excel)	
Data loading	
Accounting (Excel, QB, Sage, Accpak)	
Software application development	
Any area	
Mention any specific areas not given above	

31. **Have you followed any Information and communication Technology (ICT) courses?**

Yes		No	

If **Yes**, please provide some details about the course/s

Course Name	
Institute	
Duration	
Have you received a certificate?	

Course Name	
Institute	
Duration	
Have you received a certificate?	

- Does the knowledge/experience gained in the above course/s help you in performing daily office work?

Yes		No	

If **Yes**, please specify the area in which you use your ICT experience:

Documentation (MSWord, PageMaker,Excel)	
Accounting (Excel, QB, Sage, Accpak)	

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Software application development	
Networking	
Other	

- Did you get any opportunity to apply/experiment the knowledge/experience gained in the above course/s?

Yes		No	

If **No**, please specify in which way the organization can help you:

- Do you think the course/s added value to your career?

Yes		No	

32. What additional training or education do you require in the field of Information and Communication Technology (ICT)?

33. Are you satisfied with the opportunities you have got so far to work with ICT technology?

Yes		No	

If **No**, please specify in which way you need help:

34. Any other Comments:

Please use the space below to write any comments on how Information & Communication Technology can help you to improve your career and personal life.

Thank you for your participation.

Questionnaire for organizations

Questionnaire for MBA Research

Study of identifying how Information and Communication Technology (ICT) can be used to improve the productivity of differently abled and elderly.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a postgraduate student of University of Moratuwa, engaged in a research study on *"Identifying how Information Technology (IT) can be used to improve the productivity of differently abled and elderly"* as a partial fulfillment of the Master of Business Administration (MBA in IT) program.

This questionnaire is a part of the research study. I would appreciate if you could spare few minutes of your precious time to fill the questionnaire.

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Thank you,

D.P.Samarasinghe.
gunadp@yahoo.com

1. A Differently abled person is defined as someone with a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term impact on their ability to carry out day-to-day activities. This excludes situations where sight can be corrected by glasses or contact lenses.

Having read this, do you have any employees in your organization covered by this definition?

Yes		No	

If **Yes**, please indicate (using the boxes below) the nature of disabilities that can be found among your employees.

Dyslexia (Difficulty with reading and writing)		Mobility (physical disability)		Mental health difficulty		Progressive disability /chronic illness (e.g. Cancer)	
Visually handicapped/partially sighted		Deaf/hearing loss		Learning disability		Other	

2. **If there are differently abled persons with the required qualifications and experience, will you like to recruit them to your organization?**

Yes		No	

If **No**, Please give reasons.

3. If your company has any special measures to expand differently abled persons' employment, please describe it below.

4. **Do you have any policy, which covers the employment of differently abled people in your organization?**

Yes		No	

5. **Which of the following best describes your organization's attitudes towards the recruitment of differently abled people?**

We actively encourage job applications from differently abled people		We have no particular view or policy for or against recruiting differently abled people	
We see some jobs as more suitable for differently abled people than others		We would not consider recruiting a differently abled person	
Other (PLEASE SPECIFY)		Don't know	

6. What is your organization retirement age? ....

7. Are there any employees in your organization who are above the retirement age?

Yes		No	

If **Yes,** please specify any special reasons to extend their service in the organization.

8. Does your organization force retirement?

Yes		No	

9. If you are given the following options what will you choose?

Extend retirement	
Recruit a new employee	

10. If your company has any special measures to support elder employees, please describe it below.

11. If elder employees can overcome the barriers due to their age through ICT, what actions would you take from the following?

Provide necessary training in ICT for the elderly employee	
Provide required devices (eg: computers).	
If the employee cannot perform in his current field, find a suitable post where he can use his knowledge through ICT.	
If the employee cannot perform due to his age, find ways and means of overcoming those through ICT. Example: - Daily traveling can be overcome through telecommuting	
Recruit a new employee, accepting elderly employee retirement.	
Offer voluntary retirement scheme	

12. Please specify any additional comments that you want to make on employability of differently abled and elderly people through ICT.