

# The Role of Human Resource in Rehabilitation (Employment) of Persons with Disabilities

Twinkle Chauhan, Dr. Rama Srivastava

*Amity Institute of Social Sciences (AISS)*

*Department of Social Work*

*Amity University, Uttar Pradesh Noida*

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## I. INTRODUCTION:

The topic of disability and employment has received a lot of attention in today's inclusive and varied society as businesses attempt to provide fair chances for all workers. Individuals with disabilities comprise a significant, yet sometimes overlooked, reservoir of skilled labor that may provide distinctive viewpoints, proficiencies, and input to the professional setting. But even with improvements in understanding and regulation, people with disabilities still encounter several obstacles while looking for work and interacting with coworkers. In order to better understand the vital role that human resource (HR) management plays in the employment and rehabilitation of people with disabilities, this research study will examine the obstacles that must be overcome as well as the possibilities and best practices for creating a more welcoming and encouraging work environment.

### Defining Disability and its Impact on Employment:

It is critical to comprehend the notion of impairment and its complex effects on work before we can start our exploration. Disability is more than just a physical illness; it's a complicated web of mental, cognitive, sensory, and physical health problems that might make it difficult for a person to do specific activities or fully engage in society. According to estimates from the World Health Organization, over a billion individuals globally have a disability, making them a varied community with a range of needs and capacities.

People with disabilities experience greater rates of underemployment, discrimination at work, and unemployment than their non-disabled colleagues. This has a significant influence on employment. The relatively low rates of labor force participation among people with disabilities are caused by a variety of factors, including discriminatory

policies, lack of accessibility, educational possibilities being limited, and hurdles to attitude. Because they have less access to meaningful career possibilities, many people with disabilities suffer from social marginalization, economic insecurity, and a lower quality of life.

### Importance of Rehabilitation and Employment for Persons with Disabilities

Employment and rehabilitation are essential elements in enabling people with disabilities to live autonomous, happy lives and make significant contributions to society. A variety of services, including medical interventions, assistive technology, vocational training, and psychological support, are included in rehabilitation programs with the goal of improving an individual's functional capacities and facilitating their incorporation into the workforce. Rehabilitation initiatives can assist people with impairments in overcoming obstacles, gaining confidence, and developing the skills required for long-term work by offering specialized assistance and accommodations.

For people with disabilities, employment not only offers financial security but also promotes social inclusion, self-esteem, and a feeling of purpose. People may use their abilities, give back to their communities, and find personal growth and fulfillment when they work in meaningful jobs. Employers might also gain from hiring people with disabilities as it fosters variety, creativity, staff morale, and customer happiness. Acknowledging these reciprocal advantages highlights how crucial it is to establish inclusive work environments that respect diversity and put every employee's health first.

### Purpose of the Research Paper

In light of this, the purpose of this research article is to investigate the critical function that HR

management performs in supporting the employment and rehabilitation of people with disabilities. Through an examination of current practices, obstacles encountered by HR professionals, successful recruitment, and retention tactics, and developing trends in disability inclusion initiatives within organizations, this research seeks to offer significant insights into enhancing the employment prospects of people with disabilities. By means of an extensive examination of extant literature, case studies, and expert viewpoints pertaining to disability employment, this study aims to illuminate optimal methodologies that may provide guidance for human resources policy and foster an inclusive work environment.

This paper intends to motivate HR professionals, policymakers, to advocate disability inclusion activities and establish workplaces that allow persons of all abilities to flourish and prosper.

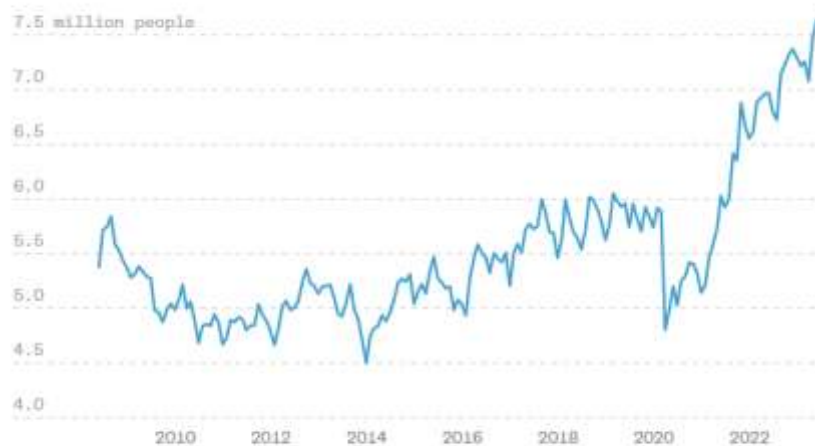
#### Overview of the current state of employment for persons with disabilities:

The UN estimates that between 50% and 70% of people with disabilities are jobless or not in

the workforce internationally, and between 80 and 90% of them do so in developed nations. Eighty to ninety percent of working-age people with disabilities live in developing nations without jobs. People with disabilities typically have unemployment rates twice as high as the overall population throughout Asia and the Pacific, sometimes reaching 80% or more. People with disabilities in Europe have a two to three times higher unemployment rate than the general population. Approximately 80–90% of disabled people in Latin America and the Caribbean do not have a job or are not in the labour.

Positive changes have, nonetheless, occurred recently. The employment-to-population ratio for impaired people in the US increased from 19.1% in 2021 to a record high of 22.4% in 2023. This is a result of the labour market's robust post-pandemic recovery. According to data, the number of people in employment increased by almost 175,000 in June to reach 7.6 million, the highest level since June 2008—the earliest year for which statistics are available, according to the BLS.

Employed workers with a disability



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics via St. Louis Federal Reserve  
Graphic: Nigel Chiswaya / NBC News

Experts claim that the increase in jobs is the outcome of both the pandemic's reduced stigma of work-from-home employment and the continuous, stable labor demand brought on by a scarcity of labor in several economic areas.

One of the most obstacles that many persons with disabilities have encountered while seeking for job is the lack of basic mobility. That hurdle has been removed in part by the post-pandemic rise in remote work.

It is difficult to find data indicating which sectors or professions have had the largest increases in the proportion of workers with impairments in recent years. The labour of this group has historically been centred in manual labour jobs in food preparation and cleaning services, as well as other types of retail employment.

Because they usually pay more, the most sought-after positions are still found in the professional and business services industry. A group of academics said in an article published in April in the journal *Disability and Health* that the growth potential among these sectors will help "ensure that Individuals with disabilities are less likely to work in service industry and blue-collar industries, which typically pay less and offer less job security."

Anecdotally, experts stated that in the early aftermath of the pandemic, the change to remote work and the hiring boom caused by tech businesses led to an increase in white-collar possibilities. However, this boom has subsequently reversed with widespread layoffs in the tech industry.

It's crucial to recognize the wide diversity within the handicapped population. According to disability activists, 25% of Americans are thought to be living with a disability; nevertheless, 70% of disabilities—particularly those that are cognitive in nature—are classified as "invisible."

However, there are still significant obstacles to work for the handicapped people. Because of this, just 4% of employees identify as handicapped.

While it has improved recently, the employment rate for those with long-term medical illnesses and impairments in the UK is still lower than that of the general population. Notwithstanding these encouraging developments, hiring practices that are biased against people with disabilities, a lack of accessibility, a refusal to provide appropriate modifications, and a lack of opportunity for education and training all pose serious obstacles to work for people with disabilities.

Employers may support by implementing accessible work environments, offering accommodations, and using inclusive recruiting procedures. Hiring more handicapped workers is the first step towards creating an inclusive workplace. Town suggests that while recruiting, organizations collaborate with advocacy groups such as the AAPD or their state's vocational rehabilitation initiative. Moreover, look for bias or discriminatory language in employment advertisements and take note of information on accommodations for the disabled. Town continues to express that these are all excellent methods to convey to prospective workers that your company respects and seeks to engage with disabled employees. On their website, Disability.IN offers resources to help firms hire and retain employees in

a more inclusive manner. More specifically, Erin Sharkey, co-founder of the non-profit Compassion Café in Beach Haven, New Jersey, counsels small business owners to recruit and train handicapped individuals. In May 2021, she and her aunt Sue Sharkey, a board-certified behaviour therapist, opened the bakery and coffee shop when Sharkey saw many of her handicapped clients were unemployed due to the pandemic. The summer café owned by the Sharkeys employed about fifty handicapped persons. Erin contends that employers need to view handicapped workers as assets rather than liabilities.

Disability is often overlooked in discussions about diversity and inclusion, but according to Town, workplace initiatives should take disability into account as a key part of an individual's identity. Disabled people need to know that they are valued and that their unique perspectives contribute to an organization's goals, just like any other employee group, the spokesperson says. It really matters to take steps like honoring the Americans with Disabilities Act's anniversary or having speakers with disabilities at business events. Disability.IN's president and CEO, Jill Houghton, suggests creating a disability employee resource group so that members may provide feedback on accommodations policies. Considering that many mental health issues qualify as disabilities, mental health is also an essential component of providing care for employees with impairments.

Evaluating mental health benefits should start with asking employees what they need, the expert advises. There is a bright side to the pandemic: it has given us a chance to talk more freely about mental health, which is strongly related to disabilities. There's a lot of anxiety about returning to work and what comes next is that we need to make sure disabilities stay part of the conversation about work."

### **Barriers to employment for persons with disabilities:**

**1. Doubts about Capacity:** Employers frequently have concerns about the skills of people with disabilities and whether or not they are suitable for particular professions. These uncertainties result from misunderstandings and a lack of knowledge regarding employment accommodations for impairments. It is imperative that businesses acknowledge that employees with disabilities may do well in a variety of roles provided they have the necessary accommodations and support.

**2. Education Gaps:** Because of socioeconomic considerations, people with disabilities often experience educational discrepancies, which can make it difficult for them to compete for jobs on an equal basis with their counterparts. Targeted interventions, including financial aid, supportive learning settings, and accessible educational programs, are needed to close these disparities and guarantee that people with disabilities have fair access to high-quality education.

**3. Stigmatization:** People with visible impairments are more likely to be stigmatized, which can result in social exclusion and low self-esteem. People with impairments may feel excluded as a result of this stigma and lack the self-assurance to follow their professional ambitions. It is imperative to raise awareness, cultivate inclusive attitudes, and fight for the rights and dignity of people with disabilities in order to combat stigmatization.

**4. Transportation and Lodging:** Inadequate workplace accessibility presents serious problems for those with impairments, particularly those who depend on specific tools or accommodations. For employees with disabilities to fully participate in the workforce, employers must make investments in assistive technologies, accessible infrastructure, and transportation choices.

**5. Attitude Barriers:** Persistent exclusionary practices in the workplace are a result of deeply ingrained preconceptions and stereotypes regarding disabilities that give rise to discriminatory attitudes and actions. Building empathy and compassion for people with disabilities, dispelling myths, and encouraging diversity are all necessary to break down attitudes that hinder people with disabilities.

**6. Accessibility Barriers:** People with disabilities frequently face obstacles to inclusion due to the physical design of workspaces, as well as technological advancements and communication systems. Establishing inclusive facilities, digital platforms, and communication channels that are useable by people of different abilities is necessary to create accessible workplaces.

**7. Employment possibilities:** People with disabilities have difficulty finding fulfilling work because of a lack of job possibilities and misunderstandings about their skills. In order to solve this problem, companies should be made more aware of the benefits of hiring people with disabilities, inclusive hiring practices should be promoted, and job placement and vocational training programs should be offered.

**8. Help and Accommodations:** People with disabilities may not be able to fully utilize their abilities and talents in the job if they do not receive

enough help and accommodations. To help employees with disabilities succeed in their responsibilities, employers should proactively identify and implement appropriate modifications, offer managers and coworkers tools and training, and cultivate an inclusive and supportive culture.

### **Role of HR in in the rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities:**

The administration of human resources (HR) is essential to encouraging the employment and rehabilitation of people with impairments. Organizations may remove obstacles and provide inclusive work environments that help people with disabilities realize their full potential by utilizing HR strategies. HR experts can have a significant impact on the following important areas to promote the inclusion of people with disabilities. By making sure that recruiting procedures are impartial and inclusive by eliminating prejudice and making appropriate adjustments for tests and interviews. Providing chances for individualized training and professional development to meet the needs and styles of diverse learners.

Making the necessary changes and adaptations to improve the workspace's usability and accessibility for people with impairments. Giving workers a fair, impartial evaluation while taking into account their individual strengths and weaknesses. Creating competitive pay scales and benefit programs that meet the unique requirements of workers with impairments. Encouraging and facilitating people with disabilities to advance in their professions by giving them chances for leadership positions and promotions. Establishing, open channels of communication and cooperation between coworkers and employees with disabilities can help to ensure that everyone feels supported and included.

Organizations may create a more welcoming and helpful work environment for people with disabilities by adopting these HR practices, which will eventually benefit both workers and companies.

### **Best Practices for Human Resource Management in the Employment of Persons with Disabilities**

Promoting the inclusion of people with disabilities in the workforce requires strategic and purposeful approaches to human resource management (HRM). By following best practices, HR professionals can foster a more inclusive and supportive work environment that appreciates diversity, promotes fairness, and enables people

with disabilities to succeed in their employment. This section describes the most successful HRM methods for employing people with impairments, drawing on substantial research and real-world experiences.

**1. Ensure Fair and Inclusive Recruitment:** To attract talented applicants with disabilities, HR professionals should remove bias and make appropriate adjustments throughout the process. Examples of inclusive recruitment techniques are:

- - Advertise openings on many channels, including disability-specific websites and networks.
- - In job descriptions, use clear language and avoid jargon.
- - Offering several application formats, such as video resumes, or online applications.
- - Providing flexible interview scheduling and locations.
- - Providing accommodations upon request, such as sign language interpretation or closed captioning.

**2. Customized Training and Development Opportunities:**

Personalized training and development opportunities are critical for helping workers with disabilities get the information and skills they need to flourish in their professions. Effective training and development techniques include the following:

- - Identifying and responding to unique learning needs and preferences
- - Providing a variety of training options, including seminars, webinars, e-learning courses, and mentoring programs.
- - Offering tools and assistance to employees with impairments, such as text-to-speech software or screen readers.
- - Promoting ongoing learning and professional growth.

**3. Workplace Accommodations:** Providing appropriate workplace accommodations improves accessibility and usefulness for employees with impairments. Common workplace accommodations are:

- - Assistive technology, including screen readers, speech recognition software, and adaptable mouse.
- - Ergonomic furniture and workplace designs
- - Flexible schedule alternatives, such as telework or reduced workweeks.
- - Changes in employment obligations, such as reassignment or job sharing.

- - Communication aids, such as visual warnings or note-taking help.

**4. Conducting fair and objective performance reviews** is crucial for recognizing successes and highlighting areas for growth among employees with disabilities. Effective performance evaluation practices include the following:

- - Establishing reasonable goals and expectations.
- - Measuring performance with objective criteria
- - Advancing regular response and guidance.
- - Considering the specific strengths and limits of employees with disabilities.

**5. Competitive Compensation Packages:**

Competitive compensation packages are crucial for attracting and maintaining excellent employees with disabilities. Effective compensation package procedures include the following:

- - Offering compensation appropriate with the employees' talents, expertise, and responsibilities.
- - Offering bonuses, incentives, or other types of rewards for great achievement.
- - Providing benefits customized to the unique requirements of employees with disabilities, such as healthcare coverage for assistive equipment or home renovation fees.

**6. Career progression:** Providing possibilities for progression is crucial for encouraging and demonstrating dedication to long-term success among individuals with disabilities. Effective professional growth strategies include:

- - Providing internal mobility options, including lateral transfers or promotions.
- - Offering formal mentorship or sponsoring programs.
- - Providing tuition reimbursement or continuing education options.
- - Establishing transparent career paths and succession planning systems.

**7. Clear Communication and cooperation:**

Effective communication and cooperation develop trust, team cohesiveness, and a sense of belonging among employees with disabilities. Effective communication and cooperation techniques include the following:

- - Encouraging accessible communication and dynamic listening.
- - Share essential information and updates on a regular basis

- - Respecting cultural differences and demonstrating sensitivity.
- - Establishing strong ties and alliances with external stakeholders, such as disability advocacy organizations or community service providers.

#### **8. Establishing and enforcing disability management policies and procedures is crucial for supporting job capacity and minimizing discomfort for workers with impairments.**

Effective disability management methods include the following:

- - Create return-to-work guidelines and transition strategies.
- - Offering ergonomic exams and recommendations.
- - Providing stress reduction and coping strategies.
- - Extending emotional assistance and counselling assistance

#### **9. Internship Opportunities for Students and Recent Graduates with Disabilities:**

Internship programs provide vital experience, boost confidence, and develop a talent pipeline for the future. Effective internship program practices include the following:

- - Collaborating with universities or colleges to discover qualified applicants.
- - Offering organized training and development opportunities.
- - Deliver paid or unpaid placements.
- - Connecting interns to mentors or coaches.

Adopting these best practices may greatly enhance job outcomes for people with disabilities while also creating a more inclusive and supportive work environment. By emphasizing inclusion, accommodation, and support, HR professionals can help people with disabilities realize their full potential and contribute to a stronger, more diverse, and productive workforce.

A few examples of different firms and how they incorporate differently abled persons into their workforce.

For instance, Wipro's Equal Opportunity, Employment Policy and Policy Prohibiting Discrimination and Harassment aims to hire employees without regard to their race, color, religion, national origin, citizenship, age, sex, marital status, lineage, medical condition, financial background, physical or mental handicap, or sexual orientation. The company's spirit of sensitivity

guides its disability and diversity work, including acting with sensitivity and being thoughtful and responsible.

In 2009, the company launched a major initiative to analyze its work in six key diversity areas: people policies, recruitment, training, infrastructure and facilities, information systems, and awareness creation. The framework included governance measures such as a diversity council formed at the corporate level that would track and review.

Wipro's advancement in the six areas on a quarterly basis. The Persons with Disability Program was established in collaboration with one of India's leading disability consultancy firms, which carried out an audit of Wipro's activities in the six areas specifically related to disability. Significant adjustments were made to Wipro's "people policies," such as offering transportation services for employees with disabilities and renovating buildings to provide greater accessibility. The company also published a 20-page handbook for recruiters and interviewers, outlines the company's equal opportunity policy, and introduced face-to-face and e-chat interviews instead of phone calls to avoid excluding people with hearing or speech disabilities.

In order to hire eligible individuals with disabilities, Wipro hosts recruiting events in collaboration with organizations that support the disabled in India, including Braille without Borders, the National Institute of Speech and Hearing (NISH), and the Ambedkar Institute of Technology for Handicapped (AITH). After a candidate is chosen, Wipro offers appropriate accommodations to remove barriers from the workplace, such as assistive technology for those with visual impairments. The Vendor Diversity Program proactively reaches vendors with disabilities and disability non-governmental organizations, encouraging them to hire people with disabilities.

#### **Common Accommodations for Employees with Disabilities:**

Employers can provide numerous modifications for workers with disabilities to ensure they can execute their job tasks efficiently. These accommodations can take numerous forms, including technology solutions and flexible work arrangements. Companies that provide proper accommodations can foster a more inclusive and supportive work environment that embraces diversity and supports equality.

**1. Assistive Technology:** This includes equipment and software that assist employees with

impairments in accessing information, communicating, and completing tasks. Assistive technology includes screen readers, voice recognition software, Braille displays, hearing aids, and ergonomic keyboards. Companies that provide assistive technology may level the playing field for employees with impairments, allowing them to exhibit their talents and abilities.

**2. Flexible work arrangements** include telecommuting, flexible timetables, job sharing, and part-time work. These agreements can assist employees with impairments in managing their health issues, attending medical appointments, and balancing work and personal duties. Companies that provide flexible work arrangements can enhance employee engagement, productivity, and minimize absenteeism.

**3. Physical Modifications:** Changes to the physical environment increase accessibility and safety for disabled personnel. Physical changes include wheelchair ramps, grab bars, accessible bathrooms, and adjustable workstations. Companies may guarantee that workers with disabilities can execute their job obligations safely and comfortably by making physical adaptations to their workspace.

**4. Employment Restructuring:** This involves altering employment assignments, responsibilities, or performance requirements to accommodate individuals with disabilities. Job restructuring might involve allocating certain duties, offering additional training or assistance, or altering working hours. Companies that provide job restructuring can ensure that workers with disabilities can fulfil their job obligations successfully and efficiently.

**5. Communication and Language Supports:** This includes offering alternate formats for written documents, such as big print, Braille, or audio recordings. It also entails providing sign language interpreters, captioning, or translation services to employees who are deaf or hard of hearing, or who speak another language. Companies may guarantee that employees with disabilities receive and express information effectively by offering communication and linguistic support.

**6. Training and Development:** Employees with disabilities benefit from personalized training options. Training and development can take several forms, such as providing accessible training

materials, delivering mentoring, or coaching, or making certification exam adjustments. Companies that provide training and development may guarantee that employees with disabilities can gain new skills, advance professionally, and accomplish their career goals.

**7. Leave and Absence Management:** Providing flexible and accommodating leave policies for employees with disabilities. Leave and absence management might take the form of offering additional sick leave, allowing for intermittent leave, or granting job-protected leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act. Companies that provide leave and absence management can guarantee that employees with disabilities can take time off, when necessary, without fear of losing their jobs.

These are just a few examples of the modifications that firms may provide for employees with impairments. The particular modifications required will be determined by the individual's impairment and the employment needs. Companies must collaborate with workers to identify and implement the most effective adjustments to guarantee that all employees are able to do their jobs successfully. By making modifications, businesses may foster a more inclusive and supportive work atmosphere that embraces diversity and supports equality.

## II. CONCLUSION:

The hiring of people with disabilities is a critical problem that HRM professionals must address. HR professionals can unlock the potential of people with disabilities by developing inclusive workplaces that encourage diversity and equality. However, addressing the obstacles and hurdles that people with disabilities confront in the workplace would take a dedicated effort.

One of the primary issues is a lack of accessibility and lodging. HR professionals must ensure that the workplace is accessible to people with disabilities and provide reasonable modifications so that they may execute their job obligations efficiently. This involves providing assistive technology, flexible work arrangements, physical adjustments, job restructuring, communication and linguistic assistance, training, and development, and managing leave and absences. By making these changes, HR professionals can foster a more inclusive and supportive workplace culture that celebrates diversity and supports equality. Another problem is the attitudinal hurdles that people with impairments

experience. Individuals with disabilities continue to face prejudice and stigma, limiting their involvement in employment environments. HR professionals must address these unfavourable attitudes by increasing disability awareness, education, and training. This involves teaching employees about disability etiquette, awareness, and allyship, as well as addressing any prejudices, misunderstandings, or stigma that may exist.

HR professionals must also guarantee that their recruiting and hiring processes are inclusive and accessible. This involves examining job descriptions to ensure they are inclusive and do not contain superfluous limitations that may exclude individuals with disabilities. HR professionals should collaborate with community-based partners to conduct focused outreach activities to attract eligible applicants with disabilities, as well as use accessible online job applications and materials. During interviews, businesses must follow norms that ban asking disability-related questions or conducting medical tests before a job offer is issued. Finally, HR professionals must ensure that their retention plans are inclusive and helpful. This involves modifying current employee programs such as orientation, onboarding, career development, and mentoring to boost the retention percentage of employees with disabilities. Creating inclusive workplace cultures through support systems such as Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) can help to share knowledge and give advice on disability concerns.

In conclusion, human resource professionals play an important role in ensuring that people with disabilities have access to inclusive, equitable, and supportive job opportunities. By tackling the obstacles and hurdles that people with disabilities confront in the workplace, HR professionals may build a more diverse and inclusive workforce that benefits both employees and the company's overall success. Embracing disability inclusion is not only helpful, but also necessary for firms seeking success in today's globalized and varied corporate environment.

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