Bibliography

Employer Best Practices Supporting the Hiring, Retention, and Promotion of People with Disabilities: A Bibliography

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Employer Practices Related to Employment Outcomes Among Individuals With Disabilities

Literature related to research on employer best practices supporting the hiring, retention, and promotion of people with disabilities. These articles study the demand (employer) side of the employment equation, focusing on the ways in which employer policies and practices affect the employment outcomes of individuals with disabilities.

Able Trust (2003). Dispelling myths of an untapped workforce: A study of employer attitudes toward hiring individuals with disabilities. Tallahassee, FL: Author. The Able Trust collaborated with the Milbank Foundation for Vocational Rehabilitation to conduct a study of business employers in Florida concerning their policies, practices, and attitudes related to hiring persons with disabilities. The general objective of the study was to identify obstacles that prevent employers from recruiting and hiring individuals with disabilities and the resources needed to address perceptions of these obstacles. A sample of businesses was selected from databases constructed by the Florida Chamber of Commerce, consisting of members, prospective members, and selected non-members. With a response rate of only 5.7%, generalizations to populations of employers are questionable. Thus, while this study can provide only tentative conclusions about employer policies, practices, and attitudes, comparisons with results from other studies can aid in the interpretation.

Acemoglu, D., & Angrist, J. (1998). Consequences of employment protection: the case of the Americans with Disabilities Act. NBER Working Paper. Cambridge, MA, National Bureau of Economics. The ADA requires employers to accommodation disabled workers and outlaws discrimination against the disabled in hiring, firing, and pay. Although the ADA was meant to increase employment of the disabled, it also increases costs for employers. The net theoretical impact turns on which provisions of the ADA are most important and how responsive firm entry and exit is to profits. Empirical results using the CPS suggest that the ADA had a negative effect on the employment of disabled men of all working ages and disabled women under age 40. The effects appear to be larger in medium size firms, possibly because small firms were exempt from the ADA. The effects are also larger in states where there have been more ADA-related discrimination charges. Estimates of effects on hiring and firing suggest that the ADA reduced hiring of the disabled but did not affect separations. This weighs against a pure firing-costs interpretation of the ADA. Finally, there is little evidence of an impact on the nondisabled, suggesting that the adverse employment consequences of the ADA have been limited to the protected group.

Acemoglu, D., & Angrist, J. (2001). Consequences of employment protection? The case of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Journal of Political Economy, 109(5), 915-957. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires employers to accommodate disabled workers and outlaws discrimination against the disabled in hiring, firing, and pay. Although the ADA was meant to increase the employment of the disabled, the net theoretical effects are ambiguous. For men of all working ages and women under 40, Current Population Survey data show a sharp drop in the employment of disabled workers after the ADA went into effect. Although the number of disabled individuals receiving disability transfers increased at the same time, the decline in employment of the disabled does not appear to be explained by increasing transfers alone, leaving the ADA as a likely cause. Consistent with this view, the effects of the ADA appear larger in medium-size firms, possibly because small firms were exempt from the ADA. The effects are also larger in states with more ADA-related discrimination charges.

Discusses attributes of the employment site which offers diversity to the work force in meeting the needs of each employee. It is hypothesized that "good" workplaces which are responsive to the needs of its employees are also "good" workplaces for employees with psychiatric disabilities. Characteristics of "good" workplaces include: appropriate matching of individual and job; a level of energy to focus attention on employees; trained supervisory personnel in recognizing needs of employees; an offering of work conditions (flexible work schedules, job sharing, work-family programs, etc.); has performance appraisals; has cafeteria style benefits; and has an Employee Assistance Program. Strategies for incorporating these characteristics in support of persons with psychiatric disabilities are suggested.


The final report of the Stress and Disability Management Project. The project examined the effects of the work environment on the experience of stress and ability to maintain work roles. Phase I of the project conducted in depth interviews with 100 workers identified as having trouble at work due to their disability. Based on this data, suggestions and assistance were offered where needed and 3 month follow-up interviews assessed changes in the health and work status of participants. Phase II involved developing interventions based on findings from Phase I, implementing these at 3 work sites, and finally evaluation of the new interventions or the successful pre-existing ones. Work sites included Weirton Steel Co., Polaroid Corp., and Health Services Organization. Results showed that general levels of stress are increased when workers do not disclose information, work-related stress can be buffered by supervisory support, and illness-related stress is directly related to the level that the work environment and functional limitations interfere with getting the job done. The report also contains 14 appendices including several assessment and follow-up interviews, surveys, evaluation instruments, a handbook entitled "Manual of Training Program for Helping Workers with Disabilities Maintain Their Work Roles", and a reprint of an article entitled "The Role of the Supervisor in Successful Adjustment to Work with a Disabling Condition: Issues for Disability Policy and Practice".


Work and family scholarship increasingly focuses on how institutions constrain the choices of families struggling to balance market work with care work. Recent legal reforms, including the family and Medical Leave Act, also focus on institutional reform to alleviate work/family conflict. This article reviews important empirical questions raised by this institutional turn in both law and social science. How have changes in the institutions of family and work contributed to work/family conflict? Have legal reforms produced more egalitarian sharing of care work between men and women? How do work organizations respond to these legal mandates? How have organizational and cultural institutions hindered or given support to laws that attempt to reform the relationship between work and family? Empirical research indicates that legal reforms have brought about important changes but that entrenched work practices and cultural norms around work, family, and gender continue to generate institutional resistance to social change. Adapted from the source document.


Do non-employed people with disabilities want to work, and if so, what types of jobs do they want? Researchers seeking to explain the low employment rate among people with disabilities have focused primarily on skill gaps, employment disincentives from disability income, accommodation mandates, and (to a lesser extent) employer attitudes and unwelcoming corporate cultures. There has been little attention paid to the attitudes of non-employed people with disabilities. This paper uses the 2006 General Social Survey, a representative national survey of US adults that has disability information and a special supplement on worker preferences, to examine the above question. We find that, relative to their non-disabled counterparts, non-employed people with disabilities are (a) as likely to want a job but less likely to be actively searching, (b) as likely to have prior job experience, and (c) similar in their views of the importance of income, job security, and other valued job characteristics. The results, which vary little by type of impairment, indicate that the low employment rate of people with disabilities is not due to their reluctance to work or different job preferences. Combined with evidence that a large share of new jobs
can be performed by people with disabilities, the findings point toward the value of dismantling barriers to employment facing many people with disabilities.


Many people with arthritis become work disabled, but little is known about (a) the types of work barriers they experience and (b) their use of job accommodations. Our objectives were to describe work barriers and use of accommodations and to examine factors associated with accommodation use in persons with arthritis at risk for work disability. Barrier assessment was conducted using the Work Experience Survey. Factors associated with accommodation use were analyzed by logistic regression. The overwhelming majority of the 121 participants (98%) reported having one or more barriers, and 68% reported 10 or more barriers; 38% used an accommodation. Greater functional limitations and self-efficacy for accommodation request were each associated with accommodation use. Even though these employed persons with arthritis faced multiple barriers at work, only a small number used any form of job accommodation.


Research examining relations between work group diversity and outcome measures often relies on diversity scores that are calculated on the basis of individual responses to organizational surveys. When employees fail to respond to a survey, however, the resultant diversity score representing their group will be somewhat distorted. The authors conducted a series of computer simulations to examine the extent to which correlations between group diversity scores (derived from continuous or categorical variables) and outcome variables were attenuated by various forms of random and systematic participant nonresponse. Results indicate that random nonresponse, and many forms of systematic nonresponse, substantially attenuate mean observed correlations.


Increased rates of work disability and its associated costs have prompted businesses to develop innovative approaches to managing the health and productivity of the workforce. The paper I) provides practitioners with the results of research that demonstrates the importance of employer organizational factors in preventing and resolving work disability, and 2) provides researchers with measures that call efficiently assess organizational factors and advance clinical research by incorporating contextual factors involved in occupational rehabilitation. Data from a series of studies in Michigan are reviewed and it is concluded that employer reports of organizational policies and practices (OPPs) are important in reducing the number of work-related disabilities and their consequences for the employee and for the company. We test the hypothesis that employee reports of OPPs are reliable and valid. To test the reliability arm validity of an employee version of the same instrument we used data from a prospective community-based study of 198 workers with carpal tunnel syndrome. Forts OPPs were identified as important: people-oriented culture (alpha = .88), safety climate (alpha = .88), disability management policies and practices (alpha = .88), and ergonomic practices (alpha = .88). These four scales were shown to have strong rest-retest reliabilities and predictive validity. It was concluded that the conceptual model guiding the research in Michigan was supported with research from another State, Maine, using an individual-level measure of OPPs.


This study reports findings from an analysis of employment allegations and resolutions maintained in the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) database. Spanning the years 1992 to 2005, the data were aggregated for individuals with psychiatric disabilities and individuals with a variety of physical, sensory, and neurological disabilities. Compared to the general disabilities group, allegations from the psychiatric disabilities group were more frequently filed by people who were younger, female, and White. The psychiatric disabilities group was significantly more likely than the general disabilities group to file against Transportation and Utilities, Finance and related fields, Services, and Public
Administration industries; larger employers; or employers from the Northeast and West regions. Allegations from the psychiatric disabilities group were significantly less likely to be deemed meritorious by the EEOC at the conclusion of the investigation process. Implications for psychiatric rehabilitation are discussed.

The US Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) has released findings of the most extensive survey in history of employers' actions and attitude toward employing people with disabilities. CESSI, a division of Axiom Resource Management Inc., conducted the survey of 3,797 companies, which statistically represent more than 2.4 million firms nationwide. This survey found a majority of large businesses are hiring people with disabilities and discovering that costs for accommodations differ little from those for the general employee population. Additionally, the survey showed that once an employer hires one person with a disability it is much more likely that employer will hire others with disabilities. ODEP Assistant Secretary Neil Romano hails the report.

This final report describes activities and accomplishments of a 3-year federally supported project in New York to replicate effective partnerships between community rehabilitation programs and school districts working to improve the transition of youth with disabilities to post-school employment. Through use of a direct mentoring process, the project worked to close the gap between research and products about effective models and the actual replication of exemplary practices that are cost-effective and focused on student results. The project was implemented by a state-level partnership between the New York State Rehabilitation Association and the State Education Department of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities. Ten leadership organizations were identified and provided with training in consultation skills and four implementation sites were selected to receive technical assistance and mentoring services from these leadership organizations. Overall results from the implementation sites indicated more students being served, involvement of more community resources, earlier student access to services, greater community involvement by students, and greater awareness by employers about hiring persons with disabilities. Extensive appendices include detailed project results and materials such as a technical assistance guide and consultation training materials.

This article reviews the research literature on the business value that can be achieved when employers and organizations offer critical incident response (CIR) services. CIR services are frequently provided as requested by corporations, insurers, and as a specialty service from Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs). There is a significant body of applied research conducted over the past 20 years worldwide that offers considerable empirical evidence to support the clinical effectiveness of CIR and related ‘psychological first aid’ kinds of workplace services. In contrast, there are far fewer research studies available to examine the business case for CIR. A search of the literature obtained a small number of employer case studies conducted in the 1990s and several newer investigations of CIR services that are integrated with other behavioral health and benefit management programs. The research available indicates that CIR services can offer financial savings and business value, primarily from reducing disability and workers’ compensation claims and improving the rate and success of employee return to work after a critical event. Six employers’ case studies are presented. Although the available evidence is promising, the rare event nature of the conditions that create the need for CIR services and their delivery in applied settings combine to offer significant challenges to conducting scientific investigations of the business impact of these services. More high-quality research is needed before firm conclusions can be drawn about the nature of business outcomes in this area.

Review, commentary, and response to Burkhauser & Stapleton's 2003 book, “The Decline in Employment of People with Disabilities: A Policy Puzzle.” The author offers his own analysis of the evidence regarding the employment effects of the ADA, describing the overall decline in employment for people with disabilities throughout the 1990s. He then turns to examining whether the enactment and implementation of the ADA caused that decline. He finds that the data suggest extrinsic factors had the biggest impact on employment rates for people with disabilities, in particular the 1990-1991 recession.

Bagues, M. F., Sylos Labini, M., & National Bureau of Economic Research. (2007). Do on-line labor market intermediaries matter? The impact of AlmaLaurea on the university-to-work transition. NBER Working Paper. Cambridge, MA., National Bureau of Economic Research. This paper evaluates the impact of the availability of electronic labor markets on the university-to-work transition. In particular, we analyze the effect of the intermediation activity carried on by the inter-university consortium, AlmaLaurea, on graduates' labor market outcomes. The different timing of universities’ enrolment in AlmaLaurea allows us to apply the difference-in-differences method to a repeated cross section data set. If the usual assumption concerning parallel outcomes holds, AlmaLaurea reduces the individual unemployment probability and improves matching quality. Interestingly, we also find that on-line intermediaries foster graduates' geographic mobility.


A review of the literature indicates that some employers express positive attitudes toward the capabilities of blind persons but are unwilling to hire them. One factor which may explain this reluctance is the authoritarian personality characteristics of some employers. High authoritarians tend to hold more negative attitudes toward the blind and may hold or aspire to important decision- and policy-making positions in organizations. It is suggested that organizations in the economic system may foster the development or promotion of persons who are most likely to hold negative attitudes toward blind persons to positions where decisions affecting the employment of the blind are made. Suggested areas of research are presented (e.g., recruitment and selection policies for blind persons).


The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) has not achieved its potential, in part, because those it sought to help have shown a reluctance to request accommodations. Using survey data from 229 hearing-impaired employees and an expert panel, logistic regression confirmed that monetary costs and impositions on others negatively influence the likelihood of requesting recurring accommodations. Furthermore, monetary costs and impositions on others negatively influence the requester's assessments of the social consequences of making such requests. These consequences, in turn, can also negatively influence future disability accommodation requests.


Although the Americans with Disabilities Act requires most employers to provide reasonable accommodation, there is reason to believe that people with disabilities are often unwilling to make such requests. We therefore focus on factors influencing the requester's likelihood of seeking an accommodation. By drawing upon the theories of planned behavior, help-seeking, and distributive justice, we propose a framework identifying several salient beliefs that may influence request likelihood and then explore the role of select situational characteristics in shaping these beliefs as a way to more fully understand the requester's assessment process.


The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) has not achieved its potential, in part, because those it sought to help have shown a reluctance to request accommodations. Using survey data from 229 hearing-impaired employees and an expert panel, logistic regression confirmed that monetary costs and
impositions on others negatively influence the likelihood of requesting recurring accommodations. Furthermore, monetary costs and impositions on others negatively influence the requester’s assessments of the social consequences of making such requests. These consequences, in turn, can also negatively influence future disability accommodation requests.


Persons with former alcohol or drug use disorders are protected from labor market discrimination by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. They have been neglected, however, in empirical studies of labor market discrimination following implementation of the Act. We apply econometric techniques used to study other disabled groups to determine if there are significant differences in employment outcomes for persons with and without former substance use disorders and, if so, what part of these differences potentially can be attributed to employer discrimination. There are no significant differences in employment rates between persons with and without former substance use disorders and, among those who are employed no significant differences in rates of full-time employment. But persons with former substance use disorders report significantly higher rates of involuntary job loss within the previous year. Part of the differential remains unexplained after controlling for other factors that affect employment outcomes, suggesting employer discrimination may be one cause of poor job stability among this group. Certain identifiable subgroups with low levels of human capital are particularly susceptible to substance-related discrimination.


To investigate the inclusion of people with disabilities in the diversity policies of the most successful businesses in the United States, we examined the publicly available workforce and supplier diversity policies of the top 100 companies on Fortune Magazine’s 2003 list of the 500 most profitable companies in the nation. The majority of these companies have extensive information about their diversity policies and practices available on their corporate website. The information was used to categorize the policies into those that include people with disabilities, do not define diversity, and enumerate what is meant by diversity (e.g. in terms of race or gender) but do not expressly mention disability. In addition, we looked beyond the diversity policies to information available on corporate websites relating to a variety of diversity initiatives. Findings suggest that the majority of the companies that top the Fortune 500 list have developed and implemented diversity policies. Of these, 42% have diversity policies that include people with disabilities in the definition of a diverse workforce. Furthermore, 47% of companies with workplace diversity policies discuss diversity in a way that neither expressly includes nor excludes people with disabilities. Far fewer (15%) supplier diversity policies include disability in the definition of diversity, but a significant number of companies use criteria that allow a business owner with a disability to benefit from the company’s supplier diversity program.


This study examines factors that predict perceptions of workplace discrimination by employees with disabilities. Individual level variables are combined with organizational level variables in a single model of perceived inequality. Data came from surveys administered to employees with disabilities and their respective employers. Individual and organizational variables together provide a better understanding of perceived discrimination than either set alone. Despite the predominance of studies that demonstrate inequality in compensation, this study shows that employees experience discrimination over most terms/conditions of employment.

Our understanding of reasonable accommodations in the workplace is incomplete. Frequently, research on disability either neglects issues of accommodation or examines the receipt of any accommodation, without specifying type. However, people with disabilities need specific accommodations, not any accommodation. This article uses comprehensive models to test the predictors of four types of accommodations received by employees with mobility-related disabilities. Overall, the results show that different factors predicted receipt of different types of accommodations. Furthermore, factors that facilitate or constrain an employer’s capacity to make particular accommodations were more powerful predictors than an individual’s need for accommodation or socioeconomic status.


Extant business research has not addressed the ethical treatment of individuals with psychiatric disabilities. This article will describe previous research on individuals with psychiatric disabilities drawn from rehabilitation, psychological, managerial, legal, as well as related business ethics writings before presenting a framework that illustrates the dynamics of (un) ethical behavior in relation to the employment of such individuals. Individuals with psychiatric disabilities often evoke negative reactions from those in their environment. Lastly, we provide recommendations for how employees and organizations can become more proactive in providing individuals with such disabilities equal employment opportunities for both access and accommodation in the workplace.


We present new evidence on the effects of disability discrimination laws based on variation induced by state-level antidiscrimination measures passed prior to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The evidence expands upon other research that focuses solely on the impact of the ADA by using a "quasi-experimental" framework that generates treatment and comparison groups. We find that disability discrimination laws are associated with lower relative earnings of the disabled, with slightly lower disabled relative labor force participation rates, but are not associated with lower relative employment rates for the disabled once we control for preexisting employment trends among the disabled.


Over the past decade, states have implemented many programs to increase the employment of people with disabilities in private-sector jobs. Recently, a number of governors have recognized the importance of increasing employment and work opportunities for people with disabilities within state government as well as other county and municipal agencies. State government agencies nationwide employ more than five million full- and part-time workers and are one of the largest employers in numerous communities. In many instances, these jobs pay competitive wages, ranging from entry-level positions to high-level professional opportunities, and provide good benefits. This brief examines the practices that states are using to become “model employers,” including strategies being implemented to expand the recruitment and hiring of people with disabilities within state government agencies.


To examine the effects of applicant disability, gender, and job level on ratings of job applicants, full-time workers (n = 88) and undergraduates (n = 98) provided ratings of hypothetical job applicants who differed on the basis of competence, overall recommendation, potency, activity, and starting salary. Applicants with disabilities were generally rated significantly higher in activity and potency than the applicant without a disability. The results of this study suggest that evaluations of job applicants with disabilities may depend on the amount of cognitive resources raters have available at the time the evaluations are made.

This paper evaluates the effectiveness of disability employment policy in assisting people with psychiatric disability to find, or return to, paid work. We argue that the poor employment outcomes from current programs establish the need for a paradigmatic shift in the form of a state-provided Job Guarantee (JG) for people with psychiatric disability.


A multimethod pilot study is described in which employers' and human resource professionals' perceptions of three labels used for epilepsy-epilepsy, seizure disorder, and seizure condition - were explored. Ninety-three participants were presented with a list of 10 chronic conditions or disabilities, including one of these epilepsy labels, and asked to rank-order the likelihood that a person with each condition would be hired for an assembly/production position. The participants also ranked cover letters from fictional applicants for a customer service representative position. The fictional applicants disclosed their condition using one of the three epilepsy labels. The participants then ranked which applicant would most likely be hired. Participants were also asked whether applicants should disclose their disability in a cover letter. Rasch and chi(2) analyses were used to analyze the results. Findings suggest that epilepsy was more positively perceived than the other two labels. Almost all of the participants stated that applicants should not disclose their disability in a cover letter. The results have important implications for employment seeking and disclosure practices.


As concerns grow that a thinning labor force due to retirement will lead to worker shortages, it becomes critical to support positive employment outcomes of groups who have been underutilized, specifically older workers and workers with disabilities. Better understanding perceived age and disability discrimination and their intersection can help rehabilitation specialists and employers address challenges expected as a result of the evolving workforce. Methods: Using U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Integrated Mission System data, we investigate the nature of employment discrimination charges that cite the Americans with Disabilities Act or Age Discrimination in Employment Act individually or jointly. We focus on trends in joint filings over time and across categories of age, types of disabilities, and alleged discriminatory behavior. Results: We find that employment discrimination claims that originate from older or disabled workers are concentrated within a subset of issues that include reasonable accommodation, retaliation, and termination. Age-related disabilities are more frequently referenced in joint cases than in the overall pool of ADA filings, while the psychiatric disorders are less often referenced in joint cases. When examining charges made by those protected under both the ADA and ADEA, results from a logit model indicate that in comparison to charges filed under the ADA alone, jointly-filed ADA/ADEA charges are more likely to be filed by older individuals, by those who perceive discrimination in hiring and termination, and to originate from within the smallest firms. Conclusion: In light of these findings, rehabilitation and workplace practices to maximize the hiring and retention of older workers and those with disabilities are discussed.


This report examines the pre- and post-ADA employment practices of Sears, Roebuck and Co., while focusing on the relationship of ADA implementation, communications policy, and information technology issues. During a two-year period the author used interviews, observation, and archival data as sources. Sears, which employs an estimated 20,000 people with disabilities, provides a case study of a company with a long-standing commitment to its employees with disabilities.


Studied the effects of prior experience on employer attitudes and hiring decisions regarding people with developmental disabilities. In Canada, 20 employers who previously had hired or trained a person with a developmental disability were compared with 18 employers without such experience. Most Ss had personal interviews, and they completed (1) a modified version of the Attitudes Toward the Employability of Persons with Severe Handicaps Scale (L. P. Schmelkin and D. E. Berkell, 1989) and (2) 82 items on factors affecting hiring decisions. Both groups expressed favorable attitudes towards the employability of developmentally disabled workers, with experienced Ss perceiving more advantages than disadvantages of this employment. Inexperienced Ss rated negative worker characteristics as a stronger impediment to hiring than did experienced Ss.


The present study extended the demands-control-support model used in occupational stress research in two ways. First, it hypothesized that role clarity (i.e. role ambiguity), like control, would moderate the relationship between demands and psychological strain. Second, the study assessed support (from leaders) as a macro characteristic of the work-group environment. Data were drawn from a large study of US army soldiers, the study sample consisting of 1786 lower enlisted male soldiers. The inclusion of support as a work-group characteristic lead to a multilevel test of themodel. A three-way multilevel interaction among work demands, role clarity and support was observed. As predicted, the relationship between demands and psychological strain was moderated by role clarity; however, this moderating relationship was found only when work-group support was high.


Article discusses the findings of study that investigated factors that differentiate an allegation of hiring discrimination from an actual discriminatory event. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) maintains a database of allegations of workplace discrimination filed under the Americans with Disabilities Act. A merit resolution is one in which the EEOC has determined that discrimination did indeed occur. A non-merit resolution is an allegation that is closed due to a technicality or lacks sufficient evidence to conclude that discrimination occurred. A data-mining approach was used to examine 19,527 closed allegations of hiring discrimination in order to differentiate and predict merit resolution and non-merit resolution outcomes. Results indicated that 26 percent of all hiring allegations filed were resolved with merit, which is much higher than the overall merit rate of 20.6 percent for all other issues. The age of the charging party was found to be the variable most predictive of merit, with younger applicants prevailing in the allegations 34 percent of the time. Behavioral disabilities, even among the young, result in generally lower merit resolution rates in hiring discrimination.


Since the groundbreaking work of the Robert Wood Johnson Conference in 1998 identifying six evidence-based practices (EBPs) for people with severe mental illness (SMI), the mental health field has moved in the direction of re-examination and redesign of service systems. Surprisingly, one area that has not been fully explicated is the role that EBPs play in promoting community integration. In this paper, we explain how community integration is a unifying concept providing direction and vision for community mental
health for people with SMI. As one crucial aspect of the recovery process, community integration clarifies the link between EBPs and recovery. We propose an alternate view, grounded in the empirical literature, to the assertion by Anthony, Rogers, and Farkas [2003, Community Mental Health Journal, 39, 101–114] that “EBP research has rarely demonstrated a positive impact on recovery related outcomes.”


The retirement of the baby-boom generation presents society with many challenges, including projected labor supply shortages in certain professions. Recently, emphasis has been placed on examining ways to harness the productive capability of those populations that historically have been excluded or underemployed. The unemployment rate among people with disabilities hovers somewhere around 70%. There are many reasons for this; however, one of the most prominent is the belief that there are significant economic costs to employing people with disabilities, without requisite benefits in terms of productivity. Research in the economics of disability and employment has focused on analyses of income support, health insurance, and accommodations at the level of the labor market. There is a gap in academic research on decision-making processes of employers of people with disabilities. There is an equivalent lack of integration of disability issues in business case studies. Through analysis of in-depth interviews and documentary evidence of four firms (Sears, Aon, Data Armor, and Arrow Messenger), this project will delineate strategies that work for successful employment of people with disabilities. The particular focus is on managing the economic costs and benefits of hiring disabled workers. Four business cases of firms and an academic multi-case study report will be produced. The business cases will focus on the strategies for hiring and maintaining people with disabilities. These will be put to use in the classroom at the Kellogg School of Management and other business schools to integrate issues of disability and employment into the curriculum. The multi-case analysis will serve as a more academic analysis of cases, examining the strategies of these firms, comparing them and generating themes and theories about which employment strategies work best and why. These cases and academic analysis will lay the foundation for the education of future business leaders and generation of theories for testing with alternative research designs.


Based on two years of fieldwork, conducted between March 2003 and March 2005 in the health care industry of the northeastern United States, this study shows that the work of family caregivers of elders goes far beyond previously recognized care in the home to acknowledge care inside health care facilities and in conjunction with community services. It reveals that family caregivers-untrained, undersupported, and unseen-constitute a "shadow workforce," acting as geriatric case managers, medical record keepers, paramedics, and patient advocates to fill dangerous gaps in a system that is uncoordinated, fragmented, bureaucratic, and often depersonalized. Detailed examination of what family caregivers actually do in traversing multiple domains reveals the extent of their contribution to and the weaknesses in the present geriatric health care system. It suggests that the experiences of family caregivers must be central to the creation of new policies and a more coordinated system that uses the complex work of family caregivers by providing the training and support that they need. Adapted from the source document.


Explores the promotional potential and perceived value of employees with disabilities. Supervisors (N=168) made promotion recommendations for employees of a hypothetical company. Results demonstrate that candidates with either depression or obesity were evaluated more negatively than equally qualified non-disabled peers. Perceived personal blame for the disability/health problem correlated negatively with promotion recommendations.


During the 1990s, while overall employment rates for working-aged men and women either remained roughly constant (men) or rose (women), employment rates for people with disabilities fell. During the
same period the fraction of the working-aged population receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (DI) benefits increased quite dramatically. We present simple time series and cross-state evidence suggesting that the growth in the DI program can account for much of the decline in the relative employment position of men and women with disabilities


Theory building has lagged on the intermediate linkages responsible for the relation between HRM and firm performance. We introduce the construct "strength of the HRM system" and describe the metafeatures of an HRM system that result in a strong organizational climate, analogous to Mischel's "strong situation," in which individuals share a common interpretation of what behaviors are expected and rewarded. The strength of the HRM system can help explain how individual employee attributes accumulate to affect organizational effectiveness.


This study investigated the relationship between favorable employability ratings of hypothetical job applicants with a severe disability and two aspects of employers' perceived organizational context: organizational climate and negotiation latitude, using a cross-sectional, correlational design. A survey including a hypothetical job applicant vignette in one of three conditions: non-disabled, severe physical disability (acquired brain injury), severe psychiatric disability (schizophrenia) was mailed out to a random sample of 1,000 employers selected from a national human resource membership list. Responses were received from 248 employers. The chief purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between employers' perceived organizational context and their impressions of job applicant employability. A secondary purpose was to explore the hierarchy of job applicant disability condition (non-disabled, acquired brain injury, schizophrenia) by employability rating. As predicted, non-disabled job applicants received mean employability ratings that were higher than applicants in either disabled condition, and this difference obtained statistical significance. However, contrary to predictions, applicants with a psychiatric disability received substantially the same employability ratings as applicants with a physical disability. This unexpected finding may be due to: (1) lack of employer familiarity with both severe disabilities in the workplace, (2) more positive views of psychiatric disabilities due to recent positive changes in societal views on mental illness, or (3) because the acquired brain injury was viewed in light of the cognitive deficits that sometimes accompany it, rendering the individual multiply disabled.


Using an analog study, the authors examined employers' perceptions of employability of people with disabilities. A survey packet was sent to a random sample of 1,000 human resources professionals that included a standardized 22-item rating scale, the Employment Characteristics Scale (ECS), a measure for rating employers' impressions of the job applicants' employability for a hypothetical administrative assistant position. Of the 248 surveys returned, results showed that job applicants without a disability received the highest mean employability ratings. Applicants in the physically disabled condition (acquired brain injury), were rated the same as the psychiatrically disabled condition (schizophrenia) -- an unexpected outcome. The findings suggest that employer perceptions of the job applicants with severe disabilities do not compare favorably with their perceptions of applicants with no disabilities. These negative perceptions have important implications for social work practice & policy. 3 Tables, 40 References. G. Giford


One of the great paradoxes of inequality in organizations is that even when organizations introduce new programs designed to help employees in traditionally disadvantaged groups succeed, employees who
use these programs often suffer negative career consequences. This study helps to fill a significant gap in the literature by investigating how local employer practices can enable employees to successfully use the programs designed to benefit them. Using a research approach that controls for regulatory environment and program design, we analyze unique longitudinal personnel data from a large law firm to demonstrate that assignment to powerful supervisors upon organization entry improves career outcomes for individuals who later use a reduced-hours program. Additionally, we find that initial assignment to powerful supervisors is more important to positive career outcomes—that is, employee retention and performance-based pay—than are factors such as supervisor assignment at the time of program use. Initial assignment affects career outcomes for later program users through the mechanism of improved access to reputation-building work opportunities. These findings have implications for research on work-family programs and other employer rights programs and for the role of social capital in careers.


Federal legislation has laid the foundation for the fair and equitable treatment of people with disabilities, yet their unemployment rate remains far above that of people without disabilities. Employers, agencies, and other entities may not be predisposed to provide equitable treatment and equal access to individuals with disabilities. If employers have negative attitudes toward people with disabilities, discrimination can result. Individuals’ behaviors may be influenced more by attitudes and beliefs than by legal mandates. Attitude change is essential to creating workforce equal opportunity. Employer education and training may be a simple, low cost method for changing beliefs and attaining equality. Tilting at Windmills is designed to increase workplace sensitivity and awareness about disability and to reduce prejudice and discrimination.


This study provides insight into small business hiring practices, attitudes and culture regarding hiring people with disabilities. This research also investigated why employers previously have asserted that they were willing to hire people with disabilities yet did not, as evidenced by the poor progress in hiring people with disabilities since the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) was enacted. The methodology for this study was in-depth, semi-structured interviews. The people interviewed included those with formal as well as informal hiring authority. Twenty-seven respondents were interviewed from five service-sector, small businesses. This study had the following aims: to identify what small businesses know regarding hiring, accommodating and supporting people with disabilities in the workplace and whether the ADA has affected their approach to hiring people with disabilities; to identify what personnel practices these employers use for recruiting and hiring people with or without disabilities and whether the hiring process differs for applicants with disabilities; to explore small businesses’ attitudes and culture regarding hiring people with disabilities and the perceptions and beliefs of people in the workplace regarding the consequences of hiring or not hiring people with disabilities. In general, this research confirmed the expressed interest of employers to hire people with disabilities. The theoretical themes that framed this research included economic/labor market theory, discrimination theory, organization theory, social justice theory and social capital theory. Other findings included: general ADA knowledge existed but detailed knowledge was lacking; adherence to ADA requirements was inconsistent; training in ADA implementation was limited; standard recruiting methods acted as barriers for many applicants with disabilities; social capital was identified as very important. The policy implications of this research include the recommendation that some form of affirmative action is required to overcome the organizational and cultural issues in the workplace which are preventing people with disabilities from being hired in higher numbers.


As California’s system of job-based health insurance continues to erode, low- and moderate-income workers are increasingly being left out, according to this policy brief from the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. While a majority of Californians continue to get health insurance through their employer or that of a family member, researchers noted that job-based insurance is particularly declining among those living at or below the poverty level. This policy brief, based on analyses of data from the 2001 and 2005 California Health Interview Surveys (CHIS), examines changes in employment-based insurance of working Californians, ages 19-64. The report was funded by a grant from Blue Shield of California Foundation, with additional funding from The California Endowment and The California Wellness Foundation.

Bruyère, S. (2000). Disability employment policies and practices in private and federal sector organizations. Ithaca, NY, Cornell University, School of Industrial and Labor Relations Extension Division, Program on Employment and Disability.


The Internet improves access to employment and community for many people. However, there is growing concern that many Web sites are inaccessible to people with certain disabilities. This article examines the impact on people with disabilities of online human resources processes used for employee recruitment, benefits, and training. In 2002, Cornell University staff reviewed the accessibility of 10 Job boards and 31 corporate e-recruiting Web sites. Human resource (HR) professionals are well positioned to report on key issues regarding these processes. A survey of 433 HR representatives was conducted regarding their organizations’ use of information and Web technology in HR processes; knowledge of computer/Web barriers to employees with disabilities; and familiarity with assistive technology and resources. The authors summarize current literature and legislation relevant to Web accessibility, and discuss implications of their findings for businesses and people with disabilities in the workplace.


More than 10 years have passed since the employment provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) came into effect for employers of 15 or more employees. Americans with disabilities continue to be more unemployed and underemployed than their nondisabled peers. Small businesses, with fewer than 500 employees, continue to be the most rapidly growing part of our national economy and therefore a potential source of employment for American job seekers with disabilities. A Cornell University survey of human resource professionals examined how employers of different sizes are complying with the ADA. The authors point to needed ADA and accommodation services that rehabilitation counselors can provide to employers.


It is estimated that 19.3% of Americans are people with disabilities, or approximately one in every seven of us. (1) Individuals with disabilities are less likely to be employed when compared to their nondisabled peers. (2) This represents a significant loss to both private and public sector organizations, of willing and able talent, as well as a loss of income and social and economic participation for people with disabilities. Individuals with disabilities continue to experience low levels of employment, even though it has been more than a decade since Congress passed the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) prohibiting disability discrimination. (3) According to a recent study using the Census Bureau’s Current Population Survey (CPS) for working-age civilians in 1999, 34% of men and 33% of women with work disabilities were employed during 1999, compared to 95% of men and 82% of women without work disabilities. (4) Men and women with disabilities also worked approximately one-third fewer hours on average than those without disabilities. (5) This disparity is a function of inequities in social policy, access to education, training, and employment, as well as society’s attitudes toward people with disabilities.


Online technology has made significant inroads into human resource (HR) processes such as recruitment, benefits, and training, yet many web sites are inaccessible to people with disabilities. Cornell University surveyed 433 HR representatives regarding their organizations’ use of information and Web technology in HR processes. Survey results report that nine of the ten organizations use Web processes for job postings, eight of ten for online benefits information dissemination, and about six out of ten for online self-service and online employee training. Employee use of computers was extensive, with the majority using computers more than half the workday. Knowledge of assistive technologies for computer users with disabilities and of Web accessibility considerations was low, but nearly half the respondents reported having made some type of adaptation to make a computer accessible to an employee with a disability. Very few organizations had trained any of their staff in Web accessibility topics or in making computers accessible, and the majority desired more information on those topics. These findings have implications not only for people with disabilities, but for the general workforce, which is aging.


The aging workforce is likely to result in increasing numbers of workers with disabilities. The US Census Bureau projects that the 45- to 54- and 55- to 64-year-old population in the United States will grow by nearly 44.2 million (17%) and 35 million (39%) in the next 10 years (US Census Bureau, 2004). By the year 2010, this group will account for nearly half (44%) of the working age population (20-64), and the number of people with disabilities between the ages of 50 and 65 will almost double (Weathers, 2006).

Disability management and accommodation policies and practices readily lend themselves to addressing the challenges employers will face with an aging workforce, and the increasing prevalence of disability that these demographics bring. Proactive education about ways to maximize the productivity of an aging workforce, effective case management, and workplace accommodation can significantly contribute to maximizing aging worker retention.


Objective: To assess the impact of disability nondiscrimination legislation on employer practices in the United States and the United Kingdom. Study Design: U.S. and U.K. human resource professionals were surveyed about their experience with implementation of the legislation. Results: Both U.S. and U.K. employers are responding to their respective legislation by making accommodations-adjustments needed by applicants and employees with disabilities. Conclusions: Rehabilitation psychologists and other health care professionals working with people with disabilities must understand employee rights and employer responsibilities under this legislation, know where employers may have difficulty in responding to an accommodation request, and be familiar with the existing workplace resources and processes that can support an effective response to such requests.


Current disability policy focuses on transfer payments to those designated as disabled & thus, unable to work. Such a thrust facilitates a life of dependency for the disabled person & has resulted in staggering growth in the younger disability-transfer population in the US, 1990-1994. Policies in the spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), rooted in the expectation that people with disabilities can & should be expected to work, can have a significant impact on employment in the disabled population. Three examples of prowork disability policies are discussed: (1) supplementation of ADA mandates with accommodation subsidies; (2) disabled worker tax credit; & (3) time-limited benefits.


Background: Upper limb disorders (ULDs) are clinically challenging and responsible for considerable work loss. There is a need to determine effective approaches for their management. Aim: To determine evidence-based management strategies for work-relevant ULDs and explore whether a biopsychosocial approach is appropriate. Methods: Literature review using a best evidence synthesis. Data from articles identified through systematic searching of electronic databases and citation tracking were extracted into evidence tables. The information was synthesized into high-level evidence statements, which were ordered into themes covering classification/diagnosis, epidemiology, associations/risks and management/treatment, focusing on return to work or work retention and taking account of distinctions between non-specific complaints and specific diagnoses. Results: Neither biomedical treatment nor ergonomic workplace interventions alone offer an optimal solution; rather, multimodal interventions show considerable promise, particularly for occupational outcomes. Early return to work, or work retention, is an important goal for most cases and may be facilitated, where necessary, by transitional work arrangements. The emergent evidence indicates that successful management strategies require all the players to be onside and acting in a coordinated fashion; this requires engaging employers and workers to participate. Conclusions: The biopsychosocial model applies: biological considerations should not be ignored, but psychosocial factors are more influential for occupational outcomes. Implementation of interventions that address the full range of psychosocial issues will require a cultural shift in the way the relationship between upper limb complaints and work is conceived and handled. Dissemination of evidence-based messages can contribute to the needed cultural shift.


Article presenting the results of focus group interviews with human resource managers, supervisors, and co-workers about their companies’ employment of persons with disabilities. Human resource administrators and supervisors were both asked to talk about barriers to employment of persons with disabilities.
disabilities and factors that facilitated their companies' decisions to hire persons with disabilities. The article summarizes the discussion regarding three barriers and four factors facilitating employment. The barriers include worries about lack of expertise regarding disabilities, concern about resolving workplace problems, and difficulties accessing resources for accommodations. The factors facilitating hiring include employers’ expectations for positive outcomes, support of corporate leadership, awareness of compliance requirements, and response to advocacy efforts. The article also presents discussions of supervisors’ and co-workers’ experiences with employees with disabilities. A companion article (J33234) draws conclusions about how public policy decision-makers, employers, vocational rehabilitation services, and employees with disabilities can act to increase employment of persons with disabilities.


This article examines the determinants of the job accommodations made by employers using data from the Survey of Ontario Workers with Permanent Impairments. I use a censored bivariate probit model, which allows for the selection of return-to-work decisions to obtain my estimates. The most important findings of this article suggest that workers who received vocational training prior to their accident and returned to work with the time-of-accident employer are more likely to receive an accommodation.


This paper uses a 1993 court case, Cook v. Rhode Island, in conjunction with the implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to estimate the impact of employment protection on the labor market outcomes of obese people. In Cook, a federal appeals court ruled for the first time that obesity can be covered under the ADA. Using data from 1988-1999, I estimate that Cook increased employment for obese women and men relative to those whose weight was in the recommended range on the order of four and two percentage points, respectively. The results provide new evidence that obesity has important labor market implications.


With increasing health-care costs and shrinking profit margins and public funding, budget-minded employers and government agencies are asking hard questions about expected outcomes of rehabilitation methods and demanding objective evidence to justify their support of rehabilitation services. The authors identify supports and interventions such as assertive community treatment programs, familial education, symptoms and medications management, integrated dual disorders treatments, supported housing, social skills training, cognitive behavior therapy and supported employment as evidence-based practices (EBPs) in psychiatric rehabilitation.


Introduction: Demand-side employment research can play an important role in advancing the knowledge base of occupational rehabilitation. Research contributes to theory building and provides the foundation for empirically supported interventions that can improve the return-to-work success of injured workers and/or the overall labor force participation rate of people with disabilities. Methods: In this article, we present our rationale for developing this special section on demand-side factors related to employment of people with chronic illness and disability. We discuss the important relationship between employer
practice factors and hiring and retention of people with chronic illness and disability. We highlight in this paper some of the exciting new findings reported in the articles contained in this special section as well as some recent demand-side employment and disability research. Conclusion: We intend for this special section to stimulate thinking and discussion about incorporating demand-side strategies in vocational rehabilitation and return-to-work interventions for people with disabilities and work injuries.


Introduction: Traditional vocational services ignore variables related to employer demands and the interaction of employer demand and the environment as predictors of employment outcomes for people with disabilities. Recently, rehabilitation researchers have begun to advocate for the use of demand-side employment models to help people with disabilities obtain and retain employment. Aim: To examine demand-side employment factors that may influence hiring and retention of people with physical disabilities. Method: One hundred and thirty two human resources (HR) managers and line managers were surveyed and the data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple regression and correlation analysis. Results: Managers rated people with disabilities’ productivity and reliability between the neutral and agree range. Managers were neutral about their own knowledge of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and job accommodation and were similarly neutral about their company’s effort to include disability in the company’s diversity efforts. Hiring efforts were associated with the company’s diversity climate and inclusion of disability in diversity efforts. A hierarchical regression was conducted with results indicating that the demand side factors accounted for a significant portion of the variance in commitment to hire; knowledge of ADA and job accommodation and inclusion of disability in diversity efforts were found to be significantly associated with commitment of the company to hire people with disabilities. Conclusions: HR and hiring managers in the current study were not overly enthusiastic about people with disabilities as reliable and productive employees. ADA and job accommodations training might improve these managers’ attitudes toward people with disabilities. Intervention at the senior management level should focus on changing company policies to include disability as part of the company’s diversity efforts.


Using data from several waves of the National Institute on Aging’s Health and Retirement Study, the author of this article evaluates whether employers have complied with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) that they (a) accommodate workers who have become disabled while in their employ and (b) not pass on the costs of that treatment in the form of lower wages. The author also examines the impact of accommodations on improved job attachment. Study results suggest that workers were accommodated slightly more after the passage of the ADA than before, though in certain specific ways only. Workers appear to have paid for their accommodations in the form of lower wages. Finally, the author shows that accommodation has been very effective at increasing job attachment for individuals with disabilities, but hits effectiveness has lessened with time since the ADA’s passage.


The indirect method error-choice technique was adapted to develop the ADA Information Survey (ADA-IS), which assessed the attitude of 57 master’s level rehabilitation counseling students, 62 college students with disabilities, and 83 small business employers, toward the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Title I. Students with disabilities held the most favorable attitudes; rehabilitation counseling students’ attitudes were more favorable than employers’ attitudes. The construct validity and reliability of the ADA-IS were examined. Discussion of and suggestions for using the ADA-IS for advocacy and educational purposes and for future research are presented.


With the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, employers are now required to provide reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities. Although the practice of accommodating applicants or employees is not new, accommodation for disabled individuals has shifted the thinking about accommodation and our perceptions and reactions to such practices. In this article, four major factors that contribute to workplace reactions to accommodation are discussed: (1) rationale for the accommodation, (2) the nature of the accommodation, (3) whether the accommodation is organization, employee or jointly initiated, and (4) the characteristics of the target or person being accommodated. A general framework is presented depicting how these variables combine to influence workplace reactions to accommodation. Research from managerial, social psychological and rehabilitation literatures is reviewed and integrated.


I present a model of when and how coworkers judge the distributive fairness of workplace accommodations of employees with disabilities. Fairness judgments are made when accommodations are salient and relevant to coworkers. I thus present factors influencing the salience and relevance of accommodation. I also argue that fairness judgments are based on equity and need rules and therefore explore factors influencing equity comparisons and perceived warrantedness. Finally, I suggest directions and ideas for future research.


An experiment assessed the impact of disability-job fit stereotypes and reward interdependence on personnel judgments about persons with disabilities. Students (N = 87) evaluated 3 confederates. The experiment varied disability of the target confederate (dyslexia vs. nondisabled), task, and dependence of rater rewards on partner performance. Two disability-task combinations represented stereotypical poor fit and good fit. Dependent variables were performance evaluations, performance expectations, and ranking of target as a partner. There was negative bias against the confederate with dyslexia in poor-fit conditions. In the interdependent reward condition, there was a negative main effect for disability, regardless of fit. No effects for disability were found on performance ratings or expectations. Results indicate the need to consider disability-job fit stereotypes and consequences to raters when assessing the impact of disability on personnel judgments.


We examine coworkers' procedural justice inferences about the accommodation of another employee when they believe it is for disability-related reasons. Legal constraints that prevent the release of information about the accommodation process may lead to negative inferences about fairness. However, we argue that other factors can help to make inferences about procedural justice more positive. We present a model of the process through which coworkers engage in making inferences about the procedural justice of accommodating a coworker with a disability and the individual and organizational level factors likely to influence those inferences. Consequently, we present propositions to be studied in future empirical research and suggestions to managers who desire to reduce negative coworker reactions to accommodating individuals with disabilities.
Employer Practices Related to Employment Outcomes Among Individuals with Disabilities

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Colella, A., & Varma, A. (1999). Disability-job fit stereotypes and the evaluation of persons with disabilities at work. Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation, 9(2), 79-95. Study of the influence of stereotypes about whether a disability is a poor fit with a job on performance evaluations and expectations. Participants rated the videotaped performance and estimated the likely future performance of individuals who either had no disability or had one that did or did not stereotypically fit the job in question. It was found that disability did not affect evaluations of actual performance, but did effect estimates of future performance. Implications for hiring practices and supervisory evaluations are discussed.


Collignon, F. C. (1997). Is the ADA successful? Indicators for tracking gains. Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 549, 129-147. Some disability activists argue that little gain was made by people with disabilities in the twenty years following the controversial reforms of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act. This article argues that the same uncertainty cannot be tolerated for the even broader reforms of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Efforts are needed now to establish baseline data for key indicators and to track the indicators over time. The article evaluates indicators for each of the legislative goals in the Americans with Disabilities Act. Nor should analysts ignore assessing the 1973 Rehabilitation Act. A comparison of national studies analyzing longitudinal earnings data collected for federal-state vocational rehabilitation program cohorts before and after full implementation of the Rehabilitation Act reveals that employment and earnings gains were realized by people with disabilities provided job training and placement in that program following the act's reforms.


Colorez, A., & Geist, G. O. (1987). Rehabilitation vs. general employer attitudes toward hiring disabled persons. Journal of Rehabilitation, 53(2), 44-47. Study comparing attitudes of rehabilitation employers and general employers on the subject of hiring disabled workers. Notes there have not been any other studies to date specifically on rehabilitation employer attitudes toward hiring disabled people. Hypothesizes that the rehabilitation employer attitudes are significantly more positive than those of general employers, with no great differences between rehabilitation employers functioning in different settings. Study used 60 subjects from rehabilitation employer group and 18 in the general employer group. Discusses test instruments, procedure, and statistical analyses. Explains results statistically. Says hypothesis was not supported on modified employment questionnaire. Indicates moderately positive attitudes among all employer groups on each of three instruments with no significant difference between disabled and non-disabled applicants who were sociable and competent. Says positive attitudes toward hiring disabled may not reflect willingness to actually hire. Notes several limitations of study. Suggests for future studies, focus on whether similarities in attitudes are due to increase in sensitivity on part of general employers, decrease on part of rehabilitation employers, or both.


This article addresses possible changes in Dutch employers’ behavior regarding the recruitment and retention of older workers during the last decade. The authors analyze surveys administered to Dutch employers in 2000, 2002, 2005, 2008, and 2009. The results show that efforts to recruit older workers are changing, congruent with the economic climate, while retention behavior shows a clear and rather gradual time effect. The authors conclude that the position of older workers has improved between 2000 and 2008 and has done so in comparison with other underrepresented groups in the labor market. During the recession, recruitment of older workers declined substantially, while efforts to retain older workers are in both absolute and relative terms higher than in 2000. With respect to organizational policies, the authors conclude that throughout the period under observation these policies are dominated by measures that ‘spare’ older workers.


A major public policy problem is the extremely low labor force participation of people with severe mental illness coupled with their overrepresentation on the public disability rolls. This situation is especially troubling given the existence of evidence-based practices designed to return them to the labor force. This article reviews research from the fields of disability, economics, health care, and labor studies to describe the nature of barriers to paid work and economic security for people with disabling mental disorders. These barriers include low educational attainment, unfavorable labor market dynamics, low productivity, lack of appropriate vocational and clinical services, labor force discrimination, failure of protective legislation, work disincentives caused by state and federal policies, poverty-level income, linkage of health care access to disability beneficiary status, and ineffective work incentive programs. The article concludes with a discussion of current policy initiatives in health care, mental health, and disability. Recommendations for a comprehensive system of services and supports to address multiple barriers are presented. These include access to affordable health care, including mental health treatment and prescription drug coverage; integrated clinical and vocational services; safe and stable housing that is not threatened by changes in earned income; remedial and post-secondary education and vocational training; benefits counseling and financial literacy education; economic security through asset development; legal aid for dealing with employment discrimination; peer support and self-help to enhance vocational self-image and encourage labor force attachment; and active involvement of U.S. business and employer communities.


Introduction: The goal of this study was to assess the construct validity of the Affective Reactions subscale of the Disability Questionnaire by analyzing its underlying factor structure. The Affective Reactions subscale consists of 21 items measuring emotional reactions related to working with people with disabilities and contributes to the overall measurement of employers’ attitudes toward individuals with disabilities. Methods: The sample included 142 employers in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Exploratory factor analysis was used to examine the factorial structure of the Affective Reactions scale and multiple regression analysis was used to determine the relationship between affective reaction factors and ADA knowledge, perceived reasonableness of workplace accommodations, and experience working with people with disabilities. Results: Exploratory factor analysis revealed three underlying attitude dimensions: (a) Negative Cognitive and Affective Reactions, (b) Positive Attitudes toward Accommodations, and (c) Positive Attitudes towards Equal Treatment of People with Disabilities in the Workplace. Multiple regression analysis results indicated that positive attitudes toward people with disabilities in the workplace are associated with positive beliefs about the reasonableness of accommodating people with disabilities in the workplace and positive attitudes are related to higher level of experience working with people with disabilities. Conclusions: The construct validity of the Affective Reactions subscale of the Disability Questionnaire is supported by the identification of three underlying attitudinal constructs.

Of 671 Washington companies responding to a survey, 64 companies employed a total of 166 handicapped individuals. The proportion of urban and rural employers hiring handicapped people did not differ significantly, but proportionally more large employers had handicapped employees. Proportionally, more public administration, transportation, and service industries hired handicapped people than other industries. (Author/JDD)


This paper reviewed empirical studies published since 1987 and identified variables related to employment outcomes for six disability groups. These groups included persons with spinal cord injuries, traumatic brain injuries, amputations, chronic pain, myocardial infarction / coronary artery bypass grafting, and severe mental illness. The five key factors that were most consistently related to vocational outcome were: severity of disability, sociodemographic factors, psychosocial factors, psychological factors, and enduring employment status. While severity of disability continues to be an important factor, there was less of a medical than psychosocial flavor evident. The key predictors of vocational outcome were socio-demographic (i.e., age, education, race/ethnicity, litigation/financial compensation), psychosocial (e.g., coping strategies, social support) and psychological factors (in particular, depressive symptoms). Sociodemographic factors that identified clients at high risk of long-term employment, and related access and equity were issues frequently reported. Enduring employment status had recently emerged as an area of interest to researchers. Implications for vocational rehabilitation service providers were discussed.


This literature review explores the extent to which current telecommuting positions are held by people with disabilities and employer attitudes about hiring people with disabilities, including veterans. Discussion includes an overview of telework, including the characteristics of telecommuters and barriers to successful telework; employees with disabilities and telework; and employment issues and barriers for workers compensation clients and veterans with disabilities.


This study examined the lives of 10 individuals with blindness or severe visual impairment who maintained competitive employment despite their vision loss. The study was designed to provide information regarding the personal characteristics and current practices related to work environment alterations which enhance competitive employment retention. This was accomplished by using a stepwise format, with each individual project building on the information generated in the previous project (this is the third part of a three-part project). Through this process, the individual characteristics of persons likely to be successfully retained in competitive employment and the interventions that facilitated this process were identified. Emphasis is placed on strategies the rehabilitation counselor can use to facilitate effective job modification, job restructuring, training/retraining, and/or cooperation with organized labor, thus promoting retention of competitive employment. Each of the ten case studies presents the perspectives of the client, rehabilitation counselor, employer, and significant other. Results of the study indicate the importance of technology in assisting the majority of the subjects in retaining their employment. Findings also indicate the major factor that, if improved, would facilitate successful job retention more than any other. This is promotion of meaningful communication among all the persons involved in the rehabilitation process. Survey materials are included.


The purpose of this study was to identify factors that facilitated or acted as a barrier to return to work (RTW) for stroke survivors. We applied 3 approaches to identify the factors. First, we conducted
Employer Practices Related to Employment Outcomes Among Individuals with Disabilities


Background Low back pain (LBP) is a major cause of work-related disability. Despite an increasing emphasis on the role of employers and workplace managers in reducing work disability, little research has been conducted in this area. Aims To identify hospital line managers' knowledge, attitudes and beliefs regarding LBP and its management; the difficulties encountered in managing the worker with LBP and the organizational needs in relation to managing LBP at work. Methods Cross-sectional survey of line managers (n = 92) at an Irish University Hospital using a self-administered questionnaire. Quantitative data were entered onto the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (V 11) and analysed using descriptive statistics. Qualitative data were coded and analysed for common themes. Results A 64% (n = 59) response rate was achieved. Contrary to current evidence, 54% (n = 32) of respondent managers reported that a staff member needs to be pain free prior to return to work (RTW). Managers reported difficulties in dealing with colleagues of workers with LBP and in knowing the work capacity of the worker with LBP. Managers demonstrated poor awareness of the importance of the manager-worker relationship in influencing RTW. Managers believed more information, easier access to health services, more ergonomic training and better staff resources were necessary supports in facilitating the management of workers with LBP. Conclusions Hospital line managers' knowledge of the evidence regarding their role in LBP management needs to be improved. Managers believed better information, improved staff resources and easier access to health and ergonomic services would facilitate their management of workers with LBP.

BACKGROUND: Low back pain (LBP) is a major cause of work-related disability. Despite an increasing emphasis on the role of employers and workplace managers in reducing work disability, little research has been conducted in this area. AIMS: To identify hospital line managers' knowledge, attitudes and beliefs regarding LBP and its management; the difficulties encountered in managing the worker with LBP and the organizational needs in relation to managing LBP at work. METHODS: Cross-sectional survey of line managers (n = 92) at an Irish University Hospital using a self-administered questionnaire. Quantitative data were entered onto the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (V 11) and analysed using descriptive statistics. Qualitative data were coded and analysed for common themes. RESULTS: A 64% (n = 59) response rate was achieved. Contrary to current evidence, 54% (n = 32) of respondent managers reported that a staff member needs to be pain free prior to return to work (RTW). Managers reported difficulties in dealing with colleagues of workers with LBP and in knowing the work capacity of the worker with LBP. Managers demonstrated poor awareness of the importance of the manager-worker relationship in influencing RTW. Managers believed more information, easier access to health services, more ergonomic training and better staff resources were necessary supports in facilitating the management of workers with LBP. CONCLUSIONS: Hospital line managers' knowledge of the evidence regarding their role in LBP management needs to be improved. Managers believed better information, improved staff resources and easier access to health and ergonomic services would facilitate their management of workers with LBP.
An extensive review of the literature revealed a paucity of empirical findings concerning the topic of mobility opportunities among employees who were deaf. The majority of the articles on mobility opportunities are, in general, focused on non-disabled groups rather than on employees who were deaf or disabled. This study is one of a few of a growing number of works that deal with employment fields dealing with employers' perceptions towards this group of employees. With the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990, this study examined more specifically the issue of vertical mobility opportunities for qualified people who are deaf and with other disabilities in the public and private sectors. Vertical mobility was defined as an individual attaining a more responsible position or a higher level position which this person desires through creativity, education, or training and efforts. In order to systematically examine the present hiring policies of the employers and the possible future effects of the ADA towards the vertical mobility opportunities among the disabled and deaf graduates in the business world, six primary research questions were addressed in this study: (1) What were employers' views and reactions to the ADA? (2) What were employers currently doing for employees with deafness and other disabilities to increase their vertical mobility? (3) What plans for changes did employers have for policies and practices for employees with deafness and other disabilities? (4) Were employer reactions and past employment policies and practices associated with their future plans for changes as a result of the ADA? (5) Were the size and type of business associated with future plans for changes as a result of the ADA? and (6) Were contacts with, presence of, and past hirings of people with deafness and other disabilities associated with future plans for changes as a result of the ADA? Findings and conclusions from study include: (1) Most respondents were aware of the ADA, but they were less sure about the details of the law and its effects. (2) With respect to vertical mobility--despite plans, broadened employment opportunities, and more favorable attitudes toward the disabled and deaf--deaf employees are most blocked out, especially for supervisory positions, even though prospects for those with other disabilities are more favorable. (3) Prior contacts and associations with disabled and deaf people, as well as positive perceptions about the ADA, were important from this study in terms of attitudes toward these workers and plans for implementing the law as well as the potential for full accommodation of people with deafness and other disabilities in the workplace. (4) Although the size of company per se was not related to plans for the future, businesses that were stable in size were most likely to plan for change as a result of the ADA followed by those employers whose companies were growing.


This study investigated the impact of disclosure of invisible disabilities (physical and psychiatric) within the employment interview process. Both the type of disability and the extent of disclosure were manipulated in an analogue experimental design. Employers (N = 60) were exposed to a short interview vignette of a potential candidate and were then asked to make a hiring decision and rate the candidate's employability. The results indicate a significant effect for disability type, with employers rating the candidate with a physical disability significantly higher than the candidate with a psychiatric disability. The findings indicate no significant effects for extent of disclosure; for the interaction of disability and extent of disclosure on employability; and for type of disability, extent of disclosure, and the interaction of disability and extent of disclosure on hiring decision. Implications of the study findings for persons with disabilities and rehabilitation counselors are discussed.


Socioeconomic factors are associated with reduced health status in low-income populations. We sought to identify affordable employment benefit packages that might ameliorate these socioeconomic factors and would be consonant with employees' priorities. Working in groups low-income employees...
participated in a computerized exercise in which they expressed their preference for employment benefit packages intended to address socioeconomic determinants of health. The hypothetical costs of these benefits reflected those of the average US benefit package available to low-income employees. Questionnaires ascertained sociodemographic information and attitudes. Descriptive statistics and logistic regression analysis were used to examine benefit choices. Groups chose offered benefits in the following descending rank order: health care, retirement, vacation, disability pay, training, job flexibility, family time, dependent care, monetary advice, anxiety assistance, wellness, housing assistance, and nutrition programs. Participants varied in their personal choices, but 78% expressed willingness to abide by their groups' choices. It is possible to design employment benefits that ameliorate socioeconomic determinants of health and are acceptable to low-income employees. These benefit packages can be provided at the cost of benefit packages currently available to some low-income employees. Groups chose offered benefits in the following descending rank order: health care, retirement, vacation, disability pay, training, job flexibility, family time, dependent care, monetary advice, anxiety assistance, wellness, housing assistance, and nutrition programs. Participants varied in their personal choices, but 78% expressed willingness to abide by their groups' choices.


The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) is analyzed in terms of its effects on the employment and wages of disabled men using data from the Survey of Income and Program Participation. The results indicate that, as early as 1990, employment rates of men with disabilities decreased dramatically and continued to decrease through the beginning of 1995. On average over the post-ADA period, employment of men with disabilities was 7.2 percentage points lower than before the act was passed. In addition, wages of disabled men did not change with the passage of the ADA.

A British survey of employers examined the recruitment and retention of people with disabilities (PWDs). Telephone interviews were conducted with two samples of employers: a random sample of 1,250 and a sample of 250 registered users of the Employment Service's "Disability Symbol," which sets a good practice standard for the employment of PWDs. Findings indicated that more than 90 percent of employers with any disabled employees employed 5 or fewer. The two most common reasons for not having any disabled employees were that none had applied for a job or that a person with disabilities had been employed but had subsequently left. Forty-five percent of the symbol users sampled had a policy specifically addressing the employment of PWDs; only 17 percent of the random sample had a policy. There was a direct relationship between the size of establishment and the existence of written policy. Almost 71 percent of symbol users and 11 percent of the random sample were actively trying to attract applications from persons with disabilities; almost 40 percent of respondents reported difficulty in attracting such applications. People with difficulties in seeing or with mental handicaps/learning difficulties were hardest to employ. The main perceived problem related to the nature of the work. Almost all symbol users were prepared to make costless or minor changes to work environment; 84 percent were willing to pay for necessary adaptations or alterations. Eleven percent of symbol users did not seem aware of its existence.


The National Center on Workforce Development/Adult (NCWD/A), funded by the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), undertook a one-year project that examined practices and strategies implemented by U.S. companies seeking to recruit and retain older workers. This brief presents themes that emerged from phone conversations with employees at 18 companies in 13 states. This brief identifies strategies that can benefit both older workers and workers with disabilities. It describes each strategy that companies discussed in relation to older workers and makes a case for its effectiveness in employing workers with disabilities, offering action steps employers can take. The brief ends with recommendations for the disability community to better support businesses to employ people with disabilities. Including these practices in business operations will position employers to become more reflective of their diverse communities and the customers they strive to serve.


Over the past two decades, two distinct types of action have been taken to address discrimination in the labour market against people with disabilities. First, the introduction of legislation and, second, the launch of "best practice" initiatives. Analyses company annual reports to test whether these two types of action have acted to increase senior management commitment to tackling the disadvantaged position of disabled workers. Presents findings that cast doubt on the extent to which either of the approaches have served to increase such commitment. Identifies a number of legislative reforms, encompassing the introduction of requirements on the external auditing of disability practices, access to occupational health services and the use of contract compliance, that could be utilised to raise the priority accorded to disability issues by senior managers.


This paper examines the importance of the "business case" in relation to disability practice. In order to investigate this issue, it draws on an analysis of over 400 top company annual reports. Findings cast doubt on the notion that organisations are influenced by an explicitly economic rationale, and also indicate the apparent limited influence of notions of social justice. Instead, they point toward the prominence of corporate social responsibility, suggesting that employers might be using the employment of people with disabilities as a subtle way to promote their corporate image.


Assessed 373 employers' attitudes toward hiring persons with psychiatric disability. Ss were interviewed by telephone, using the Employer Attitude Questionnaire, to assess their concerns in 4 major areas: symptomatology, work personality, work performance, and administrative concerns. Results suggest that employers differ in their level of concern by industry type. Overall, 3 of the 4 subscales (symptomatology, administrative concerns, and work performance) differed significantly. Employers with a history of hiring people with disabilities had lower levels of concern on work performance and administrative concern subscales. Employers with an existing policy toward hiring people with disabilities had lower levels of concern across all subscales.


How does a company’s “culture”—values, norms, policies, and practices—facilitate or hinder the employment of people with disabilities? The limited research that has addressed the role of corporate culture primarily is based on laboratory studies and employer surveys. There has been comparatively little systematic research on how company policies and practices (and corresponding attitudes of employers, supervisors, and co-workers) affect the employment opportunities of people with disabilities. Though case studies of disability employment have been accumulating, methods of conducting case studies and assessments of best practices have varied. Recognizing the critical need for systematic growth in the evidence base regarding best practices in inclusive employment, the Department of Labor’s Office of Disability Employment (ODEP) funded a Research Consortium to develop a standard design methodology and conduct case study research to identify ways in which an organization's structures, values, policies and day-to-day practices, facilitate the employment of people with disabilities.


The U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), conducted the 2008 Survey of Employer Perspectives on the Employment of People with Disabilities. The objective of this nationally representative survey was to inform the development and promotion of policy and practice by comparing employer perspectives across various industries and within companies of varying sizes. ODEP will use the data from this survey to formulate targeted strategies and policies for increasing employment opportunities for people with disabilities. This survey emphasized current attitudes and practices of employers in 12 industry sectors, including some high growth industries as projected by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). ODEP conducted a 15-minute telephone survey of a representative sample of senior executives representing 12 industries by company size: small (5-14 employees), medium (15-249 employees), and large companies (250 or more employees).


The purpose of this study was (a) to explore the latent factors in the Reasonable Accommodation Factor Survey (RAFS) instrument and (b) to compare scores on the latent factors of the RAFS by participant’s role. Eight latent factors were identified through an exploratory factor analysis with orthogonal rotation. The reliability tests indicated satisfactory reliability scores on each of the eight latent factors of the RAFS. Comparison of scores by roles of stakeholders (employee, employer, and service provider) indicated statistically significant differences in scores on three latent factors: Employee Competence in Reasonable Accommodation, Workplace Impact, and Employee Work Record. Implications for practice and research are discussed.


Business rhetoric and conventional theory expect that employment regulations will have negative effects on small firms. Prior research has shown that effects are quite rare, but has not explained why. Case studies of 18 firms from three sectors identified four explanations. (1) Perceptions of effects tend to be broad and general, rather than reflections of concrete experience. (2) ‘The law’ is not uniform, with older laws being largely taken for granted. (3) Effects depend on competitive conditions, which are more important influences on firms than are regulations; where conditions are benign, regulations can be absorbed, but in other circumstances employment regulations can exacerbate competitive pressures. (4) A degree of informality in small firms further eases responses. By the same token, however, hopes that regulation will stimulate modernization are rarely realized.

Persons with disabilities are under-represented in the American workforce. Previous federal legislation requiring nondiscrimination in employment toward persons with disabilities has been unsuccessful in alleviating this social problem. The recent passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) mandates nondiscrimination in employment practices and provides compliance timeframes. The role of employers is crucial to the successful implementation of the law. This study assessed the attitudes and employment practices of employers toward persons with disabilities across size and industry category of business through responses to a national mail survey. The attitude instrument used for this investigation was the Worker Scale developed at Virginia Commonwealth University Rehabilitation Research and Training Center. Three thousand attitude surveys were mailed to a sample of businesses stratified by size and industry. Three-hundred seventy surveys were returned. This represents a 12.3% return rate. These returned surveys were analyzed to determine differences across size and industry category of business in the responses to the Worker Scale, self-assessed knowledge of the ADA, likelihood of making workplace accommodations, previous experience in hiring or supervising employees with disabilities, and the number of employees with disabilities employed by sample businesses. One-way ANOVAs, Chi Square analyses, a Pearson correlation and a t-test were computed to assess the relationships between the variables identified. This study found no difference between assessed attitudes toward persons with disabilities and size of business. The majority of respondents (72%) assessed their level of knowledge of the ADA as being "knowledgeable" or "very knowledgeable". Respondents from large businesses rated themselves as more knowledgeable than medium businesses, and medium businesses rated themselves more knowledgeable than small businesses. Over two-thirds (68.9%) reported that accommodations have been made by their company or organization for an employee with a disability. Large businesses and those businesses classified as "government" or "education, health, and social service" were more likely to have made accommodations in the workplace. No relationship was found in this investigation between respondents' assessed attitude and their previous experience in hiring or supervising employees with disabilities. No correlation was found in this study between respondents' assessed attitude and the number of employees with disabilities employed by sample businesses.


Faced with a nursing shortage and anticipated increase in demand, home care agencies are implementing retention strategies with little knowledge of their effectiveness. The purpose of this study is to describe the strategies implemented and their effect on nurse job satisfaction and intention to leave. Data were collected from a random sample of 123 New England agencies during in-person interviews. Most agencies reported implementing multiple recruitment and retention strategies. Regression results suggest that the effects of employer retention strategy on nurses' intent to stay are the indirect result of its effects on job satisfaction. The only retention intervention that made a statistically significant difference in job satisfaction was shared governance, and no retention strategy directly affected nurses' intention to stay in their jobs.


Maintaining one’s role in the workplace despite significant health concerns can be important in meeting an individual’s emotional and economic needs. This qualitative research study reviewed the workplace experiences of 18 individuals who are HIV+ and 14 people who have cancer. Questions in the study addressed the following issues: the impact of the illness on their work life; whether they disclosed their health status and, if so, the reactions of co-workers and supervisors; and what accommodations, if any, they received. Recommendations for individuals with significant health concerns, employers, and rehabilitation counselors are discussed.


This research investigated elements of workplace culture across eight New Zealand workplaces where people with intellectual disability were employed. Using a semi-structured interview format, eight employers were surveyed, and variations in job entry procedures, orientation and training, company policies, job design, customs and practice, and social opportunities were examined. Factors influencing inclusion in the workplace culture of a total of 16 employees, eight supported employees and eight co-workers without disabilities, were identified and compared. The findings indicated that supported workers had a lower level of inclusion than co-workers. Several factors influencing inclusion of employees in the workplace culture were identified: full-time vs. part-time, level of employment support, limiting expectations and employer/co-worker attitudes. The use of a workplace culture survey by supported employment professionals has several benefits, including the identification of potentially inclusive workplaces, the facilitation of a good person and workplace environment match, the possibility of monitoring inclusion levels, encouragement of full work shift placements, and the provision of effective support on the job.


Research evidence suggests that investigation of workplace culture assists in enhancing social inclusion of and job retention by people with intellectual disability. This research explored the potential of using Hagner's (2000) "Workplace Culture Survey" to identify inclusive characteristics of eight New Zealand workplaces where people with intellectual disability were employed by surveying eight employers. Eight workers with intellectual disability and eight co-workers were surveyed to assess inclusion levels in the culture of these workplaces. The results indicated that four workplaces had a strong workplace culture. Co-workers were generally well included in the workplace culture, whereas only three of the workers with intellectual disability were included to a similar extent. Full-time employment enhanced inclusion levels. Workers with higher support needs appear to be less included. Conclusion: The use of Hagner's Workplace Culture Survey is helpful in identifying inclusive workplaces and inclusion levels of both workers with intellectual disability and co-workers.


Provides information on studies which described the psychological process invoked when managers receive requests for accommodations from employees with disabilities. Background and hypotheses; Results and discussion; Conclusion. The authors developed and tested hypotheses describing the psychological process invoked when managers receive requests for accommodations from employees with disabilities. In two scenario-based experiments, obligation and attitude had consistent effects on managers' intentions to comply, mediating the influence of performance instrumentality and perceived
fairness. Psychological reactions were affected by the controllability of a disability’s onset, the employee’s past performance, and the size of the requested accommodation.


A study was undertaken between April and June of 1973 when there was an acute manpower shortage in Israel in order to determine employers’ attitudes toward hiring people with different disabilities. The study was concerned with employers’ opinions of the person with a physical disability as a worker and employer’s suggestions for improvement of the employability of persons with disabilities. The 262 participants were chosen randomly from the National Insurance Institute’s lists of employers. The majority of employers (61%) expressed their readiness to employ disabled workers. Fifteen percent declared that they would not hire disabled persons, and 25 percent expressed reservations about hiring disabled persons.


The accommodation request process of the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) was explored using a qualitative interview approach with 20 informants who are blind. Five themes emerged pertaining to the barriers to requesting accommodation experienced by the informants: Broken Trust and Betrayal, Multiplicity of Barriers, Fear of Retaliation, Problems with Technology, and the Concept of Print. Two additional themes. Habit and Successful Means of Acquiring Accommodation, pertained to strategies informants used to by-pass the ADA process in order to accomplish their goals. Negative responses to accommodation requests inhibit further requests as people with disabilities attempt to accomplish their goals using more effective means. If this continues, the promise of the ADA to create a society where discrimination does not continue to limit opportunities for persons with disabilities will be unfulfilled.


As part of the planning process for a larger survey study to examine factors affecting employers’ intention to hire and hiring of people with disabilities, a series of three semi-structured focus groups were held with key hiring decision makers of Seattle area companies. The chief goals of the focus groups were to elicit and refine the participants’ beliefs, normative influences, and perceived control relative to hiring workers with disabilities. Narrative data obtained from the focus group discussion were examined using the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) to identify themes expressed by the focus group participants within the context of company size. Themes did vary by company size, but a prevailing concern across all companies related to questions about the efficiency/effectiveness of contact with vocational rehabilitation agencies. For both small- and mid-sized companies, there was a belief that people with disabilities could not do the work or were somehow less qualified. For large companies, convincing departmental and team managers that outreaching workers with disabilities would be a worthwhile hiring practice remained a challenge. The themes derived from this study can be used to help occupational rehabilitation professionals develop educational and marketing interventions to improve employers’ attitudes toward hiring and retaining individuals with disabilities.


The purpose of this study was to examine the implementation of Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The study: (a) investigated employers' understanding of the ADA definition of disability; (b) identified factors that influenced and policies and practices associated with the implementation of Title I; (c)
examined standards used to assess undue hardship; and (d) determined the extent to which private employers sought help with employing individuals with disabilities. The study had quantitative and qualitative components. A mail survey was conducted with a stratified, random sample (n = 320) of the private sector membership of the Illinois State Chamber of Commerce. Case studies were conducted in three private businesses of varying size and location. Participants were involved in their business’ hiring process. The researcher developed an ADA Employment Survey for both components of the study. Data were weighted and analyzed using factorial Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA), correlation, and descriptive statistics. Results indicated that 69% of the 143 survey respondents employed individuals with disabilities. These businesses had more fully implemented Title I and differed to a lesser extent with the ADA definition of disability than businesses without employees with disabilities. Employment policies and practices associated with implementing Title I were ADA training, disability awareness training, identifying essential job functions, and using unbiased training and test materials. The nature and cost of accommodations were important to undue hardship decisions in 77% of the businesses surveyed. The Illinois State Chamber of Commerce (59.5%) and the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) Program (19.2%) were used most often by businesses seeking help employing individuals with disabilities. Implementing Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 has several implications for private sector management and human resource development personnel. Among others, these implications are associated with: employers' perceptions of the ADA definition of disability; the employment of individuals with disabilities; and policies and practices used to facilitate the employment of individuals with disabilities.


Despite increased innovations in rehabilitation and laws, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990), the unemployment rate for individuals with disabilities has consistently hovered in the 60%-70% area for decades. Extensive literature reviews indicated that one of the biggest barriers to employment opportunities for people with disabilities is employers' negative attitude. The purpose of the study is to measure the attitudes of foodservice employers toward hiring persons with disabilities and to assess the effects of these attitudes on employers' hiring practices. The survey population was foodservice employers who are members of Oklahoma Restaurant Association (ORA), and a simple random sampling approach was used to survey 500 ORA members. Factor analysis, multiple regression analysis, and one-way ANOVA were employed for data analysis. The study revealed a somewhat favorable attitude towards workers with disabilities among Oklahoma foodservice employers. The results also showed that prior positive working experience with persons with disabilities people contributed to favorable employer attitude. It was concluded that the more positive employers attitude towards persons with disabilities employees, the more likely they are going to hire or continue to hire persons with disability.


It is now well established that learning disabilities (LD) persist into the adult years, yet despite a developing literature base in this area, there is a paucity of evidence-based research to guide research and practice. Consistent with the demands of the adult stage of development, autonomy and self-determination are crucial to quality-of-life issues to adults in general, and specifically to adults with LD. There are many areas of functioning in which adults need to adapt successfully, such as employment, family, social and emotional, daily living routines, community, and recreation and leisure. In essence,
there are a myriad of challenges and outcomes as adults navigate the trials and tribulations of LD as it manifests itself into adulthood. This review of the extant evidence-based literature seeks to discover relevant knowledge that can be shared with practitioners who serve adults with LD in a variety of professional and volunteer roles, particularly in adult education settings.


This study examines organizational commitment and professional commitment among a sample of social workers. It empirically explores the relationship between social workers’ commitment and nine work environment variables (collegiality, promotional opportunity, job security, organization and profession-specific skills, autonomy, legitimacy of promotions, distributive justice and supervisor recognition), six demographic or background variables (gender, relationship status, age, employment status, years in social work (profession tenure) and years employed in the current organization (job tenure)). It also includes 16 organizational variables (organizational auspices, organizational type, job position, yearly earnings and various types of job benefits, that is, medical, dental, vacation time, sick leave, flex-time, child care, maternity/paternity leave, disability insurance, life insurance, university education/degree programs, employer-paid professional development opportunities and other benefits. Findings: Based on a sample of the members of the National Association of Social Workers, the findings suggest that work environment and organizational factors contribute to social workers’ organizational and professional commitment, though the results suggest that organizational commitment is noticeably easier to explain than professional commitment. Applications: In today’s changing social service environment it is especially prudent for administrators to promote factors associated with employee commitment. This study suggests that social work managers ought to develop a greater understanding of organizational and professional commitment because of its link to organizational effectiveness and consequently how social workers work toward accomplishing their organizational or program mission.


This study determined the characteristics of employers who are open to hiring and supporting people with disabilities. The purpose was to help rehabilitation professionals better target their placement and educational activities. Using a grounded theory qualitative approach, the researchers conducted focus groups and interviews with employers, employed persons with disabilities, and experienced rehabilitation placement professionals. The results indicated that 13 specific characteristics, organized into three major categories, are found among employers who are open to hiring and accommodating persons with disabilities. The three major categories were work cultural issues, job match, and employer experience and support.


This article describes a study of employers’ attitudes toward hiring people with disabilities and toward the state Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agency. The study examined attitudes of employers in two states, one in the Midwest and one in the Southeast. In all cases, employers were known to have hired people with disabilities and to have worked with the state VR agency. The study found that employers stated that
they were glad they hired the person they did, but expressed reservations about hiring people with certain types of disabilities. Employers did not express a high degree of knowledge about the state VR program, and satisfaction with VR was mixed.


Examined the characteristics of employers who are open to hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities. 17 successfully employed consumers (mean age 47.4 yrs) with a wide range of disabilities, including mobility limitations, cognitive disabilities, psychiatric disabilities, substance abuse, and AIDS completed interviews regarding employment experiences, employer behaviors, employment policies and procedures, and other characteristics of the workplace that affected their feelings of acceptance and their ability to be a successful employee. Focus groups and interviews were conducted with employers, employed persons with disabilities, and experienced rehabilitation placement professionals. Results show that 13 specific characteristics were found among employers who are open to hiring and accommodating persons with disabilities. The 3 major categories were work cultural issues, job match, and employer experience and support.


This study describes the four-phase process used in developing the Employer Openness Survey (EOS). The EOS is an 18-item instrument designed to measure the openness of employers to hiring, accommodating, and promoting workers with disabilities. During the first phase, the authors generated potential questions and pilot-tested them with employers. They then evaluated scoring criteria and construct validity in the second phase. In the third phase, the EOS was field-tested with employers, scoring criteria were finalized, and interrater reliability was established. In the fourth phase, they presented the EOS to placement professionals who evaluated the clarity and usefulness of the instrument for practitioners in the field. Results of this study provide initial support for the EOS and confirmation of its usefulness for rehabilitation counselors providing placement services.


Personal assistance services (PAS) are in-home, non-medical long term care services for persons with disabilities that include assistance with personal care and chore tasks. The independent Living movement preference for and purported cost advantages of the consumer model of PAS attendant care service delivery are examined through secondary analyses of data obtained in a direct mail survey of a sample of PAS attendant care consumers. A comprehensive literature review of PAS attendant care, especially that provided under Medicaid, found the Pennsylvania Attendant Care Program (ACP) to have a long history of a consumer control option. An historical case study examines the ACP and is followed by descriptive data drawn from a consumer survey. A generic logistic regression model was specified to predict the attribution of extreme importance to consumer control by respondents in each of four aspects of PAS attendant care service delivery. A set of 17 predictor variables included: 5 Health Status/Severity indicators, 1 Emotional Status flag, 3 Services/Program variables, and 6 Demographics dummy variables. The fit of the model was excellent (p (less than).01) for extreme importance of consumer control in hiring/firing, training, and supervision of attendants. Payment of attendants was found a special case, presumably because of payroll paperwork. The statistically significant positive predictors for attribution of extreme importance to consumer control in the first three aspects of PAS attendant care service delivery, holding other factors constant, were receipt of ACP services in a consumer control mode, increasing numbers of approved ACP service hours, and consumer age in the 50s relative to the 40s. Negative predictors of consumer control's extreme importance included: perceived worsening of health from the previous year, greater pain interference, trauma (as opposed to illness) as cause of disability, and higher household monthly income ((greater than))(dollars)850/month). These consumer control importance predictors presumably indicate preference for consumer control of attendant care services. The very high mean level of importance ascribed to consumer control, and thereby interest in the consumer-as-

The percentage of employed people with disabilities continues to be low across the United States. A multitude of factors affect the integration of those with disabilities into the work place. This research extended a 2003 study, by Gilbride, Stensrud, Vandergoot and Golden, into the development of a marketing model and tool to improve employment outcomes of persons with disabilities. Resulting from the 2003 Gilbride, et al. research, a tool was developed, the Employer' Openness Survey (EOS), to be used by rehabilitation professionals to assess an employer's openness to hiring people with disabilities. The EOS provides the rehabilitation professional with a standard tool to use during their interview and assessment of an employer when conducting job development and placement activities. The EOS is comprised of 18 specific questions designed to reflect three constructs; work culture, work design or job match, and employer experience and support in hiring people with disabilities. The employer's responses to the EOS questions are scored and position the employer along a continuum of openness to hiring people with disabilities. This research examined the psychometric properties of the EOS through a heuristic approach, with a quantitative research design, to begin the process of a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). A CFA was chosen as the method of data analysis to establish an acceptable level of validity for the EOS. The CFA was used to examine if the constructs targeted through the questions designed by the Gilbride team emerged as the factors that were hypothesized by the researchers. The analysis suggested both convergent and discriminant validity of the survey. The three theorized constructs (factors) emerged, as well as two additional factors. These included a relationship building factor, which created enthusiasm in employers for the interview process and a factor which focused more specifically on recruitment practices favored by employers. All the factors combined proved valuable placement information and relationship building information for the rehabilitation professional.


Article reports results from study in which employers rated the importance of 38 different factors that potentially influence employer decisions about hiring and retaining a person with a disability. The results were grouped into 4 factor categories: individual, management, cost, and social. Employers rated factors related to the individuals as most important and social factors as least important.


This paper derives from a national study of employer outcomes when employing a person with a disability. Questionnaires were completed by 643 Australian employers who had employed a person with a disability. Individual performance was considered by comparison of the employee with a disability and the "average" employee. The "average" employee was rated significantly better on productivity variables, and employees with a disability were rated somewhat, but not significantly, better on reliability variables and employee maintenance variables. Organization performance was considered in terms of benefits and costs of workplace modifications and changes to staff training and supervision. In each domain, employers identified more organization benefits than costs, a large majority considering the financial effect of modifications and changes cost-neutral, with financial benefit more common than net cost.
Employers reported short-term, but no long-term or broader benefits from employer subsidies and/or incentives. The need to take a broad, "big picture" view to understand cost effectiveness is discussed.


Examines the need for identifying the business reasons for including people with disabilities in the workplace. Attitudes of businesses are addressed, as well as strategies for bringing about a reduction in the unemployment of people with disabilities. The authors present human resource managers as the corporate change agents, and discuss the impact of societal attitudes in light of new best practices for hiring. Suggestions made by Human Resources personnel, as well as first line managers, are reviewed. Finally, the authors present a model inservice training program designed to increase the hiring, retention, and advancement of people with disabilities in the work force.


This paper examines recent EEO (Equal Employment Opportunity) case law precedents relating to personnel selection, most notably hiring, training, promotion and downsizing. The statutes referenced include Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) of 1967, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 as amended by the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), Constitutional claims, the Civil Rights Act of 1991 (CRA-91), and Executive Order 11246 on Affirmative action. Seven topics are featured, including: (I) disparate treatment theory, (II) adverse impact theory in the ADEA, (III) adverse impact theory in Title VII, (IV) affirmative action based on operational needs, (V) key ADA rulings and the ADA amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), (VI) retaliation, and (VII) mandatory binding arbitration agreements. The case law surveyed reveals costly mistakes employers and HR managers can make, but which can be avoided with proper methods and policies. Some issues may require professional help (e.g., developing and validating selection tests), whereas others (e.g. retaliation), can be addressed in-house with knowledge of policies and procedures recommended by the EEOC to prevent problems from occurring, and to quickly correct them if they occur.


Demand-side employment research on company policies and practices related to retention and absence and disability management (ADM) can contribute to our understanding of employment issues related to people with disabilities from the employers' perspective. This study examined company ADM and retention practices and their effectiveness, as well as how these company policies and practices might influence hiring of people with disabilities. Findings substantiated a positive relationship among retention practices, ADM practices and outcomes. Both are associated with retaining employees who develop potentially disabling conditions; but they are not directly connected to hiring people with disabilities. These appear to be two different policy and practice issues within most companies.


Public policies to stimulate demand side factors that affect the employment status of people with disabilities need to consider workplace efforts that support the continued employment of employees who develop work limitations from any cause (back door factors), as well as the hiring behaviors of employers (front door factors). Workplace participation rates are influenced by employment exits as well as placements. Little focus has been given to preventing separation from employment, despite evidence of the progression to public disability benefits. Factors that place employees who develop impairments or...
work limitations at risk for early exit from employment are discussed. Preliminary findings from a qualitative study of successful firms are identified and illustrated with practice examples. Implications of these effective interventions are raised, including the provision of workplace based services, the need for accommodations over time, and the role of employer incentives for retention.


Article reviews literature regarding the rationale for employer-based disability management and the available evidence about its importance both for individuals with disabilities and the employers. Presents competencies required for this approach and the implications for professional development and service delivery systems.


This study provides empirical evidence about the relationship between workplace policies and practices and the incidence and outcomes of work disability, controlling for organizational factors. A randomly selected sample of 220 Michigan establishments from seven different industries was drawn. The employer self-assessment survey instrument designed for the study is described, and the eight independent variables deduced through factor analysis are presented. The twin strategies of trying to prevent injuries in the first place, and working to minimize their disabling effects through disability management techniques in the second place, were shown to be highly associated with lower levels of workplace disability.


This article summarizes qualitative, field-based findings about effective strategies that employers use to prevent and manage work disability. The study was part of a larger investigation that provided empirical evidence regarding the association of these strategies with the incidence and outcomes of work disability (see Habeck, Hunt, & VanTol, 1998). Structured site visits were conducted in a selected and diverse sample of 32 companies represented in the quantitative portion of the investigation. The visits substantiated the quantitative findings and explored how these policies and practices are implemented in the workplace. Successful strategies identified in these companies are presented, and their implications for practice are discussed.


Aging is generally associated with declining capacities and decreased activity. Social usage and employment practices suggest that chronological age influences capacity evaluation as an independent status attribute. The prevalence of disability increases with age; the rate of severe disability rises markedly at ages 55-64. The relationship of age and disability was examined in terms of capacity limitations, performance requirements, and flexibility attributes. Older men, aged 55-64, were found to be more severely disabled than younger men when other factors affecting the severity of disability, such as health, functional limitations, education and occupation at onset of disability, were taken into account. It is suggested that the residual capacities of older men become devalued when they depart from the normative expectations for working-age men through impairment or loss of occupational security. Capacity losses are more threatening to older than to younger men. The age norms do not provide for premature superannuation; disability permits behavioral modifications for incapacitated men which are not provided for in the age norms and employment practices. The possibility and problems of prevention of disability through job adaptation are considered.


This chapter reviews the current state of research and theoretical work on job development and employer decision making and applies this information in assisting job seekers with disabilities to find satisfactory employment. First, the context in which labor market decisions take place is outlined. Next, recent
research regarding the relationship between disability and employer hiring practices is summarized. On the basis of this foundation, the author reviews and critiques job development methods in current use, then outlines some of the elements of a sound approach to job development. Finally, issues involved in advancement beyond entry-level employment are discussed. It is argued that the elements presented of a sound approach to job search assistance--maximum involvement of the job seeker; attention to service identity and stigma; networking; assistance to employers in designing, carving, and creating jobs; and an empowering use of incentives and services--are underdeveloped or missing altogether from the repertoires of many job development organizations.

Hall, P. S., & Hall, N. D. (2002). Hiring and retaining direct-care staff: After fifty years of research, what do we know? Mental Retardation, 40(3), 201-211.

Recruiting and retaining direct-care staff has long been a challenge for administrators of programs that serve persons with disabilities. A literature review revealed that beginning in 1950, researchers set out to develop a paper-and-pencil test that would identify good employees. Regardless of how they defined good, employers were unable to identify tests that selected promising job applicants. Efforts to develop research-based selection tools decreased in the early 1970s with the transition from state institutions to community programs. However, the growth of community programs did not mitigate the turnover problem, and the need remains for a reliable hiring tool. Whereas recent researchers have identified practices that can reduce turnover, these practices should be more widely implemented and their efficacy examined.

Hallock, K. F., Hendricks, W., & Broadbent, E. (1998). Discrimination by gender and disability status: Do worker perceptions match statistical measures? Southern Economic Journal, 65(2), 245-263. The authors explore whether perceptions of discrimination are related to ordinary statistical measures. The majority of disabled respondents report feeling some discrimination due to their disability, the majority of women feel some discrimination because of their gender, and a surprising number of men also report some discrimination. The authors do not find a strong link between perceptions of discrimination and measured discrimination perhaps because those who perceive discrimination feel that it occurs along other dimensions than pay. However, the authors do find a connection between whether a person feels his or her income is 'inadequate' and measured discrimination for all groups studied.


Hanley-Maxwell, C., Hano, I. A., & Skivington, M. (2007). Qualitative research in rehabilitation counseling. Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin, 50(2), 99. Qualitative research approaches offer rehabilitation scholars and practitioners avenues into understanding the lives and experiences of people with disabilities and those people and systems with whom they interact. The methods used often parallel those used in counseling and appear to be well matched with the field of rehabilitation counseling. Despite this, qualitative research is still rarely present in Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin (RCB) and other counseling-related journals. Thus, acquainting/reacquainting rehabilitation researchers and practitioners with qualitative research seems appropriate. This article presents an overview of qualitative research, including a discussion of common components and processes and two designs commonly used in RCB-case study and grounded theory. Research previously published in RCB is used to illustrate various aspects of the discussion. The article ends with a discussion of current qualitative research perspectives and how these perspectives challenge rehabilitation scholars to consider new directions.

Harcourt, M., Lam, H., & Harcourt, S. (2005). Discriminatory practices in hiring: institutional and rational economic perspectives. International Journal of Human Resource Management, 16(11), 2113-2132. A number of research Studies have analyzed the causes, conditions and consequences of discrimination. Most of these have focused oil either gender or racial discrimination. Studies of discrimination on other grounds, including disability, have been relatively less common. This Study attempts to theoretically and empirically explore the nature of discrimination against disabled job applicants from the rational economic, as well as institutional theory, perspectives. The rational economic perspective emphasizes...
individual self-interest, conscious decision-making, and economic optimization. Institutional theory focuses on organizational actions taken to gain legitimacy rather than for monetary or utility optimization. Legitimacy is important to secure stakeholders' trust and recognition, and translates into favorable outcomes, such as resource support, customer loyalty, and ease in attracting qualified personnel. We test these two theories, using data drawn from 227 New Zealand organizations, which collectively employ approximately 4 per cent of that country's workforce. The evidence suggests that both theories to some extent predict discrimination based on disability. Employer behavior reflects both rational concerns for cost minimization and institutional concerns for perceived legitimacy in the eyes of key stakeholders. The strength of each concern appears, to vary with each employer's circumstances.


With workers' compensation costs as high as 10% of payroll costs in the US, employers may view discriminating in favor of the "strong and fit" as a potentially effective way of reducing penalties or increasing rebates on their workers' compensation premiums. This study attempts to remedy this gap in the literature by empirically examining the relationship between experience-rating and discrimination at the preliminary hiring stage, using New Zealand data. The focus is on the likelihood of disability-related questions being asked on job applications, because disability is likely to be associated with being "strong and fit," at least in the minds of employers. The researchers collected data from several sources. They obtained each employer's ACC premium (levy) by consulting the book, *Calculating your ACC premium* payments to Jun 30, 1999. The evidence from the current analysis indicates that the higher the ACC premium, the more likely employers are to ask disability-related questions on their job application forms.


Reasonable accommodation, a provision of the 1990 ADA, directs employers to alter the workplace so that qualified workers with disabilities have equal employment opportunity. Data on employer's requests for and employers' responses to reasonable accommodation, reported by people with disabilities, demonstrate that employers are reluctant to modify the social structure of work because of their perceived need to contain the costs of reform and maintain control of the workplace. Employers often discourage employees with disabilities from making requests for accommodation, and they deny one of every three requests. The authors show how organizations devalue the work of people with disabilities, and identify an array of resistance strategies employers use to preserve hierarchy and authority in organizations. Research study population is the government work force of a populous state. Interviews were conducted in four agencies.


Two hundred surveys were faxed to small business employers, yielding a 30.5% response rate (N=61). The names of employers were randomly selected from a mail order business list of employers in eastern Massachusetts. In addition, MDDC contracted VisionTech to distribute the same survey tool in the western part of the State.


Surveyed 30 employers who were known to be receptive toward hiring the handicapped and 30 controls. Based on returns by 44 subjects, results show that all employers tended to view the mentally retarded as better employment risks than epileptics or persons with a history of juvenile delinquency. Employers in the control group were more receptive toward the retarded than employers who were known to be interested in hiring the handicapped.


Despite the legal mandates of the ADA, people with disabilities continue to be underrepresented in the workforce. While there does exist an established body of research devoted to the hiring of individuals with
disabilities, information on retaining individuals with disabilities in the workplace has not been reflected as often in the critical discourse devoted to disability and employment practices. This article analyzes data from an ongoing study conducted by the Job Accommodation Network (JAN), showing that employers benefited from hiring, retaining, and accommodating individuals with disabilities. Benefits derived by employers include the ability to retain quality employees, increased company profitability, and an avoidance of costs associated with hiring and training a new employee. In addition to these benefits, providing accommodations in order to retain employees is shown to improve organizational culture and climate, as well as fostering a sense among all employees that employers recognize both the value of the individual worker as a human being, and the inherent social benefits of creating and sustaining an inclusive workplace.


Within the context of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, we examined the impact of requesting accommodation and having a disability on ratings of applicant suitability for employment. Psychology students and human resources (HR) professionals reviewed application materials form a hypothetical job candidate and then evaluated the candidate's qualifications for the job. Participants were randomly assigned to 1 of 5 conditions that consisted of a candidate seeking or not seeking accommodation partially crossed with disability type (none, physical, or psychiatric). Three potential covariates were considered: HR employment status, and knowledge of and attitude toward the ADA. Results showed that asking for reasonable accommodation lowered suitability ratings, even when controlling for HR employment status, the only significant covariate. Also, a candidate with a psychiatric disability was given significantly lower employment suitability ratings than was a candidate with no disability. Implications for applicants with disabilities and employers are discussed.


According to a recent Government Accountability Office report, the number of workers over age 55 is projected to increase significantly over the next twenty years, with this demographic group projected to comprise as much as twenty percent of the workforce by 2015 [12]. Accommodating the functional limitations of a large number of older workers may prove challenging for employers; however, policies and practices shaped over the course of the next few decades could allow aging workers to remain a valuable part of the US economy. Given these considerations, it is useful from a public policy perspective to determine the degree to which employers are currently addressing the accommodation needs of older workers. This paper presents the results of a study that attempted to determine the extent to which a sample of Fortune 500 employers was currently accommodating older workers. The study's methodology (in particular, its use of semi-structured telephone interviews) is reevaluated and new options (such as anonymous online employer surveys) are considered for the valid and reliable collection of data on accommodations for older workers.


The purpose of the present study was to examine the actual accommodative behaviours of employers with respect to workplace accommodation for people with disabilities. Given the critical role that employers play in the hiring of such people, it was imperative that actual employer accommodative behaviours be used to inform the levels of accommodation that currently exist within organizations. Specifically, the study sought to assess four factors relevant to employer accommodation behaviours to
inform members of the disabled population, researchers in the area of disabilities, and practitioners advocating for the employability of disabled people. These four factors included: attitudes towards people with disabilities, reactions to experiences with people with disabilities, perceived legal obligations and perceived associated costs. Given the prior lack of valid and/or reliable measures of actual accommodation behaviors, meeting the objective of the present study necessitated the development of a scale that would measure these behaviors to allow for a more meaningful investigation of the relationships between the key variables and actual accommodation practices.


Employers have pursued many strategies over the years to control health care costs and improve care. Disappointed by efforts to manage costs through the use of insurance-related techniques (e.g., prior authorization, restricted provider networks), employers have also begun to try to manage health by addressing their employees' key lifestyle risks. Reducing obesity (along with tobacco use and inactivity) is a priority for employers seeking to lower the incidence and severity of chronic illness and the associated demand for health services. This article describes the employer's perspective on the cost impact of obesity, discusses current practices in employer-sponsored wellness and weight management programs, provides examples from U.S. companies illustrating key points of employers' leverage and opportunities, and suggests policy directions to support the expansion of employers' initiatives, especially for smaller employers. Findings: Researchers and policymakers often overlook the extensive efforts and considerable impact of employer-sponsored wellness and health improvement programs. Greater focus on opportunities in the workplace is merited, however, for the evidence base supporting the economic and health impacts of employer-sponsored health promotion and wellness is growing, although not as quickly as the experience base of large employers. Conclusions: Public and private employers can serve their own economic interests by addressing obesity. Health care organizations, particularly hospitals, as well as public employers can be important role models. Policy development is needed to accelerate change, especially for smaller employers (those with fewer than 500 employees), which represent the majority of U.S. employers and are far less likely to offer health promotion programs.


This article provides a description and brief history of the Job Accommodation Network (JAN). Preliminary results from JAN's customer satisfaction survey are presented. At present, 778 employers and 882 individuals with disabilities have been interviewed. The findings to date indicate that a broad spectrum of business types use JAN's services. JAN customers reported that implementation of worksite accommodations would significantly reduce the individual's level of limitation due to the disability. Importantly, JAN customers reported having made highly effective accommodations at very little or no cost. Employers who were interviewed said slightly over half (50.5%) of the accommodations they implemented following discussion with JAN had been at no cost. For those employers who did experience some cost, the median dollar value was $600.


Reviews extant research on personal & environmental factors linked to work disability & success among those with serious mental illness; remarks are also offered on evidence-based employment services for this population. Person-environment fit theories are described as centering on three basic assumptions: (1) individuals pursue environments that match their characteristics; (2) fit can be viewed along a continuum; & (3) person-environment fit is reciprocal. Attention is then given to the R. V. Dawis & L. Lofquist's (1984) Theory of Work Adjustment. In this light, directions for employment-related research are suggested to shed more light on the notion of fit & to advance evidence-based employment services.

This qualitative study explored the employment, vocational rehabilitation (VR), and Ticket to Work (TTW) experiences of people with disabilities. Twelve focus groups were conducted with 74 working-age adults from ethnically diverse backgrounds and with various disabilities. Major barriers to employment were negative employer attitudes toward hiring workers with disabilities, lack of or unreliable transportation to and from job sites, and insufficient levels of formal education to compete successfully within the labor market. Regarding VR, participants expressed concerns with counselors, who they perceived as unresponsive and non-collaborative. Although there was general awareness of the TTW program, accurate knowledge and utilization of the program were quite limited. Of those reporting TTW awareness, over one-third feared that participating in the program would result in the loss of existing medical and cash benefits. Findings indicate that people with disabilities continue to experience significant barriers related to employment. As employment initiatives are developed and implemented, the voice of the disability community should be considered to help shape and improve these initiatives.

Hernandez, B., Keys, C., & Balcazar, F. (2000). Employer attitudes toward workers with disabilities and their ADA employment rights: A literature review. *Journal of Rehabilitation, 66*(4), 4-16. This review of 37 studies found that employers continue to express positive global attitudes toward workers with disabilities. However, they tend to be more negative when specific attitudes toward these workers are assessed. Although employers are supportive of the ADA as a whole, the employment provisions evoke concern. When appropriate supports are provided, employers express positive attitudes toward workers with intellectual and psychiatric disabilities. Affirming earlier reviews, employers with prior positive contact hold favorable attitudes toward workers with disabilities. Employers’ expressed willingness to hire applicants with disabilities still exceeds their actual hiring, although this gap is narrowing. Workers with physical disabilities continue to be viewed more positively than workers with intellectual or psychiatric disabilities.

Hernandez, B., Keys, C., & Balcazar, F. (2003). The Americans With Disabilities Act Knowledge Survey: Strong psychometrics and weak knowledge. *Rehabilitation Psychology, 48*(2), 93-99. Objectives: To construct and validate a measure that assesses knowledge of the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) and to examine ADA knowledge among private and public sector representatives. Study Design and Subjects: A 20-item measure was developed and administered to undergraduates (n = 210) and ADA experts (n = 34) to establish validity and reliability. Then, it was administered to 133 private and public sector representatives. Results: The ADA experts obtained a significantly higher mean than undergraduates. Reliability analysis resulted in a Cronbach’s alpha of .82. Furthermore, private and public sector representatives demonstrated little ADA knowledge. Conclusions: A valid and reliable measure, the ADA Knowledge Survey may be administered to individuals who are responsible for the law’s implementation.

Hernandez, B., Keys, C., & Balcazar, F. (2004). Disability rights: Attitudes of private and public sector representatives. *Journal of Rehabilitation, 70*(1), 28-37. This study examined attitudes toward disability rights among an ethnically diverse sample of 133 private and public sector representatives. The strength of these attitudes was assessed with experimental manipulation, whereby respondents obtained negative and neutral presentations of the ADA. Participants completed measures of 1) demographic, organizational, and experiential information, 2) acculturation to mainstream US culture, 3) knowledge of the ADA, and 4) attitudes toward disability rights. Individuals from the public sector, presented with neutral ADA presentation, and with a high level of ADA knowledge were more positive toward disability rights than their counterparts.

Hernandez, B., Keys, C., Balcazar, F., & Drum, C. (1998). Construction and validation of the Disability Rights Attitude Scale: Assessing attitudes toward the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). *Rehabilitation Psychology, 43*(3), 203-218. The authors constructed and validated an instrument that assesses attitudes toward the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), a law that protects the civil rights of individuals with disabilities. The Disability Rights Attitude Scale (DRAS) demonstrated acceptable reliability and validity with 2 samples of university students (N=421). Reliability analysis resulted in Cronbach’s alphas of .91 (Sample 1) and .90 (Sample 2). Principal-components factor analysis indicated that the DRAS essentially consists of 1 factor that accounted for 27% (Sample 1) and 31% (Sample 2) of the total variance. Construct validity analysis
resulted in predicted, significant positive correlations with other relevant measures. A stepwise multiple regression analysis revealed that sex, ethnicity, and prior contact with people with disabilities were significant predictors of attitudes toward the law. The DRAS provides a psychometrically sound means of assessing attitudes toward disability rights that may encourage or impede implementation of the ADA.


In the United States, one of the greatest challenges experienced by individuals with disabilities is employment. Research indicates that employer attitudes contribute to this pervasive problem. Specifically, some employers have misperceptions about the abilities of individuals with disabilities and the costs associated with the provision of accommodations. Understandably, employers are concerned with the bottom line. The purpose of the Economic Impact Study was to examine the economic costs and benefits of workers with disabilities within three sectors (healthcare, retail, and hospitality). This project included two phases of research: (1) focus groups and (2) cost-benefit survey.


Historically, employment rates for people with disabilities have been low. Despite legislation that prohibits the discrimination of this group in work settings, employers are reluctant to hire people with disabilities. The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the experiences of employers with workers with disabilities. Three focus groups were conducted with 21 administrators from three business sectors (i.e., healthcare, hospitality, and retail). Content analysis indicated five primary themes: (1) importance of disability employment agencies and disability advocates; (2) persistence of manager bias; (3) lack of promotion opportunities; (4) costs associated with having workers with disabilities; and (5) benefits associated with having workers with disabilities. Implications include the need for intervention studies that address the challenges experienced by individuals with disabilities, particularly during hiring and promoting phases of employment, and educational efforts to inform administrators and managers of the few costs and numerous benefits associated with having workers with disabilities.


This mixed-methods study examined the provision of workplace accommodations in the health care, hospitality, and retail sectors. First, focus groups with administrators from each sector revealed that accommodations costs were viewed as minimal (although frontline managers were perceived as having misperceptions). Second, the provision of accommodations as documented through human resources records for health care and hospitality indicated that accommodations were infrequent, not costly, and provided to employees with disabilities. Finally, retail employees (irrespective of disability status) reported many more accommodations than health care and hospitality workers. To dispel misperceptions related to accommodations, education is critical and social workers are well-positioned for this role.


Survey elicits information on disability management directly from practitioners of DM or advocates and consultants of DM practices. The responses to 41 items on the Ideal Employer-Based Disability Management Practices survey are analyzed by six major categories; types of disability benefits, disability cost containment, preventing employee disabilities, job retention programs, return to work programs, and disability management programs. The survey results identified agreement that employers can reduce workman's compensation costs by attention to disability management and prevention programs. Issues that have controversy are discussed.

This study investigated selected work-performance data of a large call centre using the entrepreneurial business planning paradigm as a theoretical framework and tested the hypothesis that mean levels of productivity would be different for workers with a disability and workers without a disability. On five measures of productivity, no significant differences were discernible. On one measure, workers with a disability performed significantly better. These results strongly refute the ‘intuitive wisdom’ that workers with a disability are less productive. The results enhance a growing body of corporate experience and descriptive research indicating that workers with a disability perform as well as or better than their non-disability colleagues. Yet they remain disproportionately underemployed. The key to translating the findings of this and related research into higher levels of employment of workers with disabilities will depend upon employers adopting an entrepreneurial approach to the planning of human resource management.


The purpose of this study was to document the work status, rehabilitation practices, and barriers to work re-entry for women who have undergone mastectomy (MRM). Three independent groups Of subjects included 31 female patients who were post-modified radical mastectomy (MRM), 18 physical or occupational therapists working in cancer centers, and 5 employers who represented a diverse group of businesses. Patients and therapists completed written surveys regarding the post-operative rehabilitation process. Employer interviews focused on company policies and procedures related to work re-entry. Descriptive statistics documented patients' pre- and postoperative work status and types of problems experienced postoperatively. Responses to open-ended questions were triangulated among the three groups to identify common barriers to work re-entry. Only 20% of women in this sample did not return to their preoperative employment, and most cited physical impairments as the reason. Nearly half of these women received no postoperative exercise instructions. Employers seemed willing and able to accommodate employees who return to work following mastectomy surgery when given specific information regarding their physical and functional limitations. These preliminary findings indicate the need for additional research that reflects the experiences of a more generalized population of patients, therapists, and employers.


Focuses on a survey which dealt with the awareness of employers on the mental health disability claims of employees in Canada. Promotion of disability management practices in the workplace for physical conditions like cancer; Prevention of work factors which may lead to mental health illness; Creation of a return-to-work plan for mentally ill workers.


The primary objectives were to compare the duration of sickness absence in employees with high levels of somatic symptom severity (HLSSS) with employees with lower levels of somatic symptom severity, and to establish the long-term outcomes concerning return to work (RTW), disability and discharge. Secondary objective was to evaluate determinants of the duration of sickness absence in employees with HLSSS. Methods: 489 sick-listed employees registered with five Occupational Health Physician (OHP) group practices were included in this study. We measured their baseline scores for somatic symptoms severity, depressive disorders, anxiety disorders, health anxiety, distress and functional impairment. The OHPs filled in a questionnaire on their diagnosis. A prospective 2-year follow-up was carried out to assess the long-term outcomes concerning sickness absence, and retrospective information was gathered with regard to sickness absence during the 12 months before the employees were sick-listed. Results: The median duration of sickness absence was 78 days longer for employees with HLSSS. They more often remained disabled and were discharged more often, especially due to problems in the relationship between the employer and the employee. HLSSS, health anxiety and older age contributed to a longer duration of sickness absence of employees. Conclusion: High levels of somatic symptom
severity are a determinant of prolonged sickness absence, enduring disabilities and health-related job loss. Occupational health physicians should identify employees who are at risk and adhere to guidelines for medically unexplained somatic symptoms.

Hoff-Macan, T., & Hayes, T. (1995). Both sides of the employment interview interaction: Perceptions of interviewers and applicants with disabilities. Rehabilitation Psychology, 40(4), 261-278. Study explores the social process of employment interviews of applicants with disabilities. Applicants self-disclosure of their disability and the effects on interviewer ratings is examined. Interviewers (n=36) provided data on 70 interviews. Reactions and impressions of 56 college student job applicants (43 with disabilities) were provided. Interviewers post interview evaluation weighted heavily on paper credentials and interview presentation. The findings suggest that applicants should discuss job-related aspects of their disability and encourage the interviewer to ask questions about their impairment. Applicants perceptions of the interviewers evaluation of their qualifications did not relate to how the interviewer actually judged the applicant or the applicants view of the interviewer. This is speculated to be lack of interviewing experience by the applicants. The amount of prior contact interviewers had with persons of disability did not affect the interview evaluation.

Honey, S., & et al. (1993). Employers' attitudes towards people with disabilities. Manpower Commentary Series, Poole, UK: BEBC. This document reports results of a study conducted in Britain to determine employers' policies toward recruiting and employing people with disabilities and what kinds of help and assistance employers need if they are to be able to do more in this area. Data were collected through an extensive literature review, a mailed survey of a sample of 1,855 randomly chosen companies and 351 "good practice" organizations as a control group, with an overall response rate of 52 percent, and in-depth case studies of 21 employers. Results are organized in seven chapters that focus on the following areas: employment of people with disabilities; organizations that do not employ people with disabilities; employers' policies toward people with disabilities; the pros and cons of employing people with disabilities; actions taken to employ people with disabilities; and use of external help, support, and advice. Recommendations to help employers increase their employment of persons with disabilities are given. Extensive appendices detail research methods and sample characteristics; the questionnaire and literature review are included.


Houseman, S., & Nakamura, A. (2001). Working time in comparative perspective. Volume II: Life-cycle working time and nonstandard work. This is the second of two volumes of selected papers presented at the 1996 conference "Changes in Working Hours in Canada and the United States." Eleven chapters explore an expanded set of working-time issues, which may be loosely grouped under these two topics: working time over the life cycle and nonstandard work arrangements.


Houtenville, A., & Kalargyrou, V. (2011). People with disabilities: Employers' perspectives on recruitment practices, strategies, and challenges in leisure and hospitality. Cornell Hospitality Quarterly, 53(1), 40-52. A survey of employers at 320 hospitality companies in the United States found a set of similar concerns and challenges regarding employment of persons with disabilities, although several of these issues are the result of lack of employer education. While small and medium-size companies had somewhat different issues than large companies, all firms had several concerns in common, starting with the belief that those with disabilities could not do the work. Another top concern was the potential cost of unspecified accommodations under the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, even though the record shows that most such accommodations are not exceptionally costly. Other potential concerns were the
Employer Practices Related to Employment Outcomes Among Individuals with Disabilities

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possibility that persons with disabilities would not have requisite skills or be as productive, and that supervisors would be uncomfortable supervising persons with disabilities and would not know how to discipline or evaluate them. Larger companies are more likely than small firms to actively recruit persons with disabilities, and those that do so are relatively less concerned about potential costs and the safety of those workers than those who do not. Among the policies that would encourage more hiring of workers with disabilities cited by the managers are employer tax credits and incentives, flexible work schedules, and disability awareness training. On balance, the survey indicates that greater knowledge about persons with disabilities would enhance their hiring prospects, particularly since those with disabilities constitute a loyal and stable pool of workers with a long record of satisfactory job performance.


This paper describes a research study conducted to evaluate and compare the attitudes of two groups of undergraduate students toward people with disabilities. 122 business majors and 152 rehabilitation services majors completed a survey that included the Attitudes Toward Disabled Person Scale (ATDP) and the Contact with Disabled Persons Scale. The mean scores for all students on the ATDP was 84.93 out of a possible range of 0 to 120. Higher scores are indicative of more positive and accepting attitudes toward people with disabilities. Results of the analyses show that rehabilitation majors are more likely to be older, female, and to report personal experiences with disability (their own or a family member’s). They were also more likely to report greater contact with people with disabilities. As anticipated, rehabilitation services majors had significantly more positive attitude toward people with disabilities than business majors. Implications for educators and business leaders are given.


This 3-year collaborative research project was designed to provide empirical evidence to substantiate the impact of various employer policies and practices on the prevention and management of workplace disability. It studied a random sample of 220 Michigan establishments with more than 100 employees from seven different industries who responded to a mail survey in the first half of 1991. The study correlates differences in employer-reported levels of achievement on policy and practice dimensions with performance on disability outcome measures, while controlling for a set of establishment characteristics in a multivariate regression analysis.


This paper seeks to investigate how seriously diversity issues are considered by municipal governments in North Carolina and to identify specific diversity management practices (DMPs) that are adopted more often by municipalities. It also aims to examine whether the adoption levels of DMPs are influenced by demographic and economic factors and the various backgrounds of city managers. Data about adopted DMPs and city managers’ backgrounds were collected by surveying all municipalities in North Carolina with populations of at least 5,000. A number of DMPs were identified as being more popular among municipalities that took diversity and its related issues more seriously, and other DMPs as being less popular among cities that did not pay particular attention to diversity. It was also found that the adoption level of DMPs was significantly affected by population size, the heterogeneity of population, urbanization level, and city manager’s age. The DMPs that were found suitable for each one of the four groups of cities
can be used as a guide when cities in a particular group want to adopt more DMPs to support and encourage diversity at work. According to the findings, cities need to be more proactive in managing diversity by introducing appropriate DMPs when their demographics are changing substantially.


Nonparametric tests of proportion were performed comparing discharge resolutions (the most prevalent discrimination issue filed with the EEOC between 1992 and 2008) with resolutions of a composite group of the next most prevalent discrimination issues (reasonable accommodation, terms and condition of employment, harassment and intimidation, and hiring). Results indicated that when an employee files an allegation of discharge discrimination, the resolution status of that allegation is more likely to be without Merit. Two exhaustive chi-square automatic interaction detector (CHAID) analyses were performed, with the first including 44 impairment types (e.g., back, traumatic brain injury, learning disability) and the second including those 44 impairment types combined into six categories (e.g., physical, neurological, sensory, and behavioral impairments). Results of the first exhaustive CHAID proved quite unwieldy but indicated that behavioral disabilities have relatively low merit resolution rates when it comes to discharge allegations (i.e., there is less actual discharge discrimination occurring for persons with behavioral disabilities). One additional finding was that filing discharge discrimination under one of the alternate prongs of the ADA’s definition of disability (i.e., “regarded as a person with a disability,” “record of a disability,” or “association with a person with a disability”) was the main driver of merit resolution activity. Results from a second exhaustive CHAID indicated that in the case of discharge merit resolution activity, employer industry drives the alternate prongs, employee race drives physical impairments, and employer industry drives behavioral impairments. Implications for human resources management and development research and practice are addressed.


The focus of the study is on patterns of early exit from the labor market in Finland with a special emphasis on the unemployment pathway. The period under review extends from the early 1980s to the turn of the century. The data for the study were obtained from individual-level files formed by combining census data with statistical registries of social security. The study takes a comparative macro-level approach, with comparisons being made between different periods of time. The results are interpreted from the point of view of the connection between early exit, increasing economic openness & structural change in society. In the 1980s, utilization of the unemployment pathway in a given branch depended primarily on how open the branch was to international competition. In the deep economic recession of the 1990s rate of exit was highest in the branches with primarily a domestic focus, which were hardest hit by the recession. The exit rates were remarkably high also in the previously public-sector branches recently opened to competition. After the recession, in 1996-1998, adjustments to international competition seemed to explain a great deal of early exit behavior. From a broader European perspective the Finnish unemployment pathway, combining economic competitiveness & social cohesion, can be seen as an example of the workability of the European social model. The capability of Finnish early exit policy for adjustment in the face of changing societal & international pressures was further proved in Nov 2001, when a broad-based agreement on changes in early exit & old age pension schemes was achieved by the labor market partners in line with general objectives put forward by the government.


Persons with disabilities can experience problems obtaining health care. Using the 1994-1995 National Health Interview Survey disability supplement, we examined health insurance coverage & access to health services for working-age adults with mobility problems (difficulty walking, climbing stairs, standing): 6.1% (estimated 9.48 million) of persons 18-64 years old. People reporting minor & moderate mobility difficulties had slightly lower health insurance rates than those without mobility problems (around 76% compared to almost 80%). People with mobility difficulties were more likely than others to be denied coverage & to cite preexisting health conditions as the reason.
Employer Practices Related to Employment Outcomes Among Individuals with Disabilities


Employment is an important component to community living that allows persons with disabilities the opportunity to form new relationships and learn new skills. Individuals with disabilities have much to contribute to the workplace and, if a proper “fit” is achieved, work inclusion can benefit all involved. This project provides and insight into the work experiences of persons with developmental disabilities through the eyes of the employers. Through in-depth interviews with the employers, strategies used to assist persons with disabilities in the workplace were described and challenges to inclusion were identified. Despite these challenges, however, both the persons with developments disabilities and the other individuals in the environment benefited from workplace inclusion.


Purpose: One area of life quality known to be compromised by having epilepsy is employment, and one factor contributing to the employment problems of people with epilepsy (PWE) is employer attitudes. Much research on this topic is now outdated and given the changing legal, medical, and social contexts in which PWE live, we therefore reexamined employer attitudes in the United Kingdom. Method: A mail survey of a random sample of U.K. companies selected to be representative of the 14 U.K. economic regions and proportional to the number of employees. Findings: The overall response rate was 41% (n = 204). Twenty-six percent of respondents reported having experience of employing PWE. Sixteen percent considered that there were no jobs in their company suitable for PWE; 21% thought employing PWE would be “a major issue.” Employers were uniformly of the view that PWE, even when in remission, should disclose their condition to a prospective employer. Seizure severity, frequency, and controllability were all considered important features of epilepsy in the context of employment. Epilepsy created high concern to around half of employers, including the likelihood of it being linked to a work-related accident. Employers were willing to make accommodations for PWE, in particular job sharing, temporary reassignment of duties, and flexible working hours. Attitudes to employment of PWE were influenced by company size and type and previous experience of doing so. Conclusions: We conclude that it is still the same old story for employers’ attitudes toward PWE, though happily for PWE, with some room for optimism.


Purpose: The purpose of this paper is to put forward a conceptual framework which details the policies and practices that can potentially contribute to the effective management of long-term absences, and hence the return to work and retention of ill and injured workers, and considers how far UK employers currently do have in place management arrangements which accord with those detailed in this framework. Design/methodology/approach: The conceptual framework detailed was developed by reference to secondary literature and the outcomes of a conference of relevant stakeholders. Available research evidence was then utilised to test the validity of this framework and to assess how far employers make use of the types of policies and practices identified in it. Findings: The research evidence reviewed lent a good deal of support to the propositions put forward in the conceptual framework as to the processes and practices that are central to the development of effective workplace rehabilitation programmes, as well as the internal and external factors that potentially influence the adoption and operation of them. It also indicated that there is a good deal of scope for employers to do far more to support the continued employment of ill, injured and disabled workers, particularly in smaller organisations. Practical implications: More needs to be done to encourage employers to adopt the types of policies and practices detailed in the conceptual framework and careful thought needs to be given to whether this encouragement is best provided by legislative or non-legal means. Originality/value: The central issue addressed, namely the management of long-term absence, is one that has been little explored in the existing human resource literature.

Presents results of surveys, taken before and after passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of employers and workers who are deaf, identifying two categories of factors impacting job retention and advancement: (1) individual worker performance attributes, and (2) aspects of the work environment.


The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) broadly prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in employment and other settings. Several empirical studies have suggested that employment levels of individuals with disabilities declined rather than increased after the ADA's passage. This paper provides a first look at whether lower disabled employment levels after the ADA might have resulted from increased participation in educational opportunities by individuals with disabilities as a rational response to the ADA's employment protections. The main empirical finding is that individuals with disabilities who were not employed in the years following legal innovation in the form of the ADA were more likely than their pre-ADA counterparts to give educational participation as their reason for not being employed. This preliminary evidence suggests the value of further study, with better education data, of the relationship between the ADA's enactment and disabled participation in educational opportunities.


Studies of the effects of employment protection frequently examine protective legislation as a whole. From a policy reform perspective, however, it is often critical to know which particular aspect of the legislation is responsible for its observed effects. The American with Disabilities Act (ADA), a 1990 federal law covering over 40 million Americans, is a clear case in point. Several empirical studies have suggested that the passage of the ADA reduced rather than increased employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. To the extent this is true, it is crucial to credibly disentangle the different features of this complex and multi-faceted law. Separately evaluating the distinct aspects of the ADA is important not only for determining how the law might best be reformed if some aspects of it produce negative employment effects, but also for improving our understanding of the potential consequences of ADA-like provisions in race and other civil rights laws. This paper exploits state-level variation in pre-ADA legal regimes governing disability discrimination to separately estimate the employment effects of each of the ADA’s two primary substantive provisions. We find strong evidence that the immediate post-enactment employment effects of the ADA are attributable to its requirement of “reasonable accommodations” for disabled employees rather than to its potential imposition of firing costs for such employees. Moreover, the pattern of the ADA’s effects across states suggests, contrary to widely-discussed prior findings based on national-level data, that declining disabled employment after the immediate post-ADA period may reflect other factors rather than the ADA itself.


This study examined use of preventive health care services for working-age adults with mobility limitations (uses mobility aids, has difficulty walking, difficulty standing for extended periods of time, or difficulty climbing steps) & for working-age adults reporting no mobility limitation, to identify similarities & disparities between the two populations. We analyzed data from the 1994 National Health Interview Survey Disability Supplement & NHIS Year 2000 file with cross-tabulation & logistic regression procedures to examine the relationship between mobility limitation & use of health screenings, immunizations, & health behavior counseling. Results were mixed, but disparities in preventive service use were identified.


This paper aims to identify and draw together key themes in the literature relating to the impact of disability on labor market outcomes. In doing so it provides an overview of issues in estimation in empirical work relating to disability.

We use matched employee-employer data from Britain to assess the influence of disability-specific workplace policies and practices on the earnings of disabled workers. The presence of equal opportunities policies increases the relative wages of disabled workers, but this is partially offset by the negative influence of workplace accommodations.


A growing number of employers have established initiatives to increase the participation of employees with disabilities within their companies as a component of their workforce planning and diversity strategies. These employers typically establish partnerships with local workforce and disability service organizations to source for talent. Coordinated by a single agency (or small number of agencies), employers are provided assistance and support services for recruitment, training, and job retention for employees with disabilities. This brief presents four profiles that highlight innovative practices among employers operating warehouse distribution centers. These strategies, however, can apply to other models and industry sectors. The case studies profiled show great promise for significantly expanding the number and quality of job opportunities for people with disabilities and add to the body of knowledge on this paradigm to support the continued expansion of employer partnerships.


Public policy initiatives have not succeeded in increasing employment levels among people with disabilities, reducing poverty rates, or decreasing reliance on public benefit programs. Low levels of participation in Ticket to Work and the Medicaid Buy-Ins may indicate that, by focusing on reducing work disincentives and increasing access to rehabilitation services, these programs are not addressing the most significant barriers to economic participation among people with disabilities. This study addresses barriers to employment using data from the 2007e08 California Survey of People with Disabilities, in which a representative sample of 1,000 working-age Californians identified in the Behavioral Risk Factor Survey as having disabilities were re-interviewed about their employment experiences and attitudes. Two-thirds of labor force nonparticipants with disabilities cited disability as the reason for not working, confirming findings from prior research. Most of those not working due to disability see themselves as unable to work, whether at their former job (92%) or at any job (75%), and two-thirds were told by a health care provider that they could not work. Only 19% cited benefit issues as a reason for not working. Few knew about technology to help them perform job tasks (27%) or knew people with similar disabilities who were working (28%). Asked why they believed they couldn’t work, nearly all cited limitations in job tasks (90%), but nearly all also mentioned a health problem: frequent illness (86%), fatigue (85%), or pain (75%). These findings suggest that national disability employment policy should focus on changing attitudes among people with disabilities (as well as their potential employers), improving the health of working-age adults with disabilities, increasing mentorship and awareness of available job accommodations, and broadening opportunities for nontraditional employment.


The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 was intended to facilitate employment, job retention, and workplace promotion of individuals with disabilities by protecting them from job discrimination. However, ongoing questions have been raised about the efficacy of the legislation. This study uses population data from the Disability Supplement to the 1994 and 1995 National Health Interview Surveys to assess rates of work discrimination among adults with disabilities ages 18 and older. The analysis suggests that nearly a 10th of all adults with disabilities who were in the workforce during the 5-year period immediately following passage of the ADA experienced some form of job discrimination. People who reported job discrimination were more likely to be younger and poorer and to have more severe disabilities than those who did not report any discrimination. About a third of the respondents who
experienced discrimination left the workforce permanently. The implications of these findings for rehabilitation practice are discussed.

Kessler Foundation/NOD (2010). Survey of employment of Americans with disabilities. New York: Author. The Kessler Foundation/National Organization on Disability 2010 Survey of Employment of Americans with Disabilities marks the third effort by Harris Interactive since 1986 to determine the current attitudes of corporate employers toward employees with disabilities. On the twentieth anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, this new research also serves to evaluate in a limited fashion, the impact of the ADA on U.S. business. Data released in July 2010 from an earlier study sponsored by The Kessler Foundation and The National Organization on Disability found that little progress has been made in closing the employment gap between people with and without disabilities since the passage of the ADA into law. The 2010 Survey of Employment of Americans with Disabilities provides additional insight into the employment environment for people with disabilities from the employer’s perspective and may help to answer some questions about why such a large gap still exists. Overall, the findings indicate that the environment for hiring people with disabilities needs a great deal of improvement. Although corporations recognize that hiring employees with disabilities is important and, for the most part, do not perceive the costs of hiring people with disabilities to be prohibitive, most are not hiring many people with disabilities and few are proactively making efforts to improve the employment environment for them.


Data on the employment status of persons with disabilities in federal government (average grade level, promotion rates, occupational categories, and earnings) indicate the numbers and percentage are gradually increasing; their average grade level is lower than that of nondisabled workers and they have lower promotion rates. More attention to policies and elimination of barriers were recommended.


This study examined existing employer sponsored higher education programs that serve people with disabilities in large work organizations in Monroe County, New York, and studied the experiences and perceptions of people with disabilities who use, have used, or have the opportunity to use these programs. Data for the study was obtained through content analysis of questionnaires sent to 34 work organizations, organizational literature from eight organizations, and an analysis of 25 personal interviews. It was found that (a) employer sponsored higher education programs are widely available in large work organizations in Monroe County, New York, although they vary in policy; (b) this population is productive and successful in the workplace, as evidenced through employer encouragement to use tuition assistance programs and suggested advancement in the organization; (c) this group may have to attain higher levels of education than people without disabilities in order to compete in the workplace; (d) people with disabilities have a desire to improve the quality of their lives; (e) few people with disabilities are employed in organizations which offer these programs; and (f) there are difficulties by people with disabilities in getting the aid needed in colleges to be successful in the pursuit of higher education. Implications included (a) this population needs education in order to achieve employment; (b) as government reduces funding for higher education, people with disabilities may seek tuition assistance through employers; (c) postsecondary institutions would need to accommodate people with disabilities who work, allowing for more flexible services; (d) the low number of students with disabilities who work implied a need for employer education; and (e) there are 49 million Americans who want to be employed and the attitudinal barriers of this nation may need to be adjusted.


Recent difficulties in obtaining quality child care by Clinton Administration nominees underscore the shortcomings in employee benefits available to the U.S. labor force. The author uses data from the 1991 National Organizations Survey to examine the extent to which employers provide various types of benefits. Factor analysis of 13 programs and services uncovers three underlying dimension (a) a personal benefits package consisting of medical, dental, life insurance, pensions, disability; and drug/alcohol...
abuse treatment; (b) a family benefits bundle if maternity leave, sick leave, elderly care, child care, and job training programs, and (c) participant benefits comprising cash bonuses and profit sharing. Poisson regression and multicategory logistic regression analyses examine hypotheses about the organizational capacity employee demand, and environmental factors associated with more comprehensive employee benefit programs implications of the results jar understanding organization's human resources practices and their social contracts with employees are discussed...

Kochel, L. (2002). Small business needs for information regarding the employment of people with disabilities. Research paper submitted to the Graduate School of the University of Wisconsin-Stout. Retrieved from http://www.uwstout.edu/lib/thesis/2002/2002kochell.pdf. This study investigated whether small business employers have a need for more information about hiring and employing people with disabilities. Seventy-three small business employers in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa participated in the study by responding to a questionnaire mailed to them in October. The results indicated that small business employers do have a need for more information. While the majority is willing to hire an individual with a disability, few have done so and few feel prepared to do so in the future. The implications of the findings for vocational rehabilitation agencies were discussed.

Kontosh, L. G., Fletcher, I., Frain, M., & Winland-Brown, J. (2007). Workplace issues surrounding healthcare professionals with disabilities in the current labor market. Work: Journal of Prevention, Assessment & Rehabilitation, 29(4), 295-302. Healthcare professionals, nurses with and without disabilities, administrators and personnel directors were surveyed to explore hiring practices and attitudes towards working with nurses with disabilities employed in clinical settings. Specifically the purpose of the study was to gather and analyze data regarding the perceptions of two groups towards nurses with disabilities: 1) employers and 2) other nurses (with and without a disability). The study defined a nurse with a disability as an RN who has an activity limitation, specifically an altered activity capability which limits mobility, ambulation, strength, coordination, or equilibrium. Findings suggest that nurses are more likely to be willing to work with an RN with a disability if they had worked with one in the past. However, overall acceptance of RNs with disabilities was not broad.


Experiences with disability legislation are different between Canada and the United States, but both countries have experiences to share regarding trends and best practices, as well as challenges addressing the accessibility of public facilities, housing, and transportation for persons with disabilities. Based on this distinction, a literature review was conducted focusing on the similarities and differences between Canadian and American disability legislation, primarily for trends and best practices that have resulted in positive outcomes for people with disabilities. Three times as much literature exists on U.S. experiences based on disabilities legislation over the past two decades. One major reason is that the United States has federal legislation specific to disabilities (dating back to 1990) and Canada has none. The impact of federal legislation is seen across each American state. Without federal legislation in Canada, the provinces are left to implement their own, often different, practices. This country comparison includes gaps in practices and considerations for improvements.


Despite the fact that the Civil Rights Act of 1964 protects individuals against employment discrimination on the basis of race and color as well as national origin, sex, or religion, racial discrimination in the workplace is still very much alive. In the 1990s the number of lawsuits against employers that involved racial discrimination has not been reduced compared to those in the 1980s. This issue in fact leads to unfriendly and hostile working environments at companies that still have a problem with racial discrimination. As a result, racial discrimination in the workplace causes a great deal of financial loss to many U.S. companies. Racial discrimination is still very obvious in the hiring and promotional practices of United States companies. Among all the kinds of discrimination in the workplace, such as sex, age, race, disabilities, etc., racial discrimination is one of the most serious problems in the US workplace.


In this monograph, the author focuses on the importance of, and the procedures for, determining the employment rights of individuals with chronic or age-related health problems. In spite of public policy supporting the integration of the handicapped into the mainstream of worklife, the author finds that the job status of workers with health problems is frequently at risk--particularly following medical leave or temporary hospitalization. Management decisions affecting continued employment, however, may be challenged under laws and collective bargaining agreements that protect the employment rights of handicapped or older workers. The ultimate decisions concerning continued employment may rest, then, with administrative tribunals, courts of law, or labor arbitrators. The author combines perspectives from a wide range of research with a study of 144 arbitration cases involving issues of health and job retention, and suggests specific guidelines for employers, union officials, health professionals, and others with an interest in the employment rights of the handicapped.


This study assessed potential barriers of the employment of individuals with disabilities. Participants reviewed the interview notes and résumé of a simulated applicant with a disability, along with the job description for a simulated position. Hiring ratings were assigned, followed by a series of measures assessing personality and attitudes toward people with disabilities. Results indicate that variance in both hiring ratings and attitudes differed as a function of individual differences in raters, suggesting that individual differences not only affect attitudes toward individuals with disabilities, but also impact subsequent hiring recommendations. Findings can be used by human resource professionals to eliminate attitudinal barriers in employment of applicants with disabilities, as well as stress the diversification of selection committees.


This article focuses upon the legal requirements for accommodating individuals with disabilities in the workplace and the perceptions of employers regarding barriers to accommodation. After a brief analysis of how federal courts have interpreted the ADA's accommodation requirements, the literature on accommodation is reviewed and a theoretical framework for examining employers' attitudes toward accommodation is proposed. The article then tests the framework using the results of a study of 500 New Jersey employers which elicited their experiences with and attitudes toward the accommodation of disabled workers. Suggestions for further research are provided.


Analysis of litigation outcomes indicates that most plaintiffs who sue under the Americans with Disabilities Act are unsuccessful. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission enforcement data and six years of federal appellate court decisions were reviewed, as well as recent rulings of the United States Supreme Court. The courts are interpreting the ADA very narrowly, and very few plaintiffs prevail. The results of this research suggest that if employers engage in an individualized assessment of whether an individual is
protected by the law and whether the requested accommodation is reasonable, legal liability will be minimized.


The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) in conjunction with the Cerebral Palsy Research Foundation (CPRF), the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA), and Wichita State University (WSU) jointly conducted a survey in October 2002 to gain an understanding of why low employment rates for individuals with disabilities persist. The primary focus of the survey was to determine how knowledgeable HR professionals are regarding various governmental incentives for hiring individuals with disabilities. In addition, the survey sought to find out how many companies actually take advantage of employer incentives and who in companies make decisions about using them.


The retirement of baby boomers along with a smaller cohort group of young people replacing them poses a challenge for employers in the future—where will they find the workers they need? One largely untapped source of human resources is people with disabilities (PWDs). Why have employers mostly ignored this large labor pool? This research used a semistructured interview approach with 38 executives across a broad array of industries and geographic regions to examine why employers don't hire PWDs and what they believe can be done to change this situation. Results show that most employers are not very proactive in hiring PWDs and that most employers hold stereotypical beliefs not supported by research evidence.


A survey of executives (n=341) responsible for hiring decisions found generally positive attitudes toward persons with severe disabilities and their employability, both in terms of advantages for the individual and lack of disadvantages for others in the work setting. Executives with previous contact with persons with disabilities had the most positive attitudes.


The results of a statewide study of the attitudes of employers doing business in New York State regarding the competitive employment of persons with severe handicaps are summarized. Those responsible for hiring decisions are favorable to the employability of persons with severe handicaps and see those persons as dependable, productive workers.


Describes the results of a survey assessing the attitudes of the CEOs of 341 Fortune 500 service and industrial corporations towards persons with severe disabilities. The Attitudes Toward the Employability of Persons With Severe Handicaps Scale was mailed to 1140 corporations. Three hundred and forty-one surveys were completed and returned. Results of the survey analysis indicated that the executives responsible for hiring had favorable employment attitudes towards persons with disabilities and those with severe disabilities. Industrial corporations had more favorable attitudes than service corporations. Subgroup differences in attitudes existed in both types of corporations between executives with prior experience with disabled persons and those with no prior experience with workers with disabilities. Those
executives with prior experience with the disabled person had a much more favorable attitude towards the severely disabled worker.


This study investigates the nature, scope, and dynamics of employment discrimination among Americans with asthma using data from the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. When compared to a general disability group, higher proportions of employment discrimination allegations filed by persons with asthma involved females, African Americans, Native Americans, and people between 22 and 29 years of age. Allegations of employment discrimination were also greater for people with asthma for issues involving discipline, harassment, reasonable accommodation, and suspension. Allegations involving asthma were more likely to occur among large Respondents (employers) with industry designations of finance/insurance/real estate, service, or public administration. Charging parties within the asthma group had proportionately fewer cases closed With Merit. Implications of these findings are offered related to training, research, policy, and advocacy.


While persons with disabilities comprise approximately 17% of American and Canadian populations, they comprise a mere 3% of the workforce. This study examined the attitudes of 231 Canadian management undergraduates toward employing persons with disabilities. Participants were assigned to MacLean and Cannon's (1995) fourfold table of low-high combinations of the sympathy and discomfort scales derived from the Interaction With Disabled Persons scale (IDP; Gething, 1991). Results showed that the fourfold classification of attitudes was useful in identifying differences in attitudes, as measured by the 13-item Attitudes Toward Employing Persons With Disabilities instrument (ATEPD; Lao, 2002). Scores on the IDP and ATEPD were independent of social desirability scores. Recommendations are presented for organizations and educators to promote positive attitudes toward employees with disabilities.


Objective: Building on D. Stone and A. Colella’s (1996) model, this article examines how job applicants with or without a physical disability are evaluated in relation to the nature of the job. Design: Data from 284 management undergraduates were collected through 2 experimental studies based on the same paradigm: Participants had to evaluate individuals with or without a disability applying for jobs that did or did not involve a great deal of interpersonal contact (Study 1) and for jobs typically reserved for men or for women (Study 2). Results: Job applicants with disability were rated more negatively than applicants without disability in poor-fit conditions (job involving a great deal of interpersonal contact, or male job). This devaluation was particularly marked in issues reflecting competence. By way of contrast, individuals with disabilities received higher ratings on personal qualities. Conclusions: To promote the employment of persons with disabilities, it is important not only to improve the level of qualification of people with disabilities but also to attempt to change the nature of perception of these individuals.


Article examines effective workplace supports and accommodations and relates them to employer perspectives on hiring youth with disabilities. Employment supports, including assistive technology, are also examined in relation to the typical internal company human resource management practices. A review of literature and case studies illustrate that employer attitudes toward disability are less influence on the decision to hire young adults than other factors, such as the identification of workplace supports, accommodations, and interventions that contribute to the improvement of operational and organizational processes.

This information brief discusses the benefits of work-based learning experiences for students with disabilities and the need to facilitate work experiences. It begins by examining employer perceptions of hiring and accommodating individuals with disabilities and stresses the need for refocused employment advocacy that is conducted less as a promotion of disability in the workplace, but more in the context of how the employers' enterprises will be affected positively by particular workers and by those professionals who prepare and assist these individuals for the workplace. Competencies that benefit both youth with disabilities and potential employers are identified and include: (1) identify return on investment for companies who participate in work experience programs and hire youth; (2) identify employer needs and market student skills that complement these needs; (3) help manage any changes that might occur as a result of the implementation of workplace supports and accommodations; (4) identify workplace supports, interventions, and accommodations that also contribute to improvement of companies overall operational and organizational processes; (5) interact comfortably and productively with employers and speak their language; and (6) make employer participation convenient through well-identified and easy contact and follow-up procedures.


Reports a study of employers’ attitudes toward employment of the disabled. A semistructured interview was used to gather information from 31 persons responsible for hiring in 31 firms. The topics were employers' approaches to the employment of the disabled and experience with them. Policies towards employing the disabled fell into 5 categories, the most prevalent being to consider each case on its own merits. The most successful disabled employees were better performers than their average able-bodied counterparts. Employers apparently looked for positive attributes in the disabled rather than for the absence of negative attributes. Motor disability of the legs was the disability most firms found hardest to accommodate.


Examined applicants' with disabilities and interviewers' without disabilities perceptions of the interview process in a correlational field study. In all, 36 interviewers provided ratings of 70 applicants. Separately, the applicants responded to questions about the interviewer and the interview. Results supported hypotheses contending that the interview is a mutual influence process. Interviewers' preinterview impressions were positively correlated with their postinterview evaluations. However, time spent actively recruiting the applicant was negatively correlated with the applicants' ratings of interviewers. Finally, applicant disclosure of some types of disability-related information was positively related with interviewers' ratings of applicants' interview performances. These findings suggest that applicants may want to discuss job-related aspects of their disability in the interview.


Article reviews the literature on the provision of accommodations from the perspectives of the individual employee, the workplace, and the organization. Based on the findings, the authors suggest 10 specific strategies that rehabilitation professionals can use to address the barriers to the accommodation process. These "best practices" derived from the research literature can increase the probability that employees with disabilities will request and receive reasonable accommodations that enhance work performance and contribute to job retention.


In March 1992, a random sample of 5,600 human resource professionals was selected from the membership of the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) and surveyed regarding family
issues in the workplace. Respondents were asked to provide information on the size and other characteristics of their organization and workplace practices, and were surveyed about issues concerning child care and care of elder and disabled family members. The study replicated a 1988 survey to identify important trends in family-related workplace issues over the past 4 years. Study findings, based on an 18% response rate (n=1,004), included the following: (1) 29% of the organizations represented were providing child care services, up from 10% in 1988; (2) while 45% of companies with more than 5,000 employees provided child care, only 11% of those with fewer than 100 employees did so; (3) 13% of the companies were currently providing elder care, 17% were currently exploring the need for elder care, and 64% were not involved; (4) 14% were currently providing care for disabled family members, 13% were exploring the possibility, and 68% were not involved; (5) child care was the most commonly cited cause of workplace problems, resulting in absenteeism, tardiness, scheduling problems, and reluctance to travel; and (6) the most common obstacles to implementing child, elder, and disabled care were expense, liability, complexity, and lack of employer interest. (AC)


A number of research studies have analyzed the causes, conditions and consequences of discrimination. Most of these have focused on either gender or racial discrimination. Studies of discrimination on other grounds, including disability, have been relatively less common. This study attempts to theoretically and empirically explore the nature of discrimination against disabled job applicants from the rational economic, as well as institutional theory, perspectives. The rational economic perspective emphasizes individual self-interest, conscious decision-making, and economic optimization. Institutional theory focuses on organizational actions taken to gain legitimacy rather than for monetary or utility optimization. Legitimacy is important to secure stakeholders' trust and recognition, and translates into favorable outcomes, such as resource support, customer loyalty, and ease in attracting qualified personnel. We test these two theories, using data drawn from 227 New Zealand organizations, which collectively employ approximately 10 per cent of that country's workforce. The evidence suggests that both theories to some extent predict discrimination based on disability. Employer behaviour reflects both rational concerns for cost minimization and institutional concerns for perceived legitimacy in the eyes of key stakeholders. The strength of each concern appears to vary with each employer's circumstances.


This report describes the experiences of successfully employed workers with visual impairments as they made the transition from college to work. It is based on interviews with 45 employees and 27 of their employers. The first chapter provides a literature review covering the importance of college, employer concerns, concerns of job applicants, the employment interview, and disclosing the visual impairment. The methodology of the study is then described. Direct quotations from the interviews are interspersed throughout the report. Employee interviews revealed that employees took an average of 7 months to obtain their job. Employees identified problems in the areas of transportation, money, accessing written materials, discrimination because of the visual impairment, accessing computers, managing time, and being lonely. Interviews with employers revealed that employers wanted to be informed about the visual impairment before or during the interview by the employee; the most frequent accommodations provided were travel instruction, computer access devices, alternative print media, flex-time scheduling, and removal of architectural barriers; and most employers were aware of the legal protections available to applicants and employees with disabilities. A checklist for employment was developed from the literature review and interviews. Appendices include letters and questionnaires used in the study.

McCharen, N., Deegan, M. J., Brooks, N. A., & Earp, J. A. L. (1985). Toward a model of factors influencing the hiring of women with a history of breast cancer, 117. Whether surgical treatment for cancer which results in the removal of an external part of the body is perceived by employers as a medical disability that interferes with the performance of job-related functions, or fits a more stereotypic conception of a physical impairment that might even prevent the hiring of a potential employee, has not been adequately researched, the authors contend. To discern
factors which affect employers’ decisions to hire women who have had breast cancer, a model of factors influencing the decision to hire was formulated. A random sample of personnel directors from an industrialized North Carolina county was surveyed. A majority had personal experience with breast cancer patients and had had employees with mastectomies leave work. Five factors are found to account for 69% of the variance in hiring practices: size of company, level of sick leave benefits, company participation in employees’ medical insurance, employers’ education, and personal experience with breast cancer. Knowledge level about the disease is found not to be a predictor of the hiring decision.

McCharen, N., & Earp, J. A. L. (1981). Toward a model of factors influencing the hiring of women with a history of breast cancer. Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare, 8(2), 346-363. Whether surgical treatment for cancer which results in the removal of an external part of the body is viewed by employers as a medical disability that interferes with the performance of job-related functions, or fits a more stereotypic definition of a physical handicap that might even prevent an employee from being hired, has not been adequately studied. To identify factors which influence employers’ decisions to hire women who have had breast cancer, a model of factors influencing the decision to hire was developed. A random sample of personnel directors from an industrialized North Carolina county was surveyed. A majority had personal experience with breast cancer patients and had mastectomy employees leave work. Five factors were found to explain 69% of the variance in hiring practices: size of company, level of sick leave benefits, company involvement in employees’ medical insurance, employers’ education and personal experience with breast cancer. Knowledge level about the disease did not predict the hiring decision. Regardless of whether medical personnel made the final decision, the influence of non-medical factors was found to be quite strong in determining whether a former breast cancer patient was actually hired.

McFarlin, D. B., Song, J., & Sonntag, M. (1991). Integrating the disabled into the work force: A survey of Fortune 500 company attitudes and practices. Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal, 4(2), 107-123. Surveyed 189 high-ranking personnel executives of Fortune 500 companies concerning employers’ perceptions of disabled workers’ performance and cost effectiveness and specific hiring and accommodation practices. While subjects expressed negative attitudes regarding accommodation costs and rates of advancement, most indicated that the disabled generally did as well as nondisabled counterparts on such dimensions as performance, absenteeism, and turnover. Most said that their companies were willing to alter the workplace as needed to accommodate disabled employees and that positions should be developed to be filled by the disabled. Subjects from companies with below-average levels of exposure to the disabled were significantly less positive in their attitudes regarding first impressions, rate of advancement, and absenteeism rates than those from companies with above-average exposure.

McLean, J. (2003). Employees with long term illnesses or disabilities in the UK Social Services Workforce. Disability & Society, 18(1), 51-70. Between 6% and 16% of the working age population have a long term illness or disability. ‘Disability’ is not consistently defined, however, and neither the distribution of disabled employees nor the nature of their disabilities is well documented. This paper presents the findings of a study of statutory social services employees in the UK and for the first time provides an estimate of the proportion of workers with long term illnesses or disabilities. Over a fifth had a self-reported long term illness or disability, 8% a condition which affected daily life. The distribution and nature of these, and the effects of gender, age, occupational categories, and work experience such as job satisfaction, stress and sick leave, are examined. Changes in legislation and the profile of the working age population are likely to increase the number of people with disabilities in work. The paper concludes that at a time of difficulties with recruitment and retention, social services and other social care employers must develop a range of responses to support and retain the diversity of people with disabilities in work.

Proactive disability management practices among employers have been associated with reduced frequency and duration of disability. Supervisors have a critical role in disability prevention. However, few studies have evaluated training efforts to modify supervisor responses in order to improve disability outcomes. In this study: 108 supervisors representing seven employers were provided a 1.5-h training session to reinforce a proactive and supportive response to work-related musculoskeletal symptoms and injuries among employees. Pre- and post-training results showed improvements in supervisor confidence to investigate and modify job factors contributing to injury to get medical advice, and to answer employees’ questions related to injury and treatment (p < .05). Interviews supervisors reported decreases (38.5%) than increases (9.6%) in lost work time within their departments. These data provide evidence that this approach may, improve disability outcomes of work-related musculoskeletal disorders. Controlled trials with disability outcome data are needed to confirm these results.


To determine factors that influence hiring, 120 employers and potential employers of workers with disabilities in Ohio, USA, were interviewed by psychologists to identify the characteristics of individuals with disabilities that influence hiring decisions. Significant differences exist between those employers with and those without experiences in hiring workers with disabilities in their respective assessments of workers’ dependability, performance levels, and fellow workers’ likely reactions. Employers with and those without experience in hiring workers with disabilities expressed a strong desire for additional information regarding incentives for hiring and information that might ease their task in employing persons with disabilities. Implications for workforce readiness and transition into independent adulthood supported by employment are discussed.


Hiring discrimination in the workplace is defined as failure or refusal by an employer to engage a qualified applicant as an employee due to the existence or consequence of disability. The specific intent of this study is to determine what differentiates an allegation (perception of discrimination) from an actual discriminatory event (Merit Resolution). Researchers used a data-mining approach, the Chi-square Automatic Interaction Detector (CHAID), to examine 19,527 resolved allegations of hiring discrimination in order to differentiate between Merit Resolution and Non-Merit Resolution outcomes. CHAID analysis confirmed that hiring discrimination is a complex matter with a variety of influences. Primary among these is the age of the Charging Party, with younger applicants (16-34) prevailing in their allegations 34% of the time. Within this subgroup, the sequence of predictor variables involves the Charging Party's impairment, followed by the Employer's industry classification. Behavioral disabilities, even among the young, result in generally lower Merit Resolution rates in hiring discrimination. Providers of training and technical assistance regarding hiring and disability may be able to adjust their services accordingly on the basis of findings such as these.


Presents case studies that describe the best practices of 20 companies that have been successful in the employment of people with disabilities. The first 12 companies represent corporate success stories related to recruitment and hiring of people with disabilities. The remaining 8 stories relate models of success for when an employee becomes disabled and is returning to work. Each case study shares information on the people who were key in the development or implementation of the corporate best practice.

This monograph compiles findings from the National Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) American with Disabilities Act (ADA) research project, the most ambitious effort to date to identify and understand the employment discrimination experiences of Americans with disabilities. With access to the universe of Title I allegations collected by the EEOC since the ADA took initial effect in 1992, this project has produced compelling insights into the characteristics of charging parties (i.e., people with disabilities) and respondents (i.e., employers), the types of discrimination alleged to occur, and the outcomes of the ADA Title I investigatory process. By comparing the employment discrimination experiences of subpopulations of people with disabilities, the project has identified patterns of discrimination that are differentiated most strikingly by disability type. Chapters describe, compare, and contrast the employment discrimination experiences of people with HIV/AIDS, mental retardation, diabetes, multiple sclerosis, deafness and hearing impairments, speech impairments, traumatic brain injuries, spinal cord injuries, missing limbs, and disfigurement. Together, these investigations provide critical, population-level data that can be used to inform direct service, advocacy, employer education, and professional training efforts.


This article describes findings from a causal comparative study of the Merit Resolution rate for allegations of Hiring discrimination that were filed with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) under Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) between 1992 and 2005. An allegation is the Charging Party's perception of discrimination, but a Merit Resolution is one in which the EEOC has determined that a discriminatory event did indeed occur. A Non-Merit Resolution is an allegation that is closed due to a technicality or lacks sufficient evidence to conclude that discrimination occurred. Merit favors the Charging Party; Non-Merit favors the Employer. Methods: The Merit Resolution rate of 19,527 closed Hiring allegations is compared and contrasted to that of 259,680 allegations aggregated from six other prevalent forms of discrimination including Discharge and Constructive Discharge, Reasonable Accommodation, Disability Harassment and Intimidation, and Terms and Conditions of Employment. Tests of Proportion distributed as chi-square are used to form comparisons along a variety of subcategories of Merit and Non-Merit outcomes. The overall Merit Resolution rate for Hiring is 26% compared to Non-Hiring at 20.6%. Employers are less likely to settle claims of hiring discrimination without mediation, and less likely to accept the remedies recommended by the EEOC when hiring discrimination has been determined. Conclusion: Hiring is not an unusual discrimination issue in that the overwhelming majority of allegations are still closed in favor of the Employer. However, it is counterintuitive that Hiring has a higher merit resolution rate than other prevalent issues. This finding contradicts the assumption that hiring is an "invisible process." Considering that the EEOC makes merit determinations at a competitive rate, it is clear that hiring is sufficiently transparent.


This article describes findings from a causal comparative study of the characteristics of employers against whom allegations of hiring discrimination were filed with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) under Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) between 1992 and 2005. Methods: Employer characteristics derived from 19,527 closed Hiring allegations are compared and contrasted to 259,680 closed allegations aggregated from six other prevalent forms of discrimination including Discharge and Constructive Discharge, Reasonable Accommodation, Disability Harassment and Intimidation, and Terms and Conditions of Employment. Tests of Proportion distributed as chi-square are used to form comparisons along a variety of factors including industry classification, size of workforce, and location. Results: As compared to non-hiring allegations, hiring allegations were more likely to be filed against employers with 15-100 employees, in the West U.S. Census track region, or in industries including educational services; public administration; transportation and warehousing; professional, scientific, and technical services; agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting; and construction. Conclusion: More outreach regarding ADA responsibilities appears indicated for those employers who share the aforementioned characteristics.

Using the Integrated Mission System of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the employment discrimination experience of Americans with diabetes is documented. Researchers compare and contrast the key dimensions of workplace discrimination involving Americans with diabetes and persons with other physical, sensory, and neurological impairments. Specifically, the researchers examine demographic characteristics of the charging parties; the industry designation, location, and size of employers against whom complaints are filed; the nature of discrimination (i.e., type of adverse action) alleged to occur; and the legal outcome or resolution of these complaints. Findings indicate that persons with diabetes were more likely to encounter discrimination involving discharge, constructive discharge, discipline and suspension - all job retention issues. Persons with diabetes were less likely to encounter discrimination involving hiring, reasonable accommodation, non-pension benefits, and layoff. They were also more likely to encounter discrimination when they were older or from specific ethnic backgrounds, or when they worked for small employers or in the Southern United States. Implications for policy and advocacy are addressed.


Study identified factors influencing workplace discrimination against people with disabilities using data from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Only the outcomes of allegations of employment discrimination brought under Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) were examined. These findings were then compared to available literature on attribution theory, which concerns itself with public perceptions of the controllability and stability of various impairments. Group A included impairments deemed to be uncontrollable but stable: visual impairments, cardiovascular disease, cancer, and spinal cord injuries. Group B included controllable but unstable impairments: depression, schizophrenia, alcohol and other drug abuse, and HIV/AIDS. The EEOC had resolved all allegations in terms of merit resolutions (a positive finding of discrimination) and resolutions without merit. The majority of the allegations centered mainly on hiring, discharge, harassment, and reasonable accommodation issues. Perceived workplace discrimination (as measured by allegation filed with the EEOC) occurred at higher levels in group B, especially when serious issues involving discharge and disability harassment were involved. With the exception of HIV/AIDS, however, actual discrimination (as measured by EEOC merit resolutions) occurred at higher levels for group A.


Article documents the employment discrimination experiences of Americans with traumatic brain injury (TBI) using data from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). It presents an analysis of the allegations of employment discrimination brought under Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) filed by people with TBI compared to individuals with other physical, sensory, and neurological impairments. Researchers examined demographic characteristics of the charging parties; the industry designation, location, and size of employers against whom complaints are filed; the nature of the discrimination alleged to occur; and the outcome or resolution of the complaints. Findings indicate that people with TBI were more likely to encounter discrimination after obtaining employment as opposed to during the hiring process. They were also more likely to encounter discrimination when they were younger or Caucasian or when employed in the Midwestern or Western United States.


Fourteen employers and co-workers who worked with individuals who used augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) completed a survey describing their employment experiences. A qualitative analysis identified four major themes in the responses: (a) benefits of employing individuals who use AAC, (b) challenges to the employment situation, (c) supports to the employment situation, and (d)
recommendations for improving employment outcomes for individuals who use AAC. Respondents identified the following as key factors that had a significant impact on employment outcomes for individuals who use AAC: (a) identification and development of good job matches, (b) educational and vocational preparation, (c) reliability of AAC technology, (d) attitudes of co-workers, (e) accessibility of the workplace, and (f) availability of transportation and personal care services.


Data from various national surveys find that approximately half the population with mental disorders is gainfully employed across the entire range of occupations; such persons have an employment rate of about two-thirds that of the general population. More than a third of persons with serious mental illness also work, and many hold high-status positions. Among those with schizophrenia, a diagnosis associated with high impairment, only slightly more than a fifth are at work, and 12 percent are working full time. Approximately two-thirds are enrolled in federal disability insurance programs. Our analyses indicate considerable diversity of jobs among persons with various mental disorders. Most persons with mental illness want to work, and some with even the most serious mental disorders hold jobs requiring high levels of functioning. Educational attainment is the strongest predictor of employment in high-ranking occupations among both the general population and persons with mental disorders.


The theory of representation bureaucracy concerns whether bureaucracy mirrors the origins and values of the population and, if so, whether such representation makes any difference. This article extends Hindera’s examination of active bureaucratic representation within the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to determine the effect of introducing new goals (disability discrimination) and priorities (sexual harassment) on the EEOC’s representational patterns. Using data from the late 1980s and late 1990s, we find the extent of active representation of African Americans declined. Although the EEOC is now pursuing more cases of sex discrimination, no evidence of active representation exists for women in EEOC district offices.


While the ADA clearly classifies HIV infection as a protected handicap, asymptomatic HIV carriers as well as those diagnosed with ARC and full-blown AIDS may find more protection than they have in the past from employment discrimination.


This experimental study examines the effects of bias toward persons with disabilities (PWDs) upon the employment interview decision process. The design and operationalization of the study permitted examination of the effects of specific disabilities, interview performance, and the resulting interaction between disability and interview performance, using 630 undergraduate students at a major university in the southwestern United States as subjects. The results indicate that (1) interview performance has a favorable, significant main effect upon subsequent HRM decisions, (2) specific disabilities, that is, child care demands, HIV-positive status, and being wheelchair-bound, have unfavorable, significant main effects upon subsequent HRM decisions, and (3) the presence of any of the disabilities decreased the favorable impact of superior interview performance. The limitations of the structured interview to mitigate bias were demonstrated. Given the pervasive, unfavorable treatment directed toward PWDs, it appears that the enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (1993) is warranted. The public policy implications of these results and recommendations for future research were discussed.


Conducted a survey of 326 employers from 6 states concerning their attitudes toward hiring the handicapped in general and those who are learning disabled (LD) in particular. The employers expressed positive attitudes toward making special allowances for handicapped workers as long as such allowances...
did not involve reduced workloads or involvement in the worker's personal life. Less positive attitudes were expressed toward hiring those who are LD. Only half the employers stated that they would hire workers with learning disabilities (LDs). These negative attitudes did not seem to be related to lack of knowledge about LDs, but rather to prejudice against workers with LDs or lack of experience in supervising such workers. It is suggested that 1 factor may be the more positive attitudes of employers toward hiring the physically handicapped than the cognitively handicapped.

Misra, S., Orslene, L. E., & Walls, R. T. (2010). Personal Assistance Services (PAS) for workers with disabilities: Views of employers. Journal of Rehabilitation, 76(1), 22-27. Personal Assistance Services (PAS) are defined as person-to-person services to assist individuals with disabilities with tasks they would perform if they did not have a disability. The purpose of this study was to understand difficult and complex issues surrounding work-related PAS. Focus groups were conducted to gather views and experiences of employers on issues involved with the provision and use of PAS in the workplace. These included: (a) definitional and legislative requirements on the use of workplace PAS, (b) responsibility and availability of fiscal resources for provision of PAS, (c) recruitment and management of personal assistants, and (d) other major barriers to the provision of workplace PAS. Some of the actions suggested by the employers were: Establishing a clear definition of workplace PAS, developing guidelines and procedures for the provision of PAS, and establishing a referral service for the recruitment of personal assistants.

Mitchell, P. R., McMahon, B. T., & McKee, D. (2005). Speech impairment and workplace discrimination: The national EEOC ADA research project. Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, 23(3), 163-169. Study documents the employment discrimination experiences of Americans with speech impairment using data from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Allegations of employment discrimination brought under Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by people with speech impairments were compared to allegations filed by individuals with orthopedic and visual impairments. Researchers examined demographic characteristics of the charging parties, characteristics of respondents, the nature of the allegations, and the outcomes of the allegations. Analyses revealed that individuals with speech impairments filed more allegations based on discrimination in hiring, harassment, discharge and promotion and significantly fewer allegations related to reasonable accommodation than the comparison group. The proportion of cases judged to have merit was similar across the 2 groups, but there were within-group differences in the pattern of merit resolutions.

Mithaug, D. E. (1979). Negative employer attitudes toward hiring the handicapped: Fact or fiction? Journal of Contemporary Business, 8(4), 19. A survey of some of the largest industrial firms in the country was conducted to obtain a fresh perspective on: 1. what proportion of the employees of these businesses is handicapped, 2. what types of handicapped persons are most likely to be hired, and 3. what factors affect a company's decision to hire a handicapped person. Letters and a questionnaire were sent to the Fortune 500 companies.A total of 43 firms responded to the survey by completing and returning the questionnaire. Two of the companies indicated that 21-30% of their employees were handicapped. Nearly half of the respondents did not know how many employees were handicapped or gave no response to that question. Twelve companies indicated that 1-4% of their employees had handicaps. Respondents noted that persons who were physically impaired were most likely to be hired. The factors that affect an employer's decision to hire the handicapped include ability to perform the job, productivity, compliance with affirmative action, and absenteeism. Questionnaire.

Mithran, S. (2007). Workforce barriers still exist. Community Care (1675), 7-7. The article reports on the barriers in hiring people with learning disabilities based on a survey conducted by the periodicals "Community Care" and "Personnel Today" in Great Britain. It found that 59% of employers hire people with learning disabilities. Employment barriers cited include lack of target for such workers in recruitment, the need to accommodate such workers and the lack of interest from managers.

The topic of mental illness and work has been examined in terms of consumer needs and issues; however, there is limited research from the employers' perspective. The purpose of this study is to examine the experiences of employers who have supervised individuals with mental illness. This qualitative, grounded theory study consists of semistructured interviews with 5 employers (4 female, 1 male). Results and conclusions shed light on the needs of employers so that they may better facilitate the return to work or the maintenance of work of individuals with mental illness.


This study aims to examine the effect of top management vision on top management support, practice, and the employment of managers with disabilities within the sport industry. The results indicated a significant path between supportive practices and the representation of managers with disabilities ($B^2=0.15$, $p<0.05$). Top management vision was also shown as a significant positive moderator of the relationship between top management support and supportive practices. Results suggest that top management vision is an important addition to top management support for facilitating the implementation of supportive practices, which, in turn, increase the representation of persons with disabilities in managerial positions.


Investigates the attitudes toward the employment provisions of the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990, held by rehabilitation service providers, private sector representatives, and people with disabilities. Description of the instrument developed to study the groups


This study reports findings from field research on the perceptions of small business owners and managers of the impact of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) on their firms. Binary Logistic Regression analyses indicate that the majority of owners have positive attitudes toward the act and exhibit high levels of compliance. Firm support for the ADA and participation in carrying out its requirements is driven by both positive and negative factors and extends well beyond the group of businesses that under the law are required to comply with Titles I and III of the legislation. The results suggest strongly positive impacts of the ADA in the areas of accommodating customers with disabilities and disabled employees who are already on the job. Specific factors influencing compliance decisions and accommodations spending are incorporated in a proposed model of firm behavior.


In this study, employers with and without experience in hiring individuals with developmental disabilities were surveyed regarding their perceptions. Respondents were surveyed and their responses were divided based on location (small or large city), type and size of business, average length of employment, and educational qualifications. Most respondents with experience indicated the employment usually or sometimes worked well and they were likely to hire again. Many inexperienced respondents were also receptive to hiring. Experienced respondents identified advantages to employing individuals with disabilities at higher rates than inexperienced respondents. The most frequently identified advantages were consistent attendance, workforce diversity, long-term employment, and co-worker partnerships. Experienced respondents also identified more concerns than inexperienced respondents. The most frequently identified concern was safety. Implications of the research are examined.


A report of findings from a study undertaken to assess disability management and rehabilitation programs, costs and outcomes of three major Michigan employers. This is the final report of a three-year, field-initiated study. The report analyzes the influence of 4 factors on disability management and rehabilitation: public policy, health care costs and labor economic factors; employer organizational factors; specific policies, programs and practices; and employee characteristics. Among the many implications and recommendations resulting from this analysis are: opportunities exist for rehabilitation counselors in the private and public sectors to provide counseling services at the worksite; such services could include vocational counseling for employee substance abusers, assessment of the functional capacity of injured workers; development of return to work programs, and the development of training programs; further research should focus on the linkage between a business organization and its employees in relation to health and disability incidence, costs and outcomes; though the incidence of autonomous employer-based rehabilitation programs is small, what programs exist have the potential to impact many disabled workers; and further research should examine the goals of such programs. The authors conclude by saying that employer participation in the prevention and rehabilitation of workplace disability is a positive development.

National Organization on Disability (2012). *Executive Summary: Return to Careers. A national qualitative inquiry into the career experiences, interests, and support needs of veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan with traumatic brain injuries and/or post-traumatic stress disorder*. New York,

Return to Careers is an effort to better understand the process of recovery and re-entry into civilian life faced by veterans with disabilities returning from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. NOD turns to veterans themselves (and those that work with them) to learn about their career interests and support needs, in an effort to help ensure that veterans with disabilities find success in the career marketplace. To address these issues, the Return to Careers project will seek data from veterans with TBI and/or PTSD; the families of veterans with TBI and/or PTSD; professionals in the field of veterans' support and workforce development; and businesses.


Using multiple correspondence analysis, data from the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (1992-2003) were examined for types and patterns of allegations of discrimination filed by adults with multiple sclerosis (MS) under Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Women comprised the majority of the Charging Parties (n = 687, 67%), and most of the Charging Parties were White (n = 769, 76%). The total number of allegations studied (N = 3,668) was divided into two datasets, specifically 1,142 occurring separately and 2,526 occurring as part of a multiple allegation set. The four most frequent allegations were related to discharge, reasonable accommodation, terms and conditions of employment, and harassment. Results supported the need for rehabilitation counseling interventions to help adults with MS identify and address precipitants to discharge (involuntary termination) or constructive discharge (voluntary termination in response to an untenable work situation).


Being fired can be perceived as a form of unfair treatment and as a personal and social defeat. It can generate feelings of anger, outrage and resentment that can elicit a desire for retribution. This qualitative study focuses on a case of failed integration of a person with a mental illness at the workplace. Texts were analysed from a rhetorical perspective, considering how the company leaders and the employee reconstructed and gave meaning to the events that lead to the firing, trying to justify them. Policies dealing with workplace diversity and the hiring of people with disabilities, power relations, fit between organizational goals and ideal models of behaviour in the company on one hand, and personal needs of the employee on the other, seem to be determinant in influencing the perception the parties have of interactional and procedural justice.


This article describes the significance of qualitative methodologies in capturing the complexities of the disability experience. The authors discuss some of the principles of qualitative research and show how those principles lend themselves to the new disability paradigm that has emerged in the last 20 years.


Disabled workers are a heterogeneous group encountering varying levels of labor-market discrimination. Whether the evidence is anecdotal or empirical, there are many sources showing discrimination. Previous studies have used different social-distance measures for different types of disabilities to conclude that garden-variety prejudice is why most discrimination has occurred against persons with disabilities. My dissertation departs from the "discrimination and disability" literature by focusing on how discrimination occurs. When hiring new workers, firms have a great deal of discretionary power in making decisions on both hiring and setting wages. If a firm practices wage discrimination, then the wage gap between old and new workers will be dramatic. Wage discrimination is likely to start during employment transitions. Using the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), my findings reveal discrimination during employment transitions. Workers with disabilities that evoke strong prejudicial responses encounter large wage penalties when they change employers. Workers with disabilities that elicit little or no prejudice face smaller penalties when changing employers. Prejudicial responses to disabilities also affect wages for workers who return to the workforce after a spell of unemployment. In such cases, compared to other workers, those with disabilities that elicit strong prejudice have smaller wage penalties. This may be due to employees searching for a non-discriminating employer or effectively hiding the impairment. Workers with disabilities that cause little or no prejudice encounter wage penalties that are small compared to non-disabled workers. This may be due to the stigma of unemployment being somewhat greater than the stigma of common disabilities. These conclusions are consistent with "job-lock" theories. My results suggest that disabled workers should stay at current jobs, if possible. Because of the high probability of discrimination during the re-employment process, workers are best off trying to reconcile differences with their current employer. Only if that fails should a disabled worker seriously consider looking for a new employer.


This article compares the methods of a randomized multisite clinical trial of evidence-based supported employment with conventional vocational rehabilitation among veterans with spinal cord injury (SCI). The primary hypothesis is that, compared with conventional vocational rehabilitation (i.e., standard care), evidence-based supported employment will significantly improve competitive employment outcomes and general rehabilitation outcomes. The secondary hypothesis is that evidence-based supported employment in SCI will be more cost-effective than standard care. The current article describes the clinical trial and presents baseline data. The present sample includes 301 veterans with SCI, which includes paraplegia (50%), high tetraplegia (32%), and low tetraplegia (18%). Baseline data indicate that 65% of this sample of employment-seeking veterans with SCI had never been employed postinjury, despite the fact that nearly half (41%) had received some type of prior vocational rehabilitation. These rates of unemployment for veterans with SCI are consistent with the rates reported for community samples of persons with SCI. Forthcoming outcome data will provide much needed insights into the best practices for helping these veterans restore vocational goals and improve overall quality of life.


Scope and method of study. The purpose of this study was to identify attitudes of foodservice employers toward persons with disabilities and to assess the effects of these attitudes on management decisions in hypothetical situations. An Employer Attitude Assessment Instrument was sent to 1,000 members of the National Restaurant Association. Data from 183 usable responses were analyzed using t-test, ANOVA, and Chi-square tests. Findings and conclusions. The majority of the respondents were male (75%), and white (93%) ranging in ages from 35 to 54 (60%). Seventy two percent of the respondents had more than
2 years of college education experiences. Over 70% of the respondents run their own business. Eighty seven percent of the respondents have hired the disabled, with the most preferred disability type being mental retardation. The predominant type of business was family restaurant. Most of the businesses were for profit operations. One-third of the operations employed from 11 to 30 workers and half of the operations employed 1 to 5 disabled workers. Employers did not allow the existence of a disability to effect a decision between a disabled and a nondisabled individual in all three case incidents. Employers showed a somewhat favorable perception of disabled workers and indicated more favorable attitudes toward the mentally retarded than other type of disability. Employers who have family members or friends with disabilities have more positive perceptions of physically disabled workers than other employers who don't have family members or friends with disabilities. The number of disabled employees significantly effected employers' perceptions of hiring the disabled in all cases except hearing impaired. Employers showed more positive attitudes toward the mentally retarded than physically disabled, hearing impaired, and visually impaired employees.


This paper discusses ADA workplace accommodations, particularly those for individuals with mental impairments, from the perspective of employers. Respondents from 14 companies were asked to describe the firm's accommodation process in response to hypothetical scenarios involving possible physical and mental disability issues in the workplace. Their responses were driven more by company culture, nature of the job and work environment, and the employee's work history than by a desire to comply with legal mandates. Moreover, accommodations were frequently granted without regard to whether individuals met the legal definition of 'disabled' under the recently amended ADA. In other words, most firms were at or 'ahead' of what the law required, without being motivated by the law itself or fears of litigation. This research also supports and expands prior findings that small employers 


This causal-comparative study measured a number of characteristics of a group of persons with disabilities who received services from the Department of Rehabilitation Services in Alabama from 1987-1991, secured a job, and were coded at closure as successful. One, two, three, or four years from that closure date, those same persons were interviewed to determine who had been successful in job retention and who had not. Comparison of service characteristics of each group were conducted to determine which characteristics were significant in contributing to job success. Given the sufficiently large number of cases, 154, a hold-out group was formed to compare with the analysis group, to determine the strength of the relationships of the service and job characteristics. Data were collected from four sources: the worker; the provider of supported employment services; a family member; and the employer of the last supported employment position held by the worker. Four factors were found to be significant. Hours worked, wages earned, and interactions with co-workers were statistically significant and contributed to satisfaction levels and work group outcome. Satisfaction with services was significant for employers. All of these factors should be addressed in policy and practice cooperatively by all involved to ensure the most effective and satisfying supported employment position, which should lead to greater job success and job tenure.


The purpose of this paper is to put forward a conceptual framework which details the policies and practices that can potentially contribute to the effective management of long-term absences, and hence the return to work and retention of ill and injured workers, and considers how far UK employers currently do have in place management arrangements which accord with those detailed in this framework. The conceptual framework detailed was developed by reference to secondary literature and the outcomes of a conference of relevant stakeholders. The research evidence reviewed lent a good deal of support to the
propositions put forward in the conceptual framework as to the processes and practices that are central to the development of effective workplace rehabilitation programs, as well as the internal and external factors that potentially influence the adoption and operation of them. It also indicated that there is a good deal of scope for employers to do far more to support the continued employment of ill, injured and disabled workers, particularly in smaller organizations.


This work was concerned with investigating and changing employer attitudes and practices that impede return to work and rehabilitation for injured workers. Prior studies have shown that employer responses to workers reporting work-related musculoskeletal discomfort have significant and independent effects on disability outcomes. Based on these findings, a pilot training program was developed by occupational rehabilitation specialists to improve the response of supervisors to employees reporting work-related injuries. The training was delivered to 108 supervisors at seven southeastern New Hampshire companies that volunteered to participate. A survey was developed and pilot-tested, then administered before the training. Survey participants were employees who had work-related injuries in the past year. The survey asked about types and onset of injury, specific supervisor responses, and overall impression of supervisor interaction at the time of injury. Employee responses before the intervention were compared with those collected from workers who reported injuries after the training. The postintervention results demonstrated significant decreases in supervisors (1) blaming employees for the injury, (2) not taking the condition seriously, and (3) discouraging the worker from filing a claim. Positive trends in confidentiality of discussions, access to medical care, and accommodation and work modifications were also noted. Although anecdotal reports from the companies indicated a consistent decrease in work-related lost time after the intervention, actual verification was not possible, and other components of the intervention may have accounted for this outcome. Small numbers of cases and possible lack of comparability of cases before and after the intervention are significant limitations. However, re-habilitation professionals may be able to improve disability management practices and accommodations through employer education, especially when training is directed toward front-line supervisors.


The impact of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 on the American workplace is examined. The findings of a previous study (Gerber, 1992) on employer knowledge about learning disabilities are compared to current findings. Important themes and employer beliefs and practices that were consistent in employer responses are described. Although employers are continuing to make efforts to comply with the regulations of the ADA, they still have relatively little knowledge or experience with it in terms of learning disabilities.


This research brief based on the book “The Widening Gap” presents some main findings from a study of employer-based support systems in the United States to help families meet their caregiving responsibilities, and focuses on the failure of existing policies to support caregiving responsibilities of low-income parents and women. The brief also presents policy alternatives to help working families better address their responsibilities. Data sources include primary and secondary data from the National Longitudinal Study of Youth, the Survey of Midlife in the United States, the Urban Working Families Study, and the National Daily Diaries Study. The brief reports that low-income families are particularly affected by the gap between services provided by government and employers and families’ needs. Lower- and middle-income workers spend substantially more time caring for elderly parents than do higher-income families. Employed women are more likely than employed men to provide care for a child, spouse, or elderly relative. The Family and Medical Leave Act covers only about half of U.S. workers and does not cover the common illnesses of young children that cause most parents to miss work. Low-income workers have few or no workforce benefits. Employed mothers are less likely than men to have access to paid leave and flexibility in their hours. Policy recommendations include ensuring preschoolers’ care and education, increasing the length of the school day and year, improving public transportation, and adapting work schedules and hours. The brief concludes by noting that developing
public policies that cut across social class and help all workers succeed at work and in caring for their families is critical to the welfare of low-income workers and to the advancement of women.


Studies of HIV stigma in China are becoming more prevalent, but these studies have seldom involved direct cross-cultural comparisons. Moreover, although researchers consider employers to be a key power group whose practices can significantly impact the adjustment and recovery of people with HIV, the attitudes of employers in China towards people with HIV have rarely been studied. The present study sought to investigate employers' attitudes and hiring practices towards people with HIV across three culturally and linguistically distinct cities: Chicago, Beijing, and Hong Kong. One hundred employers from a broad spectrum of firm types were interviewed across the three cities, and their qualitative data were analyzed for information about the processes behind employer practices in hiring people with HIV. Employers from all three cities showed reluctance to hire people with HIV, but this trend was most pronounced with employers from Beijing and Hong Kong. Concerns about biological contagion were apparent in all three cities. Social contagion, or the belief that people with HIV could morally corrupt those around them, was a particular concern of employers from Beijing and Hong Kong. The concerns about hiring people with HIV in Hong Kong and Beijing may be related to specific cultural dynamics related to loss of 'face', level of contact and knowledge about people with HIV, and the psychological interconnectedness between people in society. In sum, employers in all three cities showed concerns about hiring people with HIV, but at the same time, their attitudes about discriminating against people with HIV differed widely across the cities.


Stigmatizing attitudes toward people with disabilities can jeopardize such individuals' well-being and recovery through denial of employment and community isolation. By shaping social norms that define group membership, the construct of individualism may partially explain differences in stigmatizing attitudes across cultures. Further, widespread globalization has brought intensely individualistic social practices to certain segments of non-Western cultures. This paper examines whether the construct of individualism can help to explain cross-cultural differences in stigmatizing attitudes observed between American and Chinese employers. Employers (N = 879) from Beijing, Hong Kong, and Chicago provided information on their attitudes toward hiring people with disabilities, and path analyses were conducted to examine potential mediating relationships. Path analyses indicated that vertical individualism, along with perceived responsibility for acquiring a condition, partially mediated the relationship between culture and employers' negative attitudes about job candidates with disabilities. These results suggested that greater espousal of competitive and individualist values may drive stigmatizing attitudes across cultures.


Despite demands for evidence-based research and practice, little attention has been given to systematic approaches to the development of complex interventions to tackle workplace health problems. This paper outlines an approach to the initial stages of a workplace program development which integrates health promotion and disease management. The approach commences with systematic and genuine processes of obtaining information from key stakeholders with broad experience of these interventions. This information is constructed into a program framework in which practice-based and research-informed elements are both valued. We used this approach to develop a workplace education program to reduce the onset and impact of a common chronic disease - osteoarthritis. To gain information systematically at a national level, a structured concept mapping workshop with 47 participants from across Australia was undertaken. Participants were selected to maximise the whole-of-workplace perspective and included health education providers, academics, clinicians and policymakers. Participants generated statements in response to a seeding statement: Thinking as broadly as possible, what changes in education and support should occur in the workplace to help in the prevention and management of arthritis? Participants
grouped the resulting statements into conceptually coherent groups and a computer program was used to generate a ‘cluster map’ along with a list of statements sorted according to cluster membership. In combination with research-based evidence, the concept map informed the development of a program logic model incorporating the program’s guiding principles, possible service providers, services, training modes, program elements and the causal processes by which participants might benefit. The program logic model components were further validated through research findings from diverse fields, including health education, coaching, organisational learning, workplace interventions, workforce development and osteoarthritis disability prevention. In summary, wide and genuine consultation, concept mapping, and evidence-based program logic development were integrated to develop a whole-of-system complex intervention in which potential effectiveness and assimilation into the workplace for which optimised.

Describes a study investigating aspects of the supervision of employees with learning disabilities (LD). The study involved the participation of 65 practitioners who had experience as an on-site supervisor for special needs employees. They were sent a questionnaire and asked to complete it. The questionnaire identified problem behaviors in the handicapped employee, supervisory techniques used with this group, support strategies for the supervisor, and factors affecting the performance of the supervisor. Results of the survey indicated that employees with LD had lower rates of tardiness, absence from work, and abilities to accept constructive criticism or redirection than populations of normal employees. The six most predominant issues that affect job performance in employees with LD were identified as: insecurity about role; low self-esteem; memory problems; distractibility; inability to transfer learning; and inability to follow directions. The most commonly used techniques for supervising employees with LD were regularly scheduled supervisory sessions, immediate feedback, flexibility and task modification. The outside training supervisor was the primary source of professional support for the on-site supervisor. Factors influencing the quality of support to the persons with LD include the supervisor's belief in the concept of training and hiring people with LD, the supervisor's confidence in his own ability and his own success in helping people with LD, being provided with helpful strategies to aid people with LD compensate for their own weaknesses, being able to understand a person's special needs, and the worker's good performance qualities.

Examined attitudes toward employability of individuals with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities among 120 corporate executives responsible for hiring. Organizational, individual, and contact variables are examined that differentiate between corporate executives who are more favorable toward the employability of personal with intellectual disability. Questionnaire responses identified 3 key variables associated with favorable attitudes: previous contact, hiring a person with disability, and organisational size (large). Persons with mild intellectual disability were preferred for employment compared to those with moderate intellectual disability. The findings are interpreted with respect to policy and practice.

Studies of workplace discrimination have typically focused on empirically unobservable motives to explain ascriptive inequalities associated with class, gender, and race. Such studies usually have overlooked disability as an ascriptive status, and have offered little systematic research on the central question of this study: How, through what mechanisms, does disability discrimination operate in large, bureaucratic organizations? The in-depth personal interviews upon which this study is based reveal that interpersonal mechanisms of discrimination manifest as blatant and subtle acts of marginalization, fictionalization, and harassment. However, such interpersonal acts of discrimination would likely be less frequent or less consequential if not for the organizational mechanisms of tolerance and encouragement. The authors conclude that one of the central promises of the Americans with Disabilities Act, full inclusion and participation of people with disabilities in the workplace, is unlikely to be realized without renewed pressure for legislation that explicitly specifies the nature and extent of work organizations’ responsibilities for creating a nonhostile environment and the consequences of not doing so.

Conducted a follow-up interview with 57 former vocational rehabilitation (VR) clients regarding factors bearing on their vocational success. Responses to questions regarding their perceptions of rehabilitation services, work-related problems, employer-hiring attitudes, and support of family and friends suggested 12 recommendations for enhancing the employment prospects of handicapped persons. These included more (a) job-seeking skills training and job-club programs, (b) training of parents and families to assist in the job-seeking process, (c) vocational counseling with a career-development focus, (d) long-term counselor follow-up of employment status, and (e) counselor efforts in job development. Results show that 49% of Ss were employed at the time of follow-up, 13-46 mo after case closure. Most employed Ss held entry-level, secondary-labor-market positions.


Two hundred adults with multiple sclerosis (MS) responded to a survey regarding their experiences with employment discrimination. Fifty nine of the 200 respondents (29.5 percent) indicated that they had experienced discrimination on the job. The primary types of employment discrimination included: failure by employers to provide reasonable accommodations on the job (48 percent); unfair rules related to working conditions, job environment, or employment privileges (44 percent); denial or delay of promotion (41 percent); different or harsher standards of performance (39 percent); assignment to inappropriate job tasks or duties (39 percent); restriction to a certain type of job (32 percent); receiving excessive supervision or oversight on the job (30 percent); refusal to hire due to MS (29 percent); unfair compensation and wages (27 percent); forced retirement (27 percent); and unfair access to fringe benefits (25 percent). Respondents tended to inform co-workers or employers about discrimination but rarely indicated any positive outcomes from their efforts to remedy the situation. Although somewhat confident in their ability to cope with discrimination except in instances of bringing and succeeding in legal action, participants tended to be uncertain to only slightly in agreement with statements pertaining to the supportiveness of employers. Implications for service interventions and future research are discussed.


Single-predictor and stepwise multinomial logistic regression analyses and an external validation were completed on 3,082 allegations of employment discrimination by adults with multiple sclerosis. Women filed two thirds of the allegations, and individuals between 31 and 50 made the vast majority of discrimination charges (73%). Allegations occurred most frequently in industries with the largest number of employees (501 or more). Results of the single-predictor multinomial logistic regression analyses identified gender and company size as the two predictors, findings that were mirrored in the main effects model developed through the stepwise multinomial logistic regression analyses. Women were more likely than men to allege discrimination related to harassment and intimidation rather than to discharge. Workers in the smallest companies were less likely than workers in the largest companies to allege discrimination regarding reasonable accommodation, working conditions, or employment benefits and more likely to allege discrimination related to discharge. Cross-validation results provided mixed support for the main effects model.


This article summarizes the results of a recent role and function study completed in 2004 to determine the prevailing domains of disability management practice. The study also sought to establish an empirical basis for a certification exam for disability management specialists consistent with evolving standards of practice. Based on the expert panel’s input, we developed a survey instrument and distributed it to a
stratified, random sample of 1,500 disability management specialists. The results supported the subject matter experts’ process of analysis and identification of three knowledge domains: (a) disability case management, (b) disability prevention and workplace intervention, and (c) program development, management, and evaluation. Survey results are provided, as well as implications for disability management practice.


This article describes findings from a causal comparative study of the characteristics of employers against whom allegations of discrimination related to unlawful discharge were filed with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). People with disabilities filed these allegations under Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) between 1992 and 2008. Employer characteristics derived from 140,581 closed discharge-related allegations were compared to and contrasted with 165,447 closed allegations aggregated from four other prevalent forms of discrimination including reasonable accommodations, hiring, disability harassment and intimidation, and terms and conditions of employment. Tests of Proportion were used to examine comparisons of employer characteristics along a variety of factors, including size of workforce, location, and industrial classification. As compared to nondischarge allegations, discharge allegations were more likely to be filed against employers (a) with 15 to 200 employees; (b) in the South U.S. Census Tract Region; and (c) in the Manufacturing, Health Care and Social Assistance, Retail, Administrative Support, Waste Management and Remediation, Finance and Insurance, Professional/Scientific/Technical, Accommodation and Food Service, Wholesale, Construction, Real Estate, and Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing/Hunting industries. Additional research is needed to specify the mechanisms by which different employer characteristics influence patterns in allegations of discrimination pertaining to discharge, and human resource management (HRM) and human resource development (HRD) practices regarding ADA responsibilities must be developed with the aforementioned characteristics in mind.


This paper describes and analyzes results from a survey of disability management activities of 273 employers. Respondents were primarily medium and large firms from all regions of the country and a variety of industries. Results indicated that two disability management strategies recently endorsed in the literature, frontline manager involvement and contracting with outside vendors to integrate disability management responsibilities, were implemented only by a minority of respondents. Statistical analyses were used to test the hypothesis that financial incentives, and (specifically) employers' perceived exposure to disability and other fringe benefit costs, would predict implementation of disability management efforts. Almost all statistically significant findings supported this general hypothesis.


Problem: Recent research indicates that many injuries to workers are not job related and that more than half of these injuries are not compensable under Workers' Compensation. Prior research on predictors or risk factors for these injuries, and the determinants of their costs, is quite limited. Method: This study analyzes data on more than 1000 injury-related paid claims for long-term disability (LTD) benefits by workers in 271 U.S. firms. Multiple regression analyses are used to examine predictors of LTD injury claims rates and determinants of LTD benefit payments per claim. Results: Although less than 20% of these injuries are work related, employer characteristics (industry type, selected disability management
practices, and recent exposure to layoffs) are significant predictors of injury claims rates. Availability and/or generosity of other disability income sources, such as Workers’ Compensation and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), also impact on observed claims rates. Other strong predictors are the demographic and occupational mixes of employees. Cost per claim is also related to employer characteristics, employee characteristics, and the availability of other fringe benefits offered by the employer. Surprisingly, the level of benefits available under the employer’s LTD policy does not have a detectable effect on claims rates. Impact on Industry: The importance of employer characteristics and policies, as predictors of claims rates and costs, suggests that occupational and nonoccupational injury risks may be strongly correlated. Programs to reduce the risks and costs of occupational injuries may also have important payoffs in terms of lower risks and costs for injuries to employees outside of the workplace.


Corporate culture reflects an organization’s value system and impacts the recruitment, retention, and promotion of employees. Individuals with disabilities are positively impacted by a corporate culture that espouses and establishes a diverse workforce as a priority. This article provides an overview of corporate culture and the employment of individuals with disabilities, and presents a case example of the corporate culture of a large not-for-profit disability service organization. With an in-depth understanding of corporate culture and disability issues, social workers can be particularly helpful to applicants and employees with disabilities as well as employers.


Case study examined efforts by Microsoft Corporation to enhance the diversity of its workforce and improve the accessibility and usability of its products and services for employees and customers with disabilities. Discussion focuses on the relationship among the Americans with Disabilities Act, corporate leadership, attitudes toward people with disabilities, and the dynamics that shape the corporate culture at Microsoft.


One central component to meaningful employment for people with disabilities is the ADA’s workplace accommodation provision that allows qualified individuals to perform essential job functions. Little empirical evidence is available to evaluate the costs, benefits, and effectiveness of accommodations. Previous research has focused on direct costs. This article advocates an inclusive accommodation cost/benefit analysis to include direct and indirect costs and benefits and to differentiate disability-related accommodation costs from typical employee costs. The inclusive cost/benefit analysis is applied to preliminary data from interviews with employers who contacted the Job Accommodation Network (JAN). Results suggest that accommodations are low cost, beneficial and effective.


This report examines expectations of employers hiring new college graduates for the 1992-93 labor market, based on a survey of 504 organizations. Survey questions focused on: anticipated changes in job market demand and hiring trends for new college graduates; expected starting salaries; campus recruitment activities; salaried employees in overseas locations; minorities, women, and foreign nationals hired for 1991-92; new hires with no experience last year; international placement programs; reorganization activities and results experienced; advice for new graduates who cannot find jobs; shortages of qualified women and minority candidates; anticipated change in starting salary offers; estimated starting salary averages; offers of "parachutes" to new college graduates; campus visits last

Examines the response of employers to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), with a specific focus on the employment of those with mental disabilities. A telephone survey was completed in a metropolitan area in the southern US with a random sample of 117 businesses. In terms of specific practices that indicated compliance with the ADA, 15% had specific policies for hiring those with mental disabilities, and 37.6% had indeed hired such individuals. Companies that had complied with the ADA were more likely to be large and to have specific policies for the hiring of minorities and those with physical disabilities. Employers also did not believe that employment of those with mental disabilities was their responsibility, and supported increased efforts by the rehabilitation community to improve employment opportunities for individuals with mental disabilities.


This research examines the response of the business community to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) with specific focus on the employment of those with mental disabilities. The ADA is viewed as an important "rational myth" in that it represents both a legal and normative demand with which businesses are expected to comply. Yet employers' responses will be influenced by their attitudes toward persons with mental disabilities as well as their concern with legal sanction for discriminatory behaviors. A telephone survey was completed in a southern metropolitan area with a random sample of 117 businesses in order to access the knowledge employers have about the ADA (and its inclusion of those with mental disabilities), the compliance with the ADA, the employment practices, and the role played by stigma in the employment of individuals with mental disabilities. In terms of specific practices which indicated compliance with the ADA, a little over one-third of the companies which were surveyed by telephone had a Title 1 implementation plan, 15% had specific policies for hiring those with mental disabilities, and 37.6% had indeed hired such an individual. The role of coercive and normative rationales for compliance to the ADA was examined. It was found that receiving formal information about the ADA, threat of legal sanction, and previous employment of those with mental disabilities were all significant predictors of compliance with the ADA. Stigmatizing attitudes did not predict compliance, though employers did view those with mental disabilities with more discomfort than other types of employees.


In a controversial expansion of workplace civil rights, the 1990 Americans with Disability Act (ADA) extended anti-discrimination protection to individuals with "mental impairments." One of the most critical barriers to the employment of individuals with mental disabilities is the degree of social stigma such disabilities incur, and there is compelling evidence that employers have stigmatizing attitudes and have discriminated against those with mental disabilities. This study examines the role played by stigma in employers' response to the 1990 Americans with Disability Act (ADA). A stratified sample of one hundred ninety employers were surveyed in 1996-1997 in a major Southern metropolitan area. Telephone interviews were completed with one hundred seventeen employers (response rate of 61.6%). The article describes employers' experiences with employees with mental disabilities and accommodations, specific employment practices, and attitudes towards those with mental disabilities. Stigma played an important role in conformity to the ADA (operationalized as either hiring or having specific recruiting policies for hiring individuals with mental disabilities). Furthermore, employers expressing coercive (fear of a lawsuit) as opposed to normative (belief that it is the right thing to do) rationales for compliance were more likely to hold stigmatized attitudes. Employers' beliefs about mental disability form a crucial foundation for truly
supportive work environments (those that value difference and diversity), and further research is needed to determine if over time the ADA is successful in changing attitudes as well as behavior.


This Delphi study drew on the expertise of a national sample of 100 employers of disabled people, and a similar number of Disability Employment Advisors (DEAs). It presents their existing attitudes towards disabled employees before analysing the effect of the National Minimum Wage (NMW) on these views. Differences between employers and DEAs were found in relation to the perceived costs and obstacles to employers of taking or retaining disabled staff, the problems presented by specific disabilities and the motivation shown by disabled staff. There was general agreement that the NMW has benefited disabled people by making low paid jobs better paid. A minority of respondents thought it had created additional obstacles to employment for disabled people. Some disabled employees appear to have been adversely affected by the interaction of the NMW with the Supported Placement Scheme (SPS, now Workstep) and the benefits system. Understanding employers' perspectives may facilitate the promotion of work opportunities for disabled people.


Using nearly 30,000 employee surveys from fourteen companies, we find disability is linked to lower average pay, job security, training, and participation in decisions, and to more negative attitudes toward the job and company. Disability gaps in attitudes vary substantially, however, across companies and worksites, with no attitude gaps in worksites rated highly by all employees for fairness and responsiveness. The results indicate that corporate cultures that are responsive to the needs of all employees are especially beneficial for employees with disabilities. Adapted from the source document.


Teamwork, collaboration and interprofessional care are becoming the new standard in health care, and service delivery in work practice is no exception. Most rehabilitation professionals believe that they intuitively know how to work collaboratively with others such as workers, employers, insurers and other professionals. However, little information is available that can assist rehabilitation professionals in enacting authentic transdisciplinary approaches in work practice contexts. A qualitative study was designed using a grounded theory approach, comprised of observations and interviews, to understand the social processes among team members in enacting a transdisciplinary approach in a work rehabilitation clinic. Findings suggest that team members consciously attended to a team approach through nurturing consensus, nurturing professional synergy, and nurturing a learning culture. These processes enabled this team to work in concert with clients who had chronic disabilities in achieving solution focused goals for returning to work and improving functioning. Implications for achieving greater collaborative synergies among stakeholders in return to work settings and in the training of new rehabilitation professionals are explored.


Public policies stress greater inclusion of disabled people in the labour market and suggest ways to implement accommodative measures to these ends. Often missing from this literature is the experiences of disabled people in labour markets. This article reports results from a qualitative study conducted in 2005 and 2006 consisting of one-to-one and focus group interviews with 56 disabled individuals participating in employment training programmes in Calgary and Regina, Canada. Findings suggest the presence of workplace and employer discrimination and labelling as primary factors impeding respondents' success in securing and maintaining employment in the labour market. The 56 respondents
provide strong evidence that perceptions of disability have a greater impact on their inability to maintain and secure employment than does the lack of accommodative practices and measures in the workplace.


The social and economic costs of injury and disability in the workplace has had an adverse impact on employers and societies throughout the world. International trends in worksite disability management policies and practices, as surveyed by the International Labor Organization, are explored. The impact of formal training for Disability Management Coordinators is discussed, as relates to reductions in unnecessary lost time and workplace disability costs. A disability management audit system is summarized, as a strategic planning process for developing return-to-work programs for workers with disabilities.


The UK government is keen to reduce the number of people on disability benefits. Many employers and practitioners lack awareness of the practical and financial support available to them in employment retention situations. Disability Management for Employment Retention (DMfER) is a 30-month project, part funded by the European Commission’s Leonardo da Vinci programme. It aims to assist individuals, their employers and advisers, to develop positive strategies for staying in work and to raise awareness amongst policy makers of the benefits of retaining disabled workers. Project partners in Spain, Sweden, Poland and UK have identified and exchanged good practice in the area of employment retention. A lack of training materials was identified in three key areas: [1.] Information on employment retention [2.] The business case describing the benefits of employing disabled people [3.] How to best influence policy makers and what changes to policy need to be made or introduced in partner countries. Partners are piloting newly developed training modules and an Employment Retention Toolkit with various stakeholders and working towards accreditation. DMfER provides a new model for working with employers, disabled people and organisations from the statutory, private and voluntary sector to support disabled people to stay in work.


Employers’ negative attitudes and fears have long been a barrier to the employment of individuals with disabilities. Accordingly, attitude literature on the employment of people with disabilities has focused almost exclusively on employers. However, due to their influence over business practices, the successful employment of people with disabilities is also contingent on the views of the consumer. This study extends previous studies that focused on the attitudes of employers, and went directly to the consumer. Consumer attitudes toward companies that hire individuals with disabilities were assessed through a national public survey (N = 803). Most of the participants (75%) had direct experience with people with disabilities in a work environment. Moreover, these experiences were positive. All participants responded positively towards companies that are socially responsible, including 92% of consumers who felt more favorable toward those that hire individuals with disabilities. The participants also had strong positive beliefs about the value and benefits of hiring people with disabilities, with 87% specifically agreeing that they would prefer to give their business to companies that hire individuals with disabilities. Implications of consumer support on company hiring practices are discussed.


A study identified claims filed by workers who have disabilities and the characteristics of those claims. Three patterns of employer discrimination against workers with disabilities were revealed: 1. some 43% of the claims described employers who were avoiding inconvenience, 2. some 21% claimed that their employer would not reasonably accommodate them, and 3. some 13% said that their employer used absenteeism as an excuse for action. The remaining 23% of the claims included a diverse variety of situations. In the study of 3,512 claims, more than 95% were employment discrimination claims. Altogether, 11.9% of these claims were made by workers who have disabilities.
Smith, K., Webber, L., Graffam, J., & Wilson, C. (2004). Employer satisfaction, job-match and future hiring intentions for employees with a disability. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, 21*(3), 165-173. This paper is based on survey responses from 656 employers who used disability employment services to employ someone with a disability. Relationships between employer satisfaction and employer perceptions of job-match and future hiring intentions toward people who have a disability are outlined and discussed. Employers’ perceptions of the job-match process were found to be an important determinant of their perceptions of work performance and employer satisfaction. Comparative ratings on employer satisfaction for employees with and without a disability were seen as an important indicator of future hiring intentions toward people with a disability. Findings reported in this paper provide important information on which to base strategies for improving future employment outcomes for people who have a disability.

Solovieva, T. I., Dowler, D. L., & Walls, R. T. (2011). Employer benefits from making workplace accommodations. *Disability and Health Journal, 4*(1), 39-45. This study explored workplace disability accommodations and their benefits. The participants were employers and human resource professionals who had not used the services of the Job Accommodation Network (JAN). The companies included large businesses (more than 499 employees) and small businesses (fewer than 500 employees). Objective/Hypothesis The intent of this investigation was to assess the disability accommodations and benefits for the employers. Methods The study used responses to online survey from 194 employers to discuss disability-related accommodations for an employee or potential employee. The survey included 128 employers who reported having had a person with a disability who requested an accommodation. Results As reported by the employers, the most frequently mentioned direct benefits from implementing workplace accommodations were (a) retained a qualified employee, (b) increased worker productivity, and (c) eliminated the cost of training a new employee. The most frequently mentioned indirect benefits from accommodations were (a) improved interactions with coworkers, (b) increased overall company morale, and (c) increased overall company productivity. The most frequently reported types of implemented accommodations were buying equipment and changing work schedules. Most of the respondents estimated the direct benefits of having made an accommodation at more than $1000. Conclusions The findings heighten awareness of benefits associated with making accommodations for people with disabilities in the workplace. These benefits signify value for business, coworkers, and individuals with disabilities for whom accommodations are critical for successful employment.


Stensrud, R. (2007). Developing relationships with employers means considering the competitive business environment and the risks it produces. *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin, 50*(4), 226-237. This study describes a series of focus groups conducted with employers. A series of 10 focus groups was conducted in 10 different communities in a midwestern state, with small, medium, and large communities represented. A total of 67 participants, representing human resources offices and direct supervisors, responded to questions regarding problems they faced in recruiting, selecting, training, accommodating, and promoting workers. Follow-up questions asked how the diversity and disability of job seekers affected these problems. Responses yielded several themes regarding their view of these problems, offering a frame from within which rehabilitation providers can better understand the issues facing employers. Fundamental to employers’ concerns were the risks they took and the nature of the labor market that contributed to those risks.

Stoddard, S., & Premo, B. (2004). Expanding employment opportunities: Independent living center employment services and collaboration with vocational rehabilitation. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, 20*(1), 45-52. Independent living centers (ILCs) and vocational rehabilitation (VR) agencies have, as their mission, improvement of the lives of people with disabilities. Yet their differing worldviews limit opportunities to work together to promote employment. To what extent is it important for these organizations to work together? And how well is such work proceeding now? Findings from a RRTC-ILM survey provided a view
of current employment-related collaboration and an indication that, while there is motivation and opportunity to improve the ILC/VR partnership, more work is needed.


A model of factors thought to affect the treatment of disabled individuals in organizations is presented. Specifically, the model suggests that person characteristics (e.g., attributes of the disabled person, attributes of the observer), environmental factors (i.e., legislation), and organizational characteristics (e.g., norms, values, policies, the nature of jobs, reward systems) combine to affect the way disabled individuals are treated in organizations. Furthermore, the model indicates that the relationships just noted are mediated by observers’ cognitions (i.e., categorization, stereotyping, expectancies) and affective states. Finally, the model predicts that the disabled person’s responses feed back to modify observers’ expectancies and organizational characteristics. Implications for conducting research on disability issues and facilitating the inclusion of disabled individuals in organizational settings are discussed.


A recent extensive search for administrative-level approaches used in public recreation agencies across the United States led to the documentation of these practices that were almost always present in agencies with inclusive services:1 * Administrative support: establishing inclusion as part of the central mission of the agency and communicating this broadly as an agency priority. * Hiring practices: designating an inclusion facilitator (for example, a certified therapeutic recreation specialist) with strong skills in bridge-building and communication; also hiring and preparing general recreation staff who endorse the inclusive culture of the agency. * Budgeting: providing the necessary supports, accommodations, and capital improvements for increased physical access. * Marketing: advertising inclusive services to a broad audience, including directly to individuals from underrepresented groups. * Evaluating: setting up a protocol for evaluating programs, supports, and the entire inclusion process. Because administrative policies drive an organization, it is important that they designate inclusion as a priority and communicate this philosophy and program direction throughout the agency’s mission and strategic plan.


This article reviews the employment situation of people with psychiatric disabilities, considers traditional ways to analyze the role of discrimination, and proposes situation testing as a new methodology overcoming many limitations of prior research. Situation testing allows observation of employer behavior in actual workplace situations with controls allowing employer discrimination to separate from other factors influencing employment outcomes. The application of situation testing to 3 types of employment discrimination against people with psychiatric disabilities is illustrated. By rigorously documenting real world discriminatory practices, situation testing can influence public opinion and government policy, as well as change employers’ behavior through education or litigation.


Employers often overlook individuals with disabilities as potentially valuable employees. Examination of the literature regarding organizational costs and benefits of hiring the disabled indicates that the benefits outweigh the costs. Through a qualitative interview methodology, this research explores employer perceptions regarding organizational costs and benefits of hiring the disabled in order to better understand the reasons for the underemployment of this population in the workforce. Implications of the findings and recommendations for future research are discussed.

The study examines Federal manager's attitudes toward and performance against mandates to hire Americans with disabilities. Report finds Feds are not walking the talk regarding efforts to hire, retain, and effectively manage employees with disabilities.


Examined the hypothesis that the degree of a manager's adherence to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in the process of hiring those with physical or psychiatric disabilities will be greater when the level of their knowledge about the principles and provisions of ADA is greater, their attitudes toward people with a disability, generally, and toward those with a mental illness, specifically, are positive, and the degree of perceived organizational adherence is greater, when controlling for individual manager and organizational characteristics. 195 supervisors/managers completed a self-administered questionnaire containing a perceived organizational adherence scale, a reported individual adherence scale, a knowledge scale, an attitudes toward disability scale, and an attitudes toward mental illness scale. The finding of greatest significance in this study was that perceived organizational adherence was the most influential factor in determining if managers were adherent with the ADA.


The Americans with Disabilities Act (1990) is considered to be the most sweeping piece of legislation since the Civil Rights Act. However, there are some concerns about its impact on the employment status of individuals with psychiatric disabilities. This study aimed to explain the influence of various individual and organizational characteristics on the managers’ own adherence with the ADA in the process of hiring. It specifically investigated the recruiting, interviewing, and hiring practices of managers with regard to individuals with psychiatric disabilities, and the influence of attitudes towards mental illness on these practices. A total of 195 supervisors/managers from for-profit and non-profit organizations with 15 or more employees completed a mail-in self-administered questionnaire. Hierarchical regression analysis using five factors that were theoretically hypothesized to contribute to manager adherence with the ADA was conducted. The five factors were individual respondent characteristics (disability status and race--being Caucasian), organizational characteristics (size--less than 300 employees, private, and non-profit), attitudes (towards disability and towards mental illness), perceived organizational adherence, and self-reported familiarity with the content of the ADA. Greater manager adherence was associated with greater perceived organizational adherence; with greater self-reported familiarity with the content of the ADA; and with the respondents being disabled and their race being Caucasian. Manager adherence was not associated either with attitudes towards disability and mental illness, or with the scores on a scale measuring knowledge of the ADA. The rates at which managers recruited, interviewed, or hired people with physical disabilities were consistently and significantly higher than they did people with psychiatric disabilities. The findings suggest that managers/supervisors will adhere to the principles and provisions of the ADA if they perceive their employing organization as ADA adherent. Mental health professionals need to advocate for the rights of people with psychiatric disabilities in places of employment and eliminate the disparities that exist between people with physical and psychiatric disabilities.


The economic burden of depression has been documented, but the role of comorbid conditions is unclear. Depression and comorbid pain are particularly common, are associated with worse clinical outcomes and require different care than "pure" depression. Does this comorbidity account for a large share of the adverse social outcomes attributed to depression? Cross-sectional data were used from Wave 3 of the Health and Retirement Survey, a nationally representative sample of individuals aged 55-65 surveyed in 1996. Multivariate regression analyses, controlling for socio-demographics and chronic
health conditions, estimated the associations between depression and pain, and economic outcomes. Outcomes included: employment and retirement status, household income, total medical expenditures, government health insurance, social security, limitations in activities of daily living (ADLs), and health limitations affecting work. Primary explanatory variables included the presence of severe pain, mild/moderate pain, or absence of pain, with or without depression.

Results: Compared to depression alone, depression and comorbid pain was associated with worse labor market (non-employment, retirement), financial (total medical expenditures), insurance (government insurance, social security) and disability outcomes (limitations in ADLs, health limitations affecting work), after covariate adjustment ($p < 0.01$, except retirement with $p < 0.1$). Findings were even more disparate as level of pain severity increased. The simulated results showed that the magnitudes of the adverse effects were attributed disproportionately to individuals with comorbid pain and depression versus "pure" depression. Of those with depression, 51% had comorbid pain. Yet, this subgroup of depressed individuals accounted for 59% of those not employed, 61% of those with government health insurance, 79% of those with limitations in ADLs, and 72% of those with health limitations affecting work.

Discussion and Limitation: Depression with comorbid pain, not depression alone was responsible for a large part of the higher economic burden associated with depression. The study is limited by self-reported measures of pain, depression, and outcomes. It is cross-sectional and cannot identify causal effects of depression with pain. These findings may not be generalizable to other age groups.

Implications for Health Care Provision and Use: The depressed with comorbid pain appear to experience greater burden through increased costs and worse functioning and may require different management than those with depression alone. The depressed with comorbid pain may benefit from treatment practices and guidelines that address the duality of these conditions throughout the process of care.

Implication for Health Policies: The depressed with comorbid pain were more likely to receive government support than depression alone. Given the central role of employer-sponsored health insurance in the U.S., they may have worse access to health care because they leave employment or retire earlier. With the evolving state of Medicare, broad formulary access to mental health treatments might be considered.

Implications for Further Research: Further research should focus on causality of depression and comorbid pain on economic outcomes. Depression research should consider the heterogeneity of this disorder in outcomes assessment.


Even in the midst of massive layoffs that come with an economic downturn, employers must remain aware of the pending impact of their aging workforce. Losing older employees to retirement drains knowledge and expertise. In response, employers are looking at new ways to retain older workers at the same time that older workers are reevaluating the traditional approach to retirement. This article presents findings from case study research consisting of interviews with key employees at 18 companies in 13 states. Five of those companies subsequently participated in in-person site visits. Interviews were held with a wide range of informants, including company leadership, supervisors, and older workers. Findings include a description of the cultural context within which the development of formal and informal older worker retention strategies occurred, as well as the retention strategies themselves. The discussion section explores the universal nature of these retention initiatives and how consideration of universality benefits not only older workers but a range of diverse groups as well.


Interviews employers who have used natural supports in providing accommodations to supported employees to determine their perceptions regarding the accommodation process. Variations of employment support; Methods of the study; Effect of natural supports in the work environment.


For both men and women, attractiveness is an asset that impacts many stages of the employment process including hiring, wages, performance evaluation, and promotion. Moreover, many employers
attempt to increase the attractiveness of their employees by regulating their employees' (and potential employees') appearances in ways that conform to dominant notions of attractive femininity and masculinity. These attempts range from mandating uniforms or certain modes of dress, to proscribing certain hair styles or hair lengths, to formally or informally regulating employees' body shapes and sizes, to simply not hiring, not promoting, or firing individuals whose appearance does not conform to an employer's ideas about attractiveness. Over the last four decades, U.S. courts have deliberated on a large number of appearance-related cases, as employees have resisted these attempts at appearance discrimination. While employers generally have the right to control employees' appearance, workers have recourse to discriminatory actions through legal avenues such as Title VII, the ADA, and various pieces of state legislation. In this paper, we document trends in appearance-related lawsuits spanning four decades and examine how U.S. courts have protected or failed to protect employer's appearance-related practices. A number of trends emerge from our analyses. First, the number of appearance-based discrimination lawsuits has more than tripled during this time frame. There has been an overall rise in appearance-related cases that were initiated over the 35-year study period. Second, the suits follow general patterns over each decade, both in terms of who files cases and on what basis of appearance the employee is alleging discrimination. With regard to who brings cases, we find that the majority of cases in the 1970s were initiated by men, which is rather ironic since federal legislation was implemented to protect minorities and oppressed groups. We also see an increase in transgender plaintiffs over time. The data also point to differences in the types of cases that are brought. For example, 1970s cases generally dealt with men's hair length, 1980s cases with sexually revealing dress codes for women, 1990s with race- and religion-based suits, and the 2000s saw an expansion of suits related to weight, transgenderism, and "deviant" appearances. We analyze each of these trends in the context of contemporary Western society's conceptions of hegemonic beauty, particularly for women, as well as the expanded visibility, rights, and empowerment of traditionally disadvantaged groups including the disabled, racial and ethnic minorities, lesbians, gays, and transgendered people over time. We highlight these key trends through a discussion of illustrative cases, discuss the social significance of our findings, and suggest directions for future research.


The Interagency Subcommittee on Employment (ISE) of the Interagency Committee on Disability Research (ICDR) provided an opportunity for researchers and business leaders, as well as service providers, policy-makers, and advocates, to come together at the Employer Perspectives on Workers with Disabilities: A National Summit to Develop a Research Agenda. These groups from the public and private sectors met Sept. 19–20, 2006 in Washington, D.C. to guide the ISE in setting a national research agenda focused on the needs of American businesses in employing people with disabilities.


Increasingly, employers are providing a variety of accommodations to applicants or employees with disabilities. However, little is known about the resources that employers access to identify and develop accommodations in the recruitment, hiring and retention of employees with disabilities. Human resource professionals and supervisors were surveyed to determine the extent to which businesses were aware of, and utilized, the vast array of workplace supports available. Findings indicated that employers have
limited awareness of workplace supports and rely primarily on their own organizational resources in identifying and securing accommodations. Yet, business professionals expressed confidence in their ability to meet and support the needs of employees with disabilities despite many supervisors indicating that they did not have the authority to secure accommodations for workers with disabilities.


Study analyzed the types of discrimination complaints that people with multiple sclerosis (MS) have filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission under Title I of the American with Disabilities Act since 1993 compared to the pattern of complaints filed by all other people with disabilities. Analyses revealed that people with MS are more likely than other complainants to charge discrimination related to benefits, health insurance, demotion, reasonable accommodations, and the terms of employment. People with MS are less likely to file complaints alleging unlawful discharge, harassment, and discriminatory hiring practices.


Using the Integrated Mission System of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the employment discrimination experience of Americans with mental retardation is documented. Researchers compare and contrast the key dimensions of workplace discrimination involving Americans with mental retardation and persons with other physical, sensory, and neurological impairments. Specifically, the researchers examine demographic characteristics of the CPs; the industry designation, location, and size of employers against whom complaints are filed; the nature of discrimination (i.e., type of adverse action) alleged to occur; and the legal outcome or Resolution of these complaints. Chi-square analyses revealed that persons with mental retardation were more likely to encounter discrimination involving matters of involuntary termination (discharge), involuntary resignation (constructive discharge), and harassment. They were less likely to encounter discrimination related to reasonable accommodation, promotion, demotion, and reinstatement. Allegations of employment discrimination by persons with mental retardation were more likely to have merit in comparison to allegations by CPs with other disabilities. Implications for policy and advocacy are addressed.


This report contains the strategic vision for the Department of Labor (DOL)/Employment and Training Administration’s research efforts for the next five years. Section I discusses the scope of the research plan and the development process. Section II is a review of literature concerning functioning of the labor market and identification of areas needing additional research. Section III reviews recent policy changes that will affect employment and training interventions. It identifies potential research topics that would most help DOL implement the Workforce Investment Act 1998 (WIA). Section IV provides a review of
recent research, evaluation, pilot, and demonstration initiatives to help implement and improve programs under WIA. It focuses on understanding effectiveness of employment and training interventions designed to aid employers, adult job seekers, youth, and disabled and other special populations. Section V examines alternative methodologies for employment and training research and their strengths and weaknesses. Section VI identifies these nine high priority research topics: understand intermediaries’ role in the labor market; identify effective training strategies; develop appropriate assessment tools; evaluate and improve job retention programs and services; develop strategies to promote career advancement; identify effective support services; understand impact of self- directed employment services; improve interventions to assist the hardest-to-serve; and develop the potential of telecommuting. There is a 246-item bibliography. (YLB)


Work-related disability is one of the most costly and prevalent health problems facing employees, employers, insurers and policy makers. According to the National Safety Council in 2006, work injuries cost Americans $160 billion in 2005, which amounts to $1,170 per worker. Vocational rehabilitation services are often part of the benefits offered to employees who work related injuries. Based on the annual report by the National Council on Compensation Insurance in 2004, the rate of successful return to work among injured workers after vocational services varies by state, ranging from 60% to 85%. Butler, Johnson, and Baldwin (1995) found that the rate of successful return to employment is most often measured by first return to work, which may not properly reflect the rate of job retention over a longer time period or reflect a permanent, stable outcome. This retrospective cohort study analyzed vocational service data from Individual Written Rehabilitation Plans (IWRP) and Closure Forms from the MA Department of Industrial Accidents in combination with post-employment job retention interview data from a study completed by the Liberty Mutual Research Institute for Safety. These individuals had successfully returned to work after a work-related injury as part of a vocational rehabilitation plan. Pre- and post-employment data and the type of vocational rehabilitation services received were analyzed to assess their association with job retention. The research questions explored were: What is the relationship between the vocational services and the job an individual is placed in as part of an Individual Written Rehabilitation Plan and job retention, and what is the relationship between the individual characteristics, vocational rehabilitation service factors and employment characteristic factors and job retention? The Multiple regression analysis indicated that the variables that were positively related to job retention were younger age and within this sample a shorter time from the DOI-IWRP. In the linear regression of the factors associated (p < .05) with an increasing time from DOI-IWRP, were older age and having an impairment of the upper extremity basis.


This article attempts to address partially the problem of ascertaining employers’ decisions in the real world about hiring job applicants with a disability. Over a three month period, the research team responded to all (409) job advertisements for clerical positions that met certain parameters in the two major Hong Kong newspapers. Each advertisement received four application letters that were identical in every respect except one. One letter did not mention disability, one mentioned a hearing impairment, one mentioned walking with the assistance of crutches and one mentioned having recovered from a reactive depression. A positive outcome was judged to have occurred if the applicant was offered a job interview. A total of 1636 letters of application were sent and 331 positive responses were received. Multiple pairwise comparisons were made that demonstrated statistically significant differences between the non-disability group when compared with each of the disability groups. Comparisons of the disability groups with each other did not achieve levels of statistical significance. There was, however, a clear ranking of preference; people without a disability, followed by those with a hearing impairment, those using crutches to walk and finally, those who had had a depression.

Information from the Integrated Mission System of the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) was used to investigate the employment discrimination experiences of Americans with multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS; n = 1,183) in comparison to Americans in a general disability group (GENDIS; n = 17,689) with allergies, asthma, HIV, gastrointestinal impairment, cumulative trauma disorder and tuberculosis. Specifically, the researcher examined demographic characteristics of the charging parties; the industry designation, location, and size of employers against whom allegations were filed; the nature of discrimination (i.e., type of adverse action) alleged to occur; and the legal outcomes or resolutions of these allegations. Findings indicate that persons with MCS were, on average, older than the comparison group and comparatively overrepresented by Caucasians and women. People with MCS were proportionally more likely than the comparison group to allege discrimination related to reasonable accommodations and less likely to allege discrimination related to suspension, discharge, and discipline. People with MCS were proportionally more likely than the comparison group to file allegations against employers in the manufacturing and public administration industries, employers with 201-500 workers, and employers in the Western Census region and less likely to allege discrimination on the part of employers in the transportation, retail, and financial/insurance real estate industries, employers with 15-100 workers, and employers in the Midwest Census region. People with MCS were proportionally more likely than the comparison group to receive non-merit resolutions as a result of the EEOC's Americans with Disabilities Act Title I investigatory process. Investigation of these allegations clearly indicates the need to proactively identify and rectify the factors that precipitate allegations of employment discrimination. Implications for research, practice, and advocacy are addressed.

Von Bergen, A. N., Von Bergen, C. W., & Ballaré, D. A. (2008). Family responsibilities discrimination: What employment counselors need to know. Journal of Employment Counseling, 45(3), 115-130. Family responsibilities discrimination—bias against workers based on their responsibilities to care for family members—is rapidly becoming a 21st-century workplace concern. Employers who harass, pass over for promotion, or terminate workers because such workers care for children, spouses, elderly parents, or family members with disabilities have been sued with more frequency and have been incurring increasing litigation costs. Recently, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission took an important step toward ending this discrimination by issuing enforcement guidance that addresses family responsibilities discrimination and caregivers’ rights and responsibilities. This article addresses the guidance and its importance for employment counselors.

Wakefield, S., & Uggen, C. (2004). The declining significance of race in federal Civil Rights Law: the Social structure of employment discrimination claims. Sociological Inquiry, 74(1), 128-157. We examine changes in the nature and rate of complaints filed with the federal Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC) in the past 35 years. The EEOC’s role has shifted over this period from ensuring job access for racial minorities to providing diverse protections for a much broader class of incumbent workers. We first describe trends in discrimination complaints, most notably the shift from racial discrimination to bases of discrimination, and develop a conceptual model of choice among socially structured alternatives to account for them. We then test the model with time series analysis of changes with the complaint rate among different worker groups to evaluate the relative importance of legal, political, and socioeconomic determinants of civil rights complaints. Net of changes in the political climate, benefit compensation, inequality, and education levels, we find that legal changes and group-specific unemployment rates are the strongest and most consistent determinants of the rate of race, sex, and total discrimination complaints. Our results suggest that people will bear the costs of filing a complaint when legal options are relatively attractive and when employment options on the external labor market are unattractive.

Waterhouse, P., Kimberley, H., Jonas, P., & Nurka, C. (2010). What would it take? employer perspectives on employing people with a disability—Literature Review. Support Document, National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER). This literature review aims to provide the basis for informed and detailed discussions of what kinds of strategies employers would respond to in hiring and retaining employees with disabilities, including any contribution the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector might make. The review begins with discussion of the international and national policy context for this study. Governments’ twin policy objectives of social inclusion (encompassing access, equity and social justice considerations) and
economic development are canvassed. The review then moves onto consideration of the dynamics of employment in general, before consideration of the research literature on disability employment issues. A section highlights some good news stories in disability employment--before the final summing up. This literature review is a support document for the project report "What would it take? Employer perspectives on employing people with a disability." [For the main report, see ED508544.]


Study examining the influence of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) on human resource professionals. Data are 87 responses to a survey of the employment managers of 197 randomly chosen businesses in three Minnesota cities. The hypothesis that awareness and perceived impact of the law would be greater among human resource professionals in larger communities was not supported, but the hypothesis that awareness and impact would be greater in larger organizations was supported. Other results regarding the frequency and type of training and accommodation responses made by organizations are also presented.


In 1997 the EEOC issued new guidelines to clarify implementation of the mental health regulations of the ADA. This paper explores the impact of those guidelines on human resource practices in the workplace. Focus group discussions were conducted with HR practitioners from over a dozen medium-sized, midwestern corporations. Analysis of the focus group discussions identified four primary issues: Underreporting of mental health disabilities; the impact of demographic differences on mental health; misreporting of mental health disabilities; and the impact of the environment on mental health.


While many people with disabilities and employment service organizations struggle to find jobs and develop strong relationships with businesses, supplemental staffing companies are becoming an important resource for linking qualified applicants with disabilities to competitive employment careers. Yet, there exists a huge disconnect between supplemental staffing companies recruiting qualified applicants to fill client-employer work orders, people with disabilities who are seeking employment, professionals with state rehabilitation agencies and community rehabilitation programs (CRP’s) who assist them with their job searches. This article reports on two public/private demonstration projects in Virginia, primarily serving individuals with developmental disabilities. One demonstration project was conducted in an urban setting working exclusively with MANPOWER with the second demonstration site occurring in a rural area with Kelly Services and MANPOWER. The two demonstrations give promise for a public/private collaboration that could increase the employment of people with disabilities.


Labor force statistics and other evidence have demonstrated that people with disabilities are under-represented in the work place in Canada and abroad. While an assortment of factors likely contributes to this disparity, the attitudes of employers towards hiring people with disabilities are often cited as important contributors to the situation. Some authorities suggest that employer's attitudes towards people with disabilities bias their decision-making and influence employer behavior. This concept of simple discrimination suggests that employers, like others in the general public hold unfavorable stereotypes of people with disabilities that result in discriminatory hiring practices regardless the merit of a candidate with a disability. An alternative concept, ambivalence amplification, suggests that disability and merit interact in a more complex way. Research on the general public's reactions to disability suggests that when all else is equal, people will rate a person with a disability who is portrayed in a positive manner significantly higher than a comparable peer without a disability, but that the reverse will occur when both are portrayed in a negative fashion. This suggests that under favorable circumstances, employer's
attitudes towards employees or prospective employees with disabilities may be preferential, but under unfavorable circumstances, their negative attitudes are amplified to become more extremely negative. Both models suggest that discrimination may be occurring, but provide unique perspectives on how and if it might be occurring during employee recruitment. This study examined both simple discrimination and ambivalence amplification in order to explore their potential for explaining poor employment outcomes for people with disabilities. Ninety-nine employers rated/scored one of four condition-specific cover letters and resumes (application documents) from a hypothetical applicant either with or without a disability. As well as identifying disability status, these documents also portrayed the applicant as having merit (no errors in documents) or limited merit (multiple errors in documents). Participants were also asked if based on their review of the cover letter and resume, they would be willing to grant the applicant an interview. Analyses demonstrated that merit, as represented by error-free cover letters and resumés predicted employer behavior. There was no evidence main effect for disability status and no interaction between merit and disability status on either employer's ratings of application documents or on their willingness to grant an interview, regardless of gender, age, education, and affiliation with a public or private business. These findings suggest that even when a person's disability is self-reported in an application, neither simple discrimination nor ambivalence amplification influenced employer's ratings of merit or decisions based on merit. Merit appears to be their primary focus in initial screening of potential employees. These findings further suggest that disparate employment outcomes of people with disabilities may instead be influenced later in the recruitment process, perhaps when employer's come face-to-face with applicants with disabilities during the interview stage. It may be at this point in the hiring process that employer's negative attitudes towards people with disabilities result in discrimination.


In this issue of JAMA, Wang et al (see record 2007-14777-001) provide evidence that implementing depression care programs through employer-sponsored managed behavioral health can improve clinical outcomes, job retention, and effective hours worked compared with usual care. The programs encouraged depressed workers to learn about and use evidence-based depression treatments, supported clinicians in following practice guidelines, and offered telephone counseling and self-help workbooks. The monetary value of the increased work time under the program exceeded the direct intervention costs and likely exceeded or was within the range of cost increases due to greater mental health specialty use under the intervention. These findings should be evaluated within the context of the simple but startling facts about depression. Clinical depressive disorders are among the most prevalent of major medical conditions, affecting about 16% of adults in their lifetime. Owing to high prevalence, early age at onset (unlike other debilitating disorders that occur past the age of parenting and work responsibilities), and strong impact on functional status, depressive disorders are leading contributors to disability worldwide. Depressive disorders are highly treatable yet often remain unrecognized and untreated. The intervention approach in the study by Wang et al can be characterized as "building a village" of health plans, clinicians, and resources that "surround" depressed persons with opportunities to learn about and engage in evidence-based care, attending to a careful fit of intervention requirements and context-specific implementation options. Depression interventions have many advantages for individuals, their family and friends, employers and society, over and above relief of individual symptoms. This article discusses how improvements in mental health and depression treatment can increase productivity of employees and reduce economic losses for employers.


Study examined the nature of allegations of employment discrimination filed under Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by job seekers and workers with epilepsy using data from the United States (U.S.) Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Approximately three-fourths of allegations were related to post-hire issues, such as discrimination in promotion and termination, disciplinary actions, and harassment. The lowest rate of merit allegation was related to discrimination in hiring. Previously, the EEOC issued guidelines stating that mitigating measures (such as medications and assistive devices) should not be considered when determining whether of not an individual was disabled under the ADA. In Sutton v. United Air Lines, the U.S. Supreme Court held that the use of corrective eyeglasses could be considered in deciding whether or not 2 sisters were disabled, because with
corrective eyewear, their vision was normal. Because of the decision, there has been concern that people with epilepsy may experience workplace discrimination because of their disabilities, but be denied protection under the ADA because they are not "disabled" when taking medication or using other corrective measures. The allegations of workplace discrimination brought under filed by people with epilepsy and their resolutions were compared before and after the Supreme Court's Sutton decision. Results revealed that the percentage of cases closed with merit, that is, in favor of the claimant, increased dramatically following the Sutton decision, from 21.6 percent to 30.4 percent. The findings suggest that the Sutton decision has had no negative effect on claimants with epilepsy.


Reports on Project Corporate Support (CORPS), a program that assists high school students with severe disabilities (multiple disabilities, learning disabilities, mental disabilities, emotional disabilities, and other disabilities). Project CORPS addressed the systemic barriers to post-school employment of students with disabilities through a corporate/employer-driven model of transition to supported employment. Students were assisted with employment through the use of business mentoring and other supportive services provided by the employer, supervisors, and coworkers. Quality assurance data and employment data were collected for participants. Overall, Project CORPS proved to be a beneficial experience for students, schools, and businesses. 43 students were assisted in finding employment, 14 students participated in a hospitality training program, and a substantial number of businesses received mentor training with the intent of enabling them to hire, train, and accommodate more workers with disabilities in the future. Difficulties with high job turnover rates, premature termination of mentoring programs in businesses, and local school districts are also discussed.


Using the Integrated Mission System of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the employment discrimination experience of Americans with missing limbs is documented. Researchers compare and contrast the key dimensions of workplace discrimination involving Americans with missing limbs and persons with back and other non-paralytic orthopedic impairments. Specifically, the researchers examine demographic characteristics of the charging parties; the industry designation, location, and size of employers against whom complaints are filed; the nature of discrimination (i.e., type of adverse action) alleged to occur; and the legal outcome or resolution of these complaints. Findings indicate that persons with missing limbs were more likely to encounter discrimination if they were male, under 20 or over 65 years of age, and White or Native American. They were also more likely to encounter more frequent discrimination when they worked for employers in the Southern United States, those with 200 or fewer employers, or whose industry designation involved manufacturing, construction, or transportation. Finally, the nature of job discrimination experienced by Americans with missing limbs is more likely to involve hiring, promotion, or job training than other issues. Implications for policy and advocacy are addressed.


Study examining employers' views about the skills required for hiring in entry level jobs and the reasons for problems with or for firing employees with and without intellectual disabilities. Forty one employers were interviewed: 28 who employed individuals with intellectual disabilities and 13 who did not employ persons with disabilities. The two groups had similar views about the skills required for hiring individuals with and without disabilities. Both groups rated attendance and punctuality, production efficiency, and work attitude as very important. There was some overlap in the reasons employers gave for difficulties with or firing of both groups of employees. Inadequate production skills, unreliability, and poor self-control
were concerns for both groups. However, problems with safety awareness and adaptability were of
greater concern for employees with intellectual disabilities whereas problems with response to
supervision, following directions, and work attitude were of greater concern for nondisabled employees.

of the recent literature. Canadian Journal of Rehabilitation, 1(2), 89-98.
Reviews the literature on employer attitudes toward hiring individuals with disabilities. Recent research
supports earlier research suggestions that (1) employer attitudes toward hiring disabled individuals inhibit
their ability to obtain and make advancements in employment, (2) a discrepancy exists between
employer-stated willingness to hire the disabled and actual hiring practices, and (3) positive experiences
with disabled persons improve employers' attitudes toward hiring disabled workers.

1121.
Effects of illness and disability on job separation result from both voluntary and involuntary processes.
Voluntary processes range from the reasoned actions of workers who weigh illness and disability in their
decision-making, to reactive stress-avoidance responses. Involuntary processes include employer
discrimination against ill or disabled workers. Analyses of the effects of illness and disability that
differentiate reasons for job separation can illuminate the processes involved. This paper reports on an
evaluation of effects of illness and disability on job separation predicted by theories of reasoned action,
stress, and employer discrimination against ill and disabled workers. Effects of four illness/disability
conditions on the rate of job separation for 12 reasons are estimated using data from a longitudinal study
of a representative sample of the Canadian population--the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics
(SLID). Two of the four effects that are statistically significant (under conservative Bayesian criteria for
statistical significance) are consistent with the idea that workers weigh illness and disability as costs, and
calculate the costs and benefits of continuing to work with an illness or disability: (1) disabling illness
increases the hazard of leaving a job in order to engage in caregiving, and (2) work-related disability
increases the hazard of leaving a job due to poor pay. The other two significant effects indicate that: (3)
disabling illness decreases the hazard of layoff, and (4) non-work disability increases the hazard of
leaving one job to take a different job. This last effect is consistent with a stress-interruption process.
Other effects are statistically significant under conventional criteria for statistical significance, and most of
these effects are also consistent with cost benefit and stress theories. Some effects of illness and
disability are sex and age-specific, and reasons for the specificity of these effects are discussed.

ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Database. (UMI No. NQ97730).
Workplace disability is an issue of substantial concern to employers, employees, unions, and public policy
makers. While a great deal of research on the topic has occurred across a wide array of disciplines, much
of the empirical work has been atheoretical. This dissertation describes two prominent workplace
disability models and explains the necessity of developing an alternative that is less reliant on the
psychological processes of disabled employees and their colleagues, and does not assume the employee
is capable of performing the tasks assigned. A qualitative field investigation was therefore conducted in
order to identify additional variables and develop an alternative model. The research question asked:
what are the key variables impacting the process of workplace reintegration for disabled employees?
Data from 72 arbitration cases, 23 in-depth interviews, employer policies, and discussions with industry
practitioners was analyzed using grounded theory techniques of coding and constant comparison. Five
categories of variables emerged as significant contributors to the ease or difficulty of accommodations:
(1) the employment and disability history of the employee, (2) the nature of the disability (particularly
chronicity, visibility, and legitimacy), (3) the behaviours and attitudes of the returning employee,
(4) employer factors such as degree of accommodation effort, inclusion of the disabled employee, and
sophistication of reintegration procedures, as well as (5) outside agent factors (e.g. the relationship
between the employer and the employee's physician). Social capital theory is then utilized to explain
much of the interaction among the variables. Social capital is the goodwill available to individuals or
groups in a social system. It is contained in the structure and quality of relationships within and outside
the social group. Contrary to much of the recent research, I suggest that bonding (as opposed to bridging)
forms of capital are most critical for disabled employees re-entering the workplace. When disability
decreased credibility, repayment of favours, or when it prompted behaviours that violated in-group norms, accommodations were more difficult. In addition to social capital theory, some observations are explained using the concepts of locus of control, procedural justice and agency theory.


Williams, N. (2009). Recruiting and managing people with disabilities. Personnel Today, 24-24. The article reports that a survey of 107 employers from a combined workforce of almost 390,000 staff found that one in six had a separate disability policy in Great Britain. The survey revealed that two-thirds (67%) of employers have a written policy that deals with disability as part of a more general diversity policy. It is stated that almost half of the employers surveyed used government schemes to help with the recruitment and retention of disabled staff.


Despite governmental efforts and organizational initiatives, the number of disabled professionals in full-time employment is small, and the number of those occupying leadership positions remains even smaller. Past research into disability and employment has outlined a range of barriers that disabled people face in seeking and maintaining employment. Yet, not enough is known about the challenges they encounter in top ranking appointments. This article extends Ryan's and Haslam's notion of the glass cliff to help explain the precariousness experienced by a group of disabled employees in leadership positions - focusing on the nature of the positions they hold and the difficulties they encounter as they attempt to advance their careers. Using qualitative interview data the analysis draws attention to problems associated with lack of opportunity, lack of resources and lack of support. It also point to ways of making workplace cultures and organizational practices more supportive of diversity.


Scholarship on ‘flexible’ work and changing organizational cultures has had little to say about the implications of these developments for disabled people. Drawing on in-depth interviews, this paper examines the ways in which disabled workers struggle over accommodations in contemporary workplaces. Analysis reveals a number of themes concerning training, speed at work, and emotional and aesthetic labour. At their core, these themes concern the ability of workers to exercise control over the labour process. Efforts to obtain accommodation are frustrated by multiple strategies that include people's propensity to self-discipline in the interests of achieving a valued identity through paid work. The paper argues in conclusion that accommodation, as both discourse and practice, offers a conceptual resource for rethinking contemporary employment with implications for both disabled and non-disabled workers.


Male prisoners (n = 450) estimated public reaction to the label "ex-con" and endorsed likely stigma management strategies. Although most anticipate significant rejection, they prefer preventative telling to withdrawal and secrecy as adjustments. OLS regression finds factors promoting exclusion (devaluation/discrimination beliefs and reduced job opportunities) related to withdrawal and secrecy, whereas factors favoring inclusion ('wise’ family and friends and plans to attend church) increase preventative telling and reduce withdrawal and secrecy. To enhance public safety by increasing ex-convicts’ openness and visibility, policies should promote social support and economic opportunities.
Successful reentry may improve rule-following in general, whereas exclusionary practices may work against post-release control. Adapted from the source document.

Wolffe, K. E., & Candela, A. R. (2002). A qualitative analysis of employers' experience with visually impaired workers. *Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness, 96*(9), 622-634. Article reports findings from interviews with employers who have hired, accommodated, and trained workers with visual impairments in competitive positions. Five major categories of discussion were revealed: accommodations, satisfaction with visually impaired employees, anticipated challenges to hiring an individual with a visual impairment, actual challenges encountered, and the hiring process. The results have been used to develop a model for enhancing the employment rate of visually impaired job seekers. The model includes a network of experienced employers who, acting as mentors for those who have never hired a person who is visually impaired, share common concerns and discuss problems they have solved successfully.

Wood, D., & Marshall, E. S. (2010). Nurses with disabilities working in hospital settings: Attitudes, concerns, and experiences of nurse leaders. *Journal of Professional Nursing, 26*(3), 182-187. Nearly 50 million people in the United States live with a disability. People with disabilities are increasingly represented in professional nursing. It is important to understand attitudes and concerns of nurse leaders who hire and work with nurses with disabilities. Using an exploratory descriptive design, this study surveyed nurse managers from 600 hospitals, with responses from 219 participants. Using a modified version of two subscales of the Employer Attitude Questionnaire, nurse managers expressed attitudes toward work performance, reported concerns or perceived abilities of staff nurses with disabilities to work in administrative positions, rated job performance, and described accommodations extended to staff nurses with a broad range of disabilities. Results indicated that most nurse managers rated work performance as exceptional or above average. Concerns included abilities to perform necessary job tasks, patient safety, and acceptance by the public and by coworkers of the nurses with disabilities. There was a significant positive relationship between nurse managers’ previous exposure to nurses with disabilities and their willingness to hire nurses with disabilities. Conclusions indicate a need for the discipline to move beyond advocacy and personal case sharing to research on promotion of effective means of recruitment and retention of professional nurses with disabilities.

Wooten, L. P., & James, E. H. (2005). Challenges of Organizational Learning: Perpetuation of Discrimination Against Employees with Disabilities. *Behavioral Sciences and the Law, 23* (Journal Article), 123-141. This article examines why organizations struggle with learning how to prevent discrimination against their employees with disabilities. To explore this issue, qualitative archival data were collected and analyzed from 53 Americas with Disabilities Act (ADA) lawsuits filed against 44 organizations. Theoretical analysis of the qualitative data suggests that several organizationally based learning theories explain the difficulty organizations have with creating a disability-friendly work environment. These barriers to learning are embedded in complex defense mechanisms and discriminatory organizational routines. Furthermore, organizations have difficulties engaging in higher-order and vicarious learning. We conclude the article with examples of success learning practices as they relate to barriers identified in the qualitative analysis.

Wynne, R., & McAnaney, D. (2009). Preventing social exclusion through illness or disability: Models of good practice. *Work: Journal of Prevention, Assessment & Rehabilitation, 32*(1), 95-103. The starting point adopted for the development of the policy analysis framework was the ‘return to work threshold’, the factors and services that influence the chances of an absentee returning to work. Purpose refers to the intention of the measure. Relevant measures and initiatives are aimed at achieving a range of outcomes for the chronically ill or disabled employee. Health improvement measures include general medical services and specific post acute health maintenance interventions such as pain management. Retention measures aim to ensure that people at work maintain their workability through health promotion, risk management and occupational health and safety activities. Particularly relevant here are measures that aim to facilitate the redeployment of employees to other positions within the same company. The ways in which these impact negatively can include lack of appropriate and timely responses, fragmentation of responsibility for action, lack of clarity or even competing aims in return to work outcomes, lack of awareness of available options by the employer and/or the worker, needlessly
restrictive eligibility requirements or the lack of a coherent policy framework for action. Overall, the study has shown that there are significant changes in approach taking place in Europe.


The passage of the ADA raised expectations about employment among persons with disabilities, but this expectation has been tempered by growing job insecurity throughout the economy. In this article, I review the major trends in employment in the United States and show that persons with disabilities have experienced these trends in exaggerated form. Thus women with disabilities have experienced substantial increases in employment rates, while men with disabilities have seen their employment rates decrease. Persons with disabilities have experienced a disproportionate amount of the growth in part-time work. Overall, persons with disabilities have become one of the principal ways of accommodating change in the demand for labor.


This article presents a leadership-based intervention model designed to modify supervisory monitoring and rewarding of subordinates’ safety performance. Line supervisors received weekly feedback based on repeated episodic interviews with subordinates concerning the cumulative frequency of their safety oriented interactions. This information identified the priority of safety over competing goals such as speed or schedules. Section managers received the same information and used it to communicate (high) safety priority. They also were trained to conduct episodic interviews to provide intermittent feedback after intervention, turning safety priority into an explicit performance goal. Safety-oriented interaction increased significantly in the experimental groups but remained unchanged in the control groups. This change in safety-oriented interaction was accompanied by significant (and stable) changes in minor injury rate, earplug use, and safety climate scores during the postintervention period.


As American workers age, workers with impairments and functional limitations make up a larger percentage of our workforce. This investigation presents data from the National Health Interview Survey Disability Supplement 1994–1995 (NHIS-D) describing the nature of workplace accommodations in the American workforce and factors associated with the provision of such accommodations. Of a nationally representative sample of workers aged 18 to 69 years with a wide range of impairments, 12% reported receiving workplace accommodations. Males (odds ratio (OR) 0.64: 95% confidence interval (CI) 0.53–0.78) and Southerners (OR 0.57; 95% CI _ 0.47–0.70) were less likely than others to receive workplace accommodations. Those with mental health conditions were less likely than others to receive accommodations (OR 0.56; 95% CI _ 0.47–0.70). College graduates (OR 1.53; 95% CI _ 1.22–1.91), older workers, full time workers (OR 3.99; 95% CI _ 2.63–3.87), and the self-employed (OR 1.76; 95% CI _ 1.28–2.41) were more likely than others to receive accommodations.