

Pan Disability Connection

Exploring Employer Views of Selecting and Accommodating Persons with Disabilities

Report on Survey Findings

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Executive Summary

Employer-based Inclusive Employment policies & practices are a principle mechanism for raising the level of meaningful employment for persons with disabilities. In 2017, the Pan Disability Connection (PDC) undertook a study to identify the prevalence of Inclusive Employment practices in the greater Edmonton area, the barriers experienced by employers when striving for Inclusive Employment, and the supports and resources employers desire to enhance their capacity to engage in Inclusive Employment.

Responses from 21 participants in the study were analyzed and reported herein by Shakera Mairs and Mike Annett of MacEwan University.

Notable Findings

1. 70% of Diversity and Inclusion policies are meaningfully upheld, but only 50% of respondent companies had such policies. Holding a perception that Inclusive Employment is socially appropriate and is positively related to respondent willingness to engage in related practices. 'Management commitment', 'Formal policies', and 'Leader / HR support' all meaningfully contribute to the norm of Inclusive Employment in organizations.
2. The 'Traditional Assessment Process' is the largest barrier to Inclusive Employment from the respondent perspective. The study did not explore or discover attributes of the process that create the barrier, but is presumed here to infer issues in job qualification standards and candidate screening. It is interesting to note that 'Sourcing' was also a larger barrier, but 'Application Process' and 'Interview Process' were lesser barriers. This suggests the respondents are aware of 'entry' issues largely from the employer (not candidate) perspective.
3. 'Listings of Grants / Funding' is the greatest support desired by respondents. The study did not explore or discover the underlying need for the funding – for example, whether the funding was needed for hard cost mitigation, or to serve as a motivational aspect to secure leader support. The next class of desired supports related to social motivation and influence support (e.g. Awareness Training, Success Stories, Consulting Services). Least desired are more technical how-to supports (e.g. Model Policies, Legislation FAQs).
4. The study contributed information to an academic model exploring respondent willingness and action for Inclusive Employment. The model showed limited relationship between levels of 'willingness' and 'action', which is partly explained by study design, but also highlights the likelihood that 'circumstances' contribute booster and blocker effects on willingness.

Moving Forward Recommendations

The study provides PDC with a measure of clarity for the state of Inclusive employment in organizations, and allows insights into beneficial areas for enhanced action by the PDC.

Three suggestions for next steps are:

1. **Prepare and circulate funding and cost-recovery guidance for organizations to increase awareness of available resources and methods of securing funding.** Implementation could include listing on websites, client 'leave-behinds', newsletter article content, and special information sessions / webinars.

2. **Engage in coaching and peer-sharing to enhance social presence and inter-organizational connections that raise the perceived 'normalcy' of Inclusive Employment.** Implementation could include seminars at relevant conferences, forming accountability & support pairings / triads between organizations, and initiating a PDC consulting service.
3. **Conduct practical research on the 'Traditional Assessment Process' barrier and develop an alternative assessment model to overcome the identified issues.** Implementation could include a PDC member organization internal project (e.g. a member tasks its HR Department for support), or partnering with a post-secondary institution as a 'Community Service Learning' or 'Consulting Services' collaboration.

In addition to the above practical next steps, the PDC is encouraged to consider the process and findings of this study, and determine if a 2018 replication, enhancement, or refocusing is warranted to provide the information most helpful to its mission and deliverables.

Introduction

The Pan Disability Connection (PDC) works to support the inclusion of persons with disabilities (PWD) in common society. PDC engaged research support from MacEwan University (Mairs and Annett) to learn from employers about their organizational culture and practices related to employing persons with disabilities and concerns or barriers they perceive / experience.

This report begins with an introduction of PDC member experiences and an overview of related academic literature regarding employment of persons with disabilities. Following this introduction are notes on Methodology. Then, questions and findings related to 'Context' and 'Barriers' are presented. Lastly, findings related to Exploratory Scholarship of the willingness and actions for Inclusive Employment practices are presented.

Pan Disability Connection – Snapshot of Experience

The Pan Disability Connection is a collective impact organization working together to identify and eliminate systemic barriers to employment for persons with disabilities. Members of the PDC include Disability Service Organizations (DSO) (e.g. Chrysalis, Employabilities, Gateway Association, and Prospect) and organizations motivated to internally achieve and publicly champion diversity and inclusion (e.g. DynaLife, Enbridge, and Stantec). PDC has observed a range of attitudes and actions towards the employment of persons with disabilities, including enthusiastic acceptance, tolerance, and disinterest. Anecdotally, the varying responses are attributed to corporate leadership, company representative idiosyncratic perceptions, and workplace conditions / circumstances. PDC member awareness of employment issues and circumstances aligns with findings from Statistics Canada (2014).

Academic Literature Comments

Employment practices regarding PWD and low rates of workplace inclusion are longstanding, widespread, and significant issues (Procknow & Rocco, 2016). Kulkarni (2012) reports that relative to non-PWD job seekers PWD job seekers encounter more hardships in securing and maintaining employment. Statistics Canada further identifies employment differences between those self-identifying as disabled and those not (2014).

One explanation of this employment hardship is 'person-job fit' and clear recognition that some people are more and less-suited for some jobs. This perspective is borne-out in the common recruitment and selection literature (Sekeiguchi & Huber, 2011), and applies in the context of performance limiting disability. For example, Grandin (1999), writing about finding good jobs for people with Autism, summarized a series of jobs that are more suited to persons with higher working memory and lower working memory, or those that are visual thinkers versus non-visual thinkers. Considering that some jobs have well established personality or competency predictors for success (Edwards, 1991), or Bona Fide Occupational Requirements (Thun, 2007) it is reasonable to expect 'good fit' on valid performance dimensions is beneficial, and that 'poor fit' may create frustration and a range of problems for both the company and the person.

The legitimacy of 'fit' begets a related issue of 'accommodations' and whether technology, tools, adaptations, or other supports can augment the performance of a person and induce fit that would be otherwise absent. Evidence from scholarship into a priori disability and workplace accommodation and

return-to-work from injury and illness workplace accommodation suggests that many disabling, person-centered limitations and conditions can be mitigated with non-onerous additional tools and supports or adjustments to the work / work-processes (Schur et al, 2014). Therefore, it is probable that initial assessments of 'poor fit' for PWD may be overcome if there is sufficient application of accommodations.

A different explanation for the hardship of PWD securing and maintaining employment is the attitude of company representatives. Specifically, some representatives have prima facie concerns that PWD lack the traditional knowledge, skills and abilities for the job and thus are not properly considered for the capabilities they do possess (Lengnick, Gaunt and Kulkarni, 2008). That is, they are screened-out (excluded) before a proper assessment of fit or need for accommodation is completed. In a study of hiring manager concerns towards persons with disabilities, Annett & Mairs (2017) recorded direct quotes of supervisors philosophically against considering employment of persons with disabilities. Similarly, in a study of students intending to become managers Carvalho-Freitas, et al (2015), found a significant number articulated a low willingness to work with persons that have a disability. Subsequently, it is reasonable to expect some PWD are actively discriminated against in the employment process according to the representative's perception of them rather than their actual performance.

Conclusion

In light of the practical experience of PDC members and the academic literature, it is reasonable to conclude that employer actions towards inclusiveness are predicated upon employment circumstances (e.g. type of work), ability to effectively accommodate persons with disabilities, and individual / corporate willingness to employ (i.e. select-in; accommodate) persons with disabilities. However, specific information about Inclusive Employment practices in particular organizations and in the greater Edmonton area is not well recorded or appreciated. As such, the PDC study discovers useful and needed information to guiding influence efforts of organizations such as the PDC.

Methodology

The study was conducted using targeted and snowball sample approaches to facilitate distribution of an electronic survey in the greater Edmonton area. More than 80 organizations were directly solicited for response in June and July 2017. In total 43 responses were submitted by August 2018. However, when significantly incomplete submissions are eliminated the analyzed set of data is reduced to 21 significantly completed submissions for an estimated response rate of 26%. The survey questions and response coding are listed in Appendix B.

PDC guided development of the survey instrument and focused the questions on practical aspects of Inclusive Employment in organizations. This information provides context information regarding the volume, form, and context of Inclusive Employment practices. This includes topics areas for:

- Company and Respondent Characteristics
- Perceptions of Employer's Inclusiveness
- HRM and Supervisory Practices
- Inclusiveness Improvement Options
- Personal Practices

Several academic literature-oriented questions were included in the survey to help inform the development of a model that articulates influences on 'willingness' to engage in Inclusive Employment practices and the translation of willingness to action. These questions primarily formed scales / constructs such as norms, negative attitudes, capacity, willingness, intentional action, and circumstances.

Compiled data was analyzed using general statistical assessments for frequency, central tendency cross-tabulation, correlation, and scale development. Thematic coding of the comments was also conducted.

Context Questions and Findings

The majority of survey questions provided basic information about the respondents, their respective company, and their views of corporate and personal Inclusive Employment practices. The tables and general comments below provide a summary of notable data. The full set of tables is provided in Appendix A, and a spreadsheet summary of the quantitative data is provided in Appendix C.

Note: Many questions presented a response scale with 0 = Not at All and 10 = Very Much. Other questions presented 'Yes / No', or Select All Appropriate response options.

A range of industries are represented, with Transportation and Warehousing, and "Other Services" representing about one-third of the respondents' companies.

Industry (Q02)	Count
Accommodation and food services	1
Arts, entertainment and recreation	1
Construction	1
Educational services	2
Health care and social assistance	2
Information and cultural industries	1
Manufacturing	1
Other services (except public administration)	4
Public administration	1
Transportation and warehousing	4
Utilities	2

The companies were also medium to large size organizations, with more than half employing 150 or more people.

Headcount (Q03)	Count
10-49 Employees	3
50-149 Employees	6
150-249 Employees	1
250-999 Employees	2
1000+ Employees	9

Of the 12 that answered the question about unionization, there was a relative balanced range for the amount of unionized employees at the organization.

Unionization (Q04)	Count
No Union At All	2
3	2
7	2
8	1
9	2
Mostly / Fully Unionized	3

The presence of a Diversity and Inclusion Policy was split equally – 10 yes and 10 no, but of the 10 yes responses there is some difference in the degree to which the policy is actually upheld.

D&I Policy Upheld (Q05)	Count
Not At All	1
5	1
6	1
7	2
8	3
Very Much	2

To assure sufficient insight and perspective about Inclusive Employment, respondents indicated their role and amount of staffing actions undertaken in the past 12 months. Summaries of this data are:

Role (Q07)	Count
Employee	3
Human Resource Department Member	7
Middle Manager	3
Senior Leader	3
Supervisor / Manager	5

Staffing Actions (Q08)	Count
0	5
1 to 10	14
11 to 20	1
200	1

A range of disabilities in the workplace have been observed by respondents.

Observed Disabilities (Q17)	Count
a) Physical	8
b) Sensory	3
c) Intellectual	2
d) Emotional-Mental Health	3
e) Developmental	4

Respondents clarified their perception of disability by providing general examples such as ‘cognitive’, ‘psychological’, ‘autoimmune’, ‘hearing and sight impairment’, and ‘learning’ with only ‘Downs Syndrome’ identified by name.

Regarding experience and intention for inclusive hiring, about half indicate they have either hired or accommodated a PWD, and there is a high positive inclination for hiring PWD.

Inclusive Hiring Inclination (Q36)	Count	Range	Mean	67% of Responses +/- from the Mean
a) General Positive Intention	18	4-10	7.9	2.1
b) Will When Opportunity	18	3-10	8.6	2.2

Intentionally (Q42)	Count
a) Hired a PWD	10
b) Requested / Approved an Accommodation	10

When asked about the circumstances of disability inclusion, all four circumstances were identified by respondents with only three respondents indicating all circumstances.

Inclusion Circumstances (Q12)	New Hire & Low Impact	New Hire & High Impact	Return to Work	General Decline
Yes	14	15	15	9

Accommodation Types (Q18)	Count	Range	Mean	67% of Responses +/- from the Mean
a) Job Carving	17	1-10	6.1	2.7
b) Job Aids	17	0-10	6.3	3.6
c) Workplace Design	16	0-10	6.6	3.1

Reporting Higher Levels of Accommodation (Q18)	Job Carving	Job Aids	Workplace Design
Industry (Note: Headcount, Unionization, and Presence of D&I Policy did not meaningfully indicate accommodation type.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information and Cultural Industries Other Services (Excluding Public Administration) Transportation and Warehousing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educational Services Healthcare and Social Assistance Other Services (Except Public Administration) Transportation and Warehousing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education Services Healthcare and Social Assistance Other Services (Except Public Administration)

Barriers Research Questions and Findings

The PDC expressed a need to better understand barriers employees may experience for hiring persons with disabilities, and articulated the following principle areas of interest:

- 1) Recruitment and Hiring
- 2) Onboarding
- 3) Retention
- 4) Tools and Resources
- 5) Employer Feedback and Perspective

These principles areas are presented in order with introductions to the PDC's perceived barriers and corresponding findings from employers. Context variables introduced above, and additional questions from the survey, are include where appropriate to provide additional insight.

Recruitment and Hiring

Based on experience and literature, it is probable that employers with intentions for employment inclusiveness encounter difficulty sourcing desired candidates, and selection process that make hiring difficult.

Several potential barriers were explored, as listed in the chart below.

Hiring Barriers (Q23)	Count	Range	Mean	67% of Responses +/- from the Mean
a) Sourcing	18	4-10	5.8	3.5
b) Application Process	16	0-10	4.4	3.5
c) Systemic Discrimination	17	0-10	5.9	2.8
d) Qualifications	14	0-10	5.8	2.7
e) Interview Process	16	0-10	3.9	3.0
f) Traditional Assessment Process	16	2-10	6.5	2.3
g) Conflicting Policies	13	0-10	5.8	3.5

Across all respondents and type of hiring barrier, the mean rating is 5.7 and standard deviation of 2.3.

The industries that report relatively lower barriers (mean less than 3.4) are Health Care and Social Assistance as well as Arts, Entertainment and Recreation, and higher (mean greater than 8.0) are Utilities and Educational Services.

The range and means of participant responses indicates that some hiring barriers are more concerning than others. Notable findings include that:

- all barriers were perceived as present.
- only the Application Process and Interview process had averages less than 5/10 indicating they were seen as lesser barriers by respondents.
- only Sourcing and Traditional Assessment Process were seen as a barrier by all respondents (no respondent indicated '0 = Not at All'.
- only Traditional Assessment Processes had a mean rated above 6, as well it had a relatively tight standard deviation of 2.3, meaning that statistically, 67% of respondents would rate it as perceived barrier between 5.2 and 8.9 / 10.

From the responses, while many barriers are present, the most significant barrier appears to be the Traditional Assessment Process.

When contrasting the barrier 'Traditional Assessment Process' with the presence of a Diversity & Inclusion Policy at the company, the barrier of 'Traditional Assessment Process' was perceived as greater in those companies with a policy than those without. But, of those with a policy, those companies with a policy that is more meaningfully upheld, the barrier is lesser perceived.

These findings may indicate that Traditional Assessment Processes are more of a barrier in companies that claim to promote diversity via policy but fail to uphold that policy, than either companies without a policy or companies that meaningfully uphold their policy.

Onboarding

After hiring, the next step of employment is the actual entry and initial preparation of the employee for their work.

Onboard Barriers (Q24)	Count	Range	Mean	67% of Responses +/- from the Mean
c) Administration	12	0-6	2.2	2.6
d) Training Preparation	15	0-9	4.7	2.9
e) Integration	16	0-9	3.5	2.6

The range and means of participant responses indicates that onboarding barriers are not a significant overall concern. The aspect of 'Training Preparation' had the largest overall mean, and was rated as a higher barrier by:

- **Industry:** Accommodation & Food Services; Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation, and Other Services (Excluding Public Administration)
- **Unionization:** Level of unionization is 7 or more.

Other company descriptors such as headcount, and whether a D&I Policy was present or meaningfully upheld did not clearly indicate the significance of this barrier.

These findings indicate that Onboarding Barriers are somewhat perceived by respondents and the largest barrier of ‘Training Preparation’ may be related to the nature of work to be trained in, or the formalization of duties as often present in more unionized organizations.

Retention

The initial employment of persons with disabilities is one matter, and retention once employed is another. Retention is considered here from the perspective of the employer and according to motivating and demotivating factors for assuring the persons continued employment.

Positive Impressions (Q26)	Count	Range	Mean	67% of Responses +/- from the Mean
a) Loyalty	19	5-10	8.0	1.9
b) Reliability	19	5-10	7.7	1.9
c) Commitment	19	5-10	8.2	1.7
d) Attitude	18	5-10	8.1	1.9
e) Impact on Team Culture	18	5-10	8.2	1.5

The range and means of participant responses indicates that PWD are generally perceived as making positive impressions upon the organization.

Retention Barriers (Q27)	Count	Range	Mean	67% of Responses +/- from the Mean
a) Training Needs	15	1-10	5.7	2.3
b) Low Promotion Potential	14	1-9	5.1	2.3
c) Performance Management Concerns	13	0-9	3.9	2.6
d) Goal Setting Difficulties	12	0-9	3.3	2.6
e) Discipline is Difficult	11	1-10	4.0	3.3
f) Low Engagement	11	1-9	3.2	2.9
g) Compensation Relative to Contribution	12	1-9	3.3	2.5

The range and means of participant responses indicates that the main retention barriers pertain to employee training needs, and promotion potential.

Across all respondents and type of retention barrier, the mean rating is 4.5 and standard deviation of 2.5. The respondents that report relatively higher retention barriers (mean greater than 7.0) are:

- **Industry:** Utilities, and Other Services (Except Public Administration).
- **Headcount:** 1000+ Employees
- **D&I Policy:** Yes policy and lower scores of the policy ‘being meaningfully upheld’

These findings indicate that Retention Barriers are perceived by respondents but that PWD employees are rated favourably for positive impression aspects of their employment, and that few of the likely demotivating aspects of their employment are rated as significant problems. Subsequently, the data suggests the once employed the organization's perception of general conduct and performance of the PWD is less likely to be a factor for their continued employment.

Tools and Resources

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which any hesitation in the organization for hiring a PWD was related to the items below.

Hiring Hesitation (Q29)	Count	Range	Mean	Standard Deviation: (67% of Responses +/- from the Mean)
a) Lack of Resources, Supports, Information	16	0-9	5.3	2.7
b) Negative Perceptions about PWD	15	0-7	2.5	2.6
c) Limited Exposure to PWD	18	0-9	3.6	3.1
d) Lack of Government Grant Funding	16	0-9	4.4	3.2
e) No Desire for Inclusion	11	0-8	2.2	3.0

The two largest hesitations (Lack of Resources, Lack of Government Funding) represent more tactile issues, whereas the three lowest hesitations pertain to perceptions towards to diversity and inclusion.

When asked for comments about their hesitation rankings, respondents provide the following:

Hire Hesitation Comments (Q30)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the union environment, some staff would see it as not "fair" to have a staff member on the same level or pay scale that needed assistance or modification to their duties. We would need our union to make sure they supported these hiring practices.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No HR systems are in place to easily hire someone with a disability. The process is defined and not many hiring managers think to look at the potential candidates that might come from a Disability Service Organization
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our organization specifically wants to hire individuals with significant autism/intellectual disability. It is very unfortunate that most grants that are available are aimed at increasing employment for individuals who are "higher functioning" than our target population. It would be very helpful if we could acquire some grant funding while we more toward complete sustainability.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety and technical requirements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills, education or ability to do the job. Safety.

- We don't always feel like we have the time necessary to dedicate to the proper training of the employee with a disability. We are in the chemical industry, and as such work with a lot of dangerous substances, so our opportunities to employ people with disabilities are mitigated somewhat by that.

Respondents also indicated which tools and resources may help them initiate and enhance inclusive hiring practices. The frequency of 'yes' responses to each suggested resource or tool is listed below.

Tools and Resources (Q31)	Count
a) Listings of Employment Grants for PWD	13
b) Disability Awareness Training for All Employees	12
c) Positive Literature / Success Stories	12
d) Consulting Services from Disability Service Organizations	10
e) Guides to 'Inclusive Hiring Practices'	9
f) Business Case Information	7
g) Model Policies for Common HR Processes	6
h) Legislation FAQs	2

Consistent with the findings of the hiring hesitation question (Q29), employers desire financial support for hiring persons with disabilities. This is followed by general motivational / awareness supports (i.e. awareness training, positive literature), then by general support (i.e. consulting services, and hiring guides). Lower down on the ranking are more technical supports (i.e. business case, model policies, and legislation faq).

Respondents were invited to suggest other resources or tools, and two comments were offered. One suggested 'promotional videos'. The other indicated that most of the above supports were not relevant as the organization specifically targets 'people with significant intellectual disabilities'. This respondent named 'employments grants' as the sole desired support and did not describe additional supports would be helpful in that objective.

The findings of these questions are in some contrast as respondents indicate lower hesitations related to perceptions of PWD but value resources that positively influence perceptions. This may indicate a 'desirability bias' in the hesitation response. However, it is clear that employers desiring support are looking for general 'influence' support rather than specific 'how-to' support.

Employer Feedback and Perspective

Respondents provided sets of open ended comments which are presented and themed below.

The circumstances that aided their Inclusive Employment practices are:

Conditions / Circumstances that Facilitate Hiring and/or Accommodation (Q43)	Count
a) Part of a Disability Management Process	3
b) Support from a Disability Service Organization	2
c) Willing to understand and adapt to the person's abilities	2
d) Workplace Mission is to Create Jobs for PWD	1

The biggest hiring barriers and corresponding suggested solutions are:

Biggest Hiring Barrier (Q32)	Suggested Solution (Q33)
Work Design / Business Operations	
Many very physically demanding jobs that may not align with certain physical disabilities	Tell stories about all the successful employees that have disabilities
The perception that in a recreation environment that it would be difficult to employ someone with a disability in a more active and dynamic workplace.	Create diversity and inclusion policies; and reach out to Disability Service Organizations.
The amount of work we can offer to a disabled people that doesn't involve repeated handling of dangerous chemical substances. We are happy to have them help us with non-regulated, repetitive tasks.	There is little we can do to alter this (the above) given our existing business model.
Attitudes and the way we do work and understand what work traditionally looks like.	Education and a new structure of systems to allow for innovation
Identifying the right tasks and roles (depending on the disability)	None Provided
Corporate Supports / Directions	
Limited resources and determining how to support our diverse communities (e.g. newcomers, visible minorities, Indigenous communities)	More financial support
Knowledge of what type of resources are available, assistance from HR doesn't always include hiring someone with a disability unless the HR individual is passionate about making a difference in this way.	Policies/or suggestions from HR should be in place to look at all options before starting the interview process. Looking at job carving before.
Someone taking the time to look into it	Positive experiences need to be shown
Labour Market / Candidate Abilities	
Current competitive labour market	None Provided
Skills and experience.	Persons with education and skills, ability to do the job are considered regardless of disability.

Personal reflections are:

Personal Intentions or Actions for Inclusive Hiring (V43)
General Willingness
Gave them an opportunity to have success
I haven't sought out to place a person with a disability in a specific position but am open to it.
Active Interest
I understand the personal biases and attitudes that prevent persons with disabilities being hired but in my unit we are actively look and finding ways to hire under represented people who have barriers to employment.
Our aim is to become fully sustainable by having enough jobs for individuals with significant autism/intellectual disability to produce the necessary income to pay for overhead and administrative expenses. I think it is important that we are trying to do this by finding a way that folks with the skills and strengths our population comes with can provide paid services to the community. We are emphatically not trying to fit people with disabilities into jobs that were not originally designed for them.
We have recently hired 2 part time employees with a disability and they are starting next week.
Legitimate Inclusiveness
I don't believe qualified candidates should be screened out to make room for disabilities, that is hiring for optics. I believe in hiring the right person for the job whether they have a disability or not. That is inclusive.

General comments are:

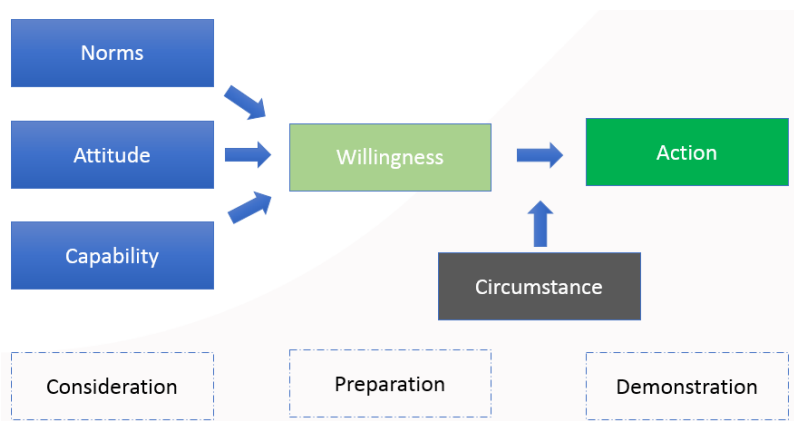
General Comments (Q44)
Concerted Action / Intention Needed
Most of my experience tells me that without explicit driven initiatives to hire persons with disabilities by leadership and educating employer's persons with disabilities will continue to be under employed and with funding so constrictive disability, employment agencies are not able to assist in getting people into the workplace.
It would help if Disability Service Organizations would check back at the workplace at regular intervals regarding their client and how they are doing. There could be changes at the workplace. Or the supervisory staff may need help in communicating new work practices.
Benefits of Inclusive Employment
It brings a total different feel to the work place, you really can only explain it from personal experience of working with people with disabilities
I do think it's important to consider that some organizations/businesses might want to begin with the desire to employ a certain segment of the disabled population. When that's the starting point, it's easier to create jobs that fit the needs, rather than retroactively trying to accommodate the job to the needs surrounding disabilities. Although there are challenges, in general, creating jobs for this population is incredibly rewarding
PWD Perceptions
I feel that people with disabilities may not apply in the field of recreation due to their perceptions that it would be difficult to be accommodating? But that is just my assumption.

Exploratory Scholarship

The study provided opportunity to explore and begin developing a model for articulating antecedents and pathways that lead to Inclusive Employment practices, as well as intervening factors that may serve as boosters or barriers. Although the study did not have sufficient response rates to generate statistically significant results and relationships, the gained information and perspective is helpful to future work in this area.

The Theory of Planned Behaviour, operationalized as the Reasoned Action Approach, (REFERENCE), provides a wholistic framework for appreciating antecedents, intentions, and implementation of complex behaviours such as Inclusive Employment. This framework is widely applied in many behavioural psychology and economic studies, but is still developing in the human resource management and business practices field.

A representation of the model is presented below, and illustrates that ‘preparation’ or the willingness to engage in a behaviour or practice is preceded by several forms of ‘consideration’ or antecedent influences. Further, that preparation precedes ‘demonstration’ and that the step between intending to perform a behaviour and actually performing a behaviour can be boosted or blocked by various circumstances. This is generally appreciated as the ‘knowing – doing’ gap.



The survey data was analyzed two stages. The first stage was to determine if expected constructs (scales) for consideration, and preparation, and demonstration could be established. The second stage was to assess the relationships between those constructions.

Construct Assessment

Consideration

Three consideration constructs are Norms, Negative Attitude, and Capability.

Construct	Scale Reliability (above .70 is desirable)	Scale Mean	Scale Standard Deviation: (67% of Responses +/- from the Mean)
Norms (Q20)	Cronbach Alpha: 0.81	7.5	2.0
Negative Attitude (Q35)	Cronbach Alpha: 0.66	6.5	1.4
Capability (Q37)	Cronbach Alpha: 0.62	7.3	1.6

‘Norms’ refers to the general pattern of social behaviour and expectations. In the study, these were specifically addressed with Q20 and items such as “The culture of your organization is inclusive”, “My organization has a policy or formal support to hire a person with a disability”, and “My organization strives for a sense of community / belonging in the workplace”. The results show that the survey items work well-together as a scale and respondents express a relatively high level of agreement that Inclusive Employment practices are socially acceptable.

‘Negative Attitude’ refers to a pessimistic personal perspective or approach to a person, behaviour, or circumstance. In the study, this was specifically addressed with Q35 regarding general comparisons to non-disabled employees using items such as “Lower performance capacity”, “Increased liability”, “Increased absenteeism” and “Increased supervisory requirements”. When the item regarding absenteeism is removed from the scale the results show that the remaining measures of attitude work somewhat well as a scale, and that respondents expressed a moderate level (mean = 6.5) of negative attitude or recognition of difficulties regarding Inclusive Employment and employment of PWD.

‘Capability’ refers to locus of control and personal capacity to effect a decision, behaviour, or outcome. In the study, this was specifically addressed with Q37 regarding supervisory functions of persons with disabilities using items such as “Have personal authority to hire”, “Have skills and abilities to supervise”, and “Have the ability to positively advocate for”. When the item regarding “authority” is removed from the scale the results show that the remaining measures of capability work somewhat well as a scale, and that respondents expressed a relatively high level of self-belief for tasks and accountabilities related to Inclusive Employment.

Preparation

The single preparation construct is Willingness.

Construct	Scale Reliability (above .70 is desirable)	Scale Mean	Scale Standard Deviation: (67% of Responses +/- from the Mean)
Willingness (Q36)	Cronbach Alpha: 0.83	8.2	2.0

‘Willingness’ is the positive inclination to effect a certain decision, behaviour, or outcome. In the study, this was specifically addressed with Q36, and items such as “You have positive intentions towards hiring” and “If the opportunity presented itself you would consider hiring”. The result shows the survey items work well together as a scale and respondents express a high level of willingness to engage in Inclusive Employment.

Demonstration

The single demonstration construct is Intentional Action.

Construct	None	Accommodation	Hiring	Both
Action (Q42)	7	10	12	8
	No		Yes	
Action Binomial	7		14	

‘Intentional Action’ is an informed and expressly completed decision or behaviour to achieve an outcome. In the study, this was specifically addressed with Q42, and items Have you intentionally

“Hired a person with a disability” and “Requested / Approved work-related accommodations.” The count of responses for each potential action is presented, and then collapsed into simple ‘no’ and ‘yes’ categories for having completed no accommodations or hirings, or having completed one or both actions. The results show that two-thirds of respondents had intentionally acted towards Inclusive Employment (versus passive support in relation to a hidden disability).

Circumstance

‘Booster’ is a policy, person, or practice that enhances a person’s willingness to enact a decision or perform a behavior. In this study, the presence of various boosters were assessed but the potency of those boosters was not assessed.

Willingness Boosters (Q41)	Count
a) Feeling Supported by DSO	9
b) Presence of Champion	8
c) Feeling Supported by Leader / HR	7
d) Personal Social Connection	6
e) Saw Examples of Action	5
f) Influenced by DSO Marketing Messages	2

The results show that positive active support from DSO, Champion, and Leader / HR are the most common boosters of respondent willingness to engage in Inclusive Employment practices. These are followed closely by aspects of the social environment including having a personal social connection with a PWD and having observed Inclusive Employment practices. The least common booster is being influenced by DSO Marketing / Promotional Messages – although it is not clear if the issue is potency of the messages or the non-awareness of messages.

‘Blocker’ is a policy, person, or practice that reduces a person’s willingness to enact a decision or perform a behavior. In this study, the presence of various blockers were assessed but the potency of those blockers was not assessed.

Willingness Blockers (Q41)	Count
a) Workplace Conditions	10
b) Budget / Costs	5
c) Personal Authority	5
d) Lack of Clear / Meaningfully Supported D&I Policy	4
e) Conflicting Policies	4
f) Personal Ability to Supervise / Manage	4
g) Personal Willingness to Supervise / Manage	3
h) Personal Perceptions of Risk / Concern	3
i) Organizational Culture / Norms	3

The results show that workplace conditions are the most significant blocker of respondents’ willingness to engage in Inclusive Employment practices. These conditions include the respondent’s individual

assessment of safety, non-changeable work / processes, and bona fide occupational requirements). Further, that while other impediments are less common, they are still present for some respondents.

Relationship Assessment

The second stage of analysis involved assessing the relationships between constructs.

First, correlations were assessed for each of the consideration variables (norms, negative attitude, capacity) with the preparation variable (willingness).

		Correlations			
		Norms	Negative Attitude	Capacity	Willingness
Norms	Pearson Correlation	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
Negative Attitude	Pearson Correlation	-0.310	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.499			
Capacity	Pearson Correlation	0.662	-0.171	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.052	0.616		
Willingness	Pearson Correlation	0.664	-0.001	0.130	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.051	0.997	0.606	

Significance is normally established at .05, but may also be accepted at 0.10.

Two ‘close to significant’ correlations were determined – that norms is positively related to capacity, and positively related to willingness. This suggests that greater awareness that Inclusive Employment practices are ‘common’ or ‘usual’ corresponded with feelings of being capable of engaging in Inclusive Employment practices. Further, that greater awareness of that Inclusive Employment practices are ‘common’ or ‘usual’ corresponded with greater internal motivation to engage in Inclusive Employment practices.

It is also useful to note that Negative Attitude was negative correlated with the other variables, suggesting that more negative attitudes relate to lower perceptions of norms, capacity, and willingness, or vice versa, that higher perceptions of norms, capacity, and willingness are related to lower negative attitudes.

These findings suggest, in a limited way, that one pathway to influencing a person’s willingness to engage in Inclusive Employment practices is to increase the level of social normalcy of such behaviours. This could be achieved through promulgation of positive stories, influence of ‘champions’, and virtuous cycles.

Second, the relationship between the preparation construct (willingness) and the demonstration construct (action binomial) is assessed through Chi-square comparison. This statistical technique helps determine the independence between variables that have binomial values.

For this test, the willingness variable was forced into two categories – those below the scale median (8.5) were coded as 'less willing' while those above mean were coded as 'more willing'. The categories were then tested against the action binomial categories of 'no' and 'yes'.

The results of the test indicate non-significant Pearson Chi-Square probability value of 0.90. Meaning that respondents that were 'more willing' and 'less willing' were equally likely to have performed an intentional act of Inclusive Employment.

While the variable constructs, and the low number of survey respondents certainly contribute to the finding that there is no clear relation between willingness and action, it is important to also consider that there may be factors in the respondent's business environment that interrupt a willing actor, or compel an unwilling actor. Further research in this regard would be helpful.

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