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Disability as a diversity and inclusion factor in recruiting

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Abstract Above all, the population of individuals with impairments is constantly increasing, making them one of the largest groups in the diverse workforce. Jobs for people with impairments require the implementation and development of special processes within enterprises. This is because the details of employment for persons with disabilities must be considered organizationally and legally. Examining current diversity and inclusion policies of companies and states concerning the hiring of people with disabilities is the aim of this research. According to the study's findings, there were no appreciable differences between employees with disabilities and those without them at various stages of the hiring process. Nonetheless, it should be noted that corporate behavior regarding the employment of persons with disabilities is largely influenced by the Nigerian legal system.

Introduction

In the business sector, diversity and inclusion have received more attention in the twenty-first century. A growth in the percentage of working women and the engagement of individuals with diverse backgrounds, nationalities, and skill sets are prerequisites for this development (Garg & Sangwan, 2021). Additionally, managing diversity within a company is now a crucial economic necessity rather than a personal preference, according to Daniels' (2020) study. Strategies to manage and harness diversity should be developed by organizations in order to enhance and maintain enterprise-wide performance (Miller & Katz, 2019). Moreover, research by Sabharwal (2015) found a connection between the idea of inclusion and business practices pertaining to diversity. Since the terms "diversity" and "inclusion" are used interchangeably, it is necessary to study both concepts in order to critically examine how the workforce can be employed in this way (Holvino et al., 2019).

Above all, because the number of persons who have impairments is always rising, they make up one of the most significant categories in the varied workforce. As per World Bank figures (2021), the proportion of individuals who are disabled in all nations is 15%. This presents challenges for businesses and government agencies alike. Although many businesses actively integrate inclusion and diversity policies into their strategies, this isn't always done correctly (Collier, 2016). However, businesses frequently hire disabled workers because they believe their physical constraints will cause them to perform poorly in the workplace (Halvorsen & Hvinden, 2014). Consequently, recruiters frequently provide a lower rating to candidates with impairments than to those without (Vedeler, 2014; Coleman-Brunnen et al., 2017).

Pre-recruitment, enlistment, selection, and adjustment (Bonaccio et al., 2020) are stages that can be recognized by components such as recruitment, foundation, degree of incapacity, legal aspects, and staff attitudes. The employer's point of view demonstrates the benefits of creating administration practices for employing people with disabilities in companies and highlights some of the issues companies face in implementing such practices. Subsequently, future research will look at the issue of work of people with inabilities from the viewpoint of companies with regard to the stages of the recruitment process.

Literature review

Within the context of work, a disabled individual is somebody who is likely to find, return to, maintain, and advance in appropriate work as a result of a recognized physical, sensory, mental or mental incapacity. Those who are altogether declining (ILO, 2019) is unclear seems to be an incomplete thought. Given the proper conditions, most disabled individuals can be productive, so nearly all occupations can be done by disabled individuals. Many of the barriers that individuals with incapacities confront are not due to their inability, but to the way society sees them and the inhumane organization of work. In Nigeria, structural and physical barriers to accessing trade and business negatively influence the business prospects and efficiency of individuals with inabilities.

Even structures that give fundamental administrations such as wellbeing care, instruction, transportation, entertainment, and justice confront noteworthy obstructions that avoid individuals with incapacities from getting to programs and administrations essential for ordinary life. Access to these banks isn't conceivable for those using mobility aids or wheelchairs (Eleweke & Comparative, 2016). The few disabled people who are fortunate enough to be employed face physical challenges such as the lack of ramps, lack of lifts, narrow entrances and passages, inaccessible restrooms, and tight, overcrowded offices.

What do people need if they have the right skills for a job. Employers can benefit from hiring people with disabilities. Additionally, some employees become disabled while working. We can save a lot of money on medical bills, insurance, and missed work if we come up with good ways to help people with disabilities find jobs (ILO, 2014). Many companies today use diversity and inclusion strategies to recognize and appreciate the differences among their employees. This helps them stay ahead in the market. However, even though there is more attention on hiring people with disabilities in the workplace, companies are still reluctant to employ them because of prejudice. Studies show that workers with disabilities are just as productive as those without disabilities.

Diversity and inclusion in the workplace

Many countries and companies are now focusing on including people from various backgrounds in their workforce. This is a way to create a diverse and inclusive work environment. Therefore, it's really important for businesses today to manage diversity well. Diversity and inclusion in the workplace are extremely important. This was talked about by Frederick A. Miller and others started thinking about how to manage diversity in the 1980s because there were more and more different kinds of people working together. According to Cox (2020), diversity refers to the different social and cultural backgrounds of people working together in a specific place. William and O'Reilly (1998) say diversity refers to how different team members are in terms of things like their age, gender, and other characteristics. In their study, they discuss how this diversity can affect how well a team works together. Ely and Thomas say that diversity is about people from different groups having different ways of working and thinking. Hubbard defines diversity as a mix of both similarities and differences among employees that managers can use to achieve the company's goals. Based on these meanings, diversity in a company means that it has a variety of people from different backgrounds, reflecting the community it is in.

Diversity and including different people at work are important. This was first shown by Frederick A. Miller and others, who started thinking about how to manage diversity in the 1980s because there were more and more different kinds of people working together. Cox (2020) says diversity means having people from different backgrounds working together in the same place. Ely and Thomas (2020) say diversity refers to people from different groups having different ways of working. Hubbard (2019) says diversity is when employees have things in common but are also different, and leaders can use this to help the company succeed. Diversity in a company

means having a mix of people from different backgrounds that represent the community where the company is located. Furthermore diversity, means that people have many different qualities that make them unique. These characteristics can be grouped into four types of categories (Lakshman & Dr AmratRao, 2019):

- Personality (specific traits, abilities and skills),
- Internal (gender, age, IQ level, race),
- External (ethnicity, religion, culture, family status),
- Organizational (job title/position).

Having different kinds of people working in a company doesn't automatically make it better. Sabharwal (2014) and Sposato, et al., (2015) wrote that there is a need to make a workplace to be somewhere everyone is accepted and treated fairly, no matter where they come from. It was recommended by Waxman (2017) that researchers need to study how diversity and inclusion are connected to the features of an organization when making a plan.

Legal regulation of disability discrimination in employment

Nigeria is a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and its Optional Protocol. Article 4 of the Convention characterizes the common and particular commitments of States (counting Nigeria) and parties with regard to the rights of people with disabilities. One of the basic commitments contained within the Convention is that national law must guarantee the satisfaction of the rights listed within the Convention. Part of these commanded powers is the sanctioning and section of bills, which must incorporate the foundation of an oversight committee. Based on this, the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act was passed in 2018. The Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act incorporates arrangements necessary for the inclusion of people with disabilities not only in the workforce but also in society at large. The first part prohibits discrimination and made provision for awareness regarding the rights, respect and dignity; and capabilities, achievements and contributions of persons with disabilities, while the second, third, and fourth sections deal with accessibility of individuals with disabilities to physical structures, whether on land, at sea, or in air. It commands the development of open buildings, streets, roads, and pathways in such a way that people with disabilities can access them without obstacle or difficulty, and that vehicles, ships, and aircraft reserve seats and provide services to facilitate safety and accessibility for people with disabilities (Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities [Prohibition] Act, 2018).

The law grants people with disabilities the right to free and inclusive education and healthcare, priority in lines, emergency accommodation, and prohibits the abuse of people with disabilities in accessing food. It also provides for a specifiedfive-year transition period during which open buildings, structures, or automobiles must be adapted to be accessible and usable by people with disabilities, including those using wheelchairs. It stipulates that the government or any government organization, agency, or individual responsible for approving a construction plan will not approve the plan of a public building if the plan does not provide appropriate means of access

according to new building regulations. The law gives for the foundation of a National Committee on People with Disabilities, responsible for the educational, medical, social, economic, and civil rights of people with disabilities.

Recruitment process for disabled people

In 2020, Bonaccio et al. carried out research on the obstacles and misconceptions that businesses encounter when employing individuals with disabilities. The research presents a cycle that will be thoroughly examined, as well as the functions of managers at every level of the hiring process. The availability of qualified applicants with disabilities, recruiting qualified candidates with disabilities, and attracting candidates with disabilities to job opportunities comprise the first stage of the cycle: recruitment and organizational attraction. These components draw attention to problems such as recruiting managers undervaluing disabled applicants, candidates with disabilities hiding their disability, and a lack of visibility of the company's diversity culture on external platforms.

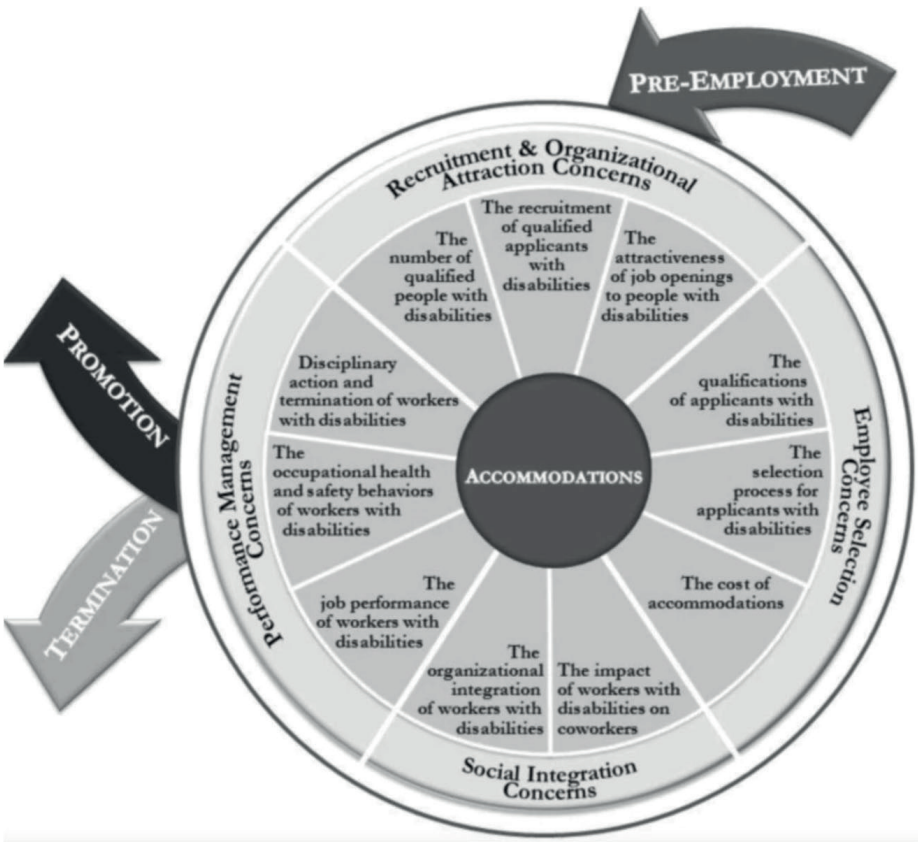

Figure 1: Employers' concerns regarding individuals with disabilities and the job cycle. Bonaccio et al. (2020).

The number of qualified people with disabilities

As pointed out in the studyby Kaye et al. (2019) many HR managers pointed out that they rarely see individuals with disabilities among the candidates. The issue, however, is often that potential candidates are hesitant to inform prospective employers of their disability Statistics show that, on average, only 10-16% of disabled people of working age report having a physical disability. Looking at information by nation, we found that the number of people who did not inform their employer of their disability included11% in Canada (Turcote, 2014), 10% to 16% in the United States (Kraus, 2017; Lauer & Houtenville, 2018), etc. This data covers all forms of disability, with physical disability being the most common among people of working age (Arim, 2015; Kraus, 2017).

The recruitment of qualified applicants with disabilities

Numerous studies demonstrate that HR managers frequently undervalue individuals with disabilities the most (Kulkarni & Kote, 2014; Schur et al., 2014). At the same time, managers note that it is challenging to employ a qualified workforce with disabilities, as demonstrated by Domzal et al. (2020). Employers must reduce the possibility of potential obstacles for potential workers in order to hire competent disabilities personnel.

The attractiveness of job openings to people with disabilities

As a rule, the positions for disabled and non-disabled individuals don't differ much in terms of requirements, responsibilities, etc., but there are a few particular focuses that candidates with incapacities pay attention to. First, candidates with disabilities place more emphasison certain traits, such as working hours, benefits, etc. (as defined by the state disability pension) (Fabian, 2013). Second, studies show that candidates with disabilities prefer public institutions (Ali et al., 2019; Jans et al., 2012).

The qualifications of applicants with disabilities

During the employee selection process, managers assess the knowledge, abilities, and skills of job applicants. However, disabled candidates may sometimes face underestimation from managers due to the stereotype that their physical limitations may prevent them from performing certain job tasks (Kulkarni & Kote, 2014). This notion is misguided as there are various types of disabilities, some of which would not hinder job performance or be visible to someone without a disability (Baldridge et al., 2018).

The selection process for candidates with disabilities

Hiring managersmust have certain information and abilities to screen candidates with disabilities. For example, job seekers can sue if a manager asks the wrong question (e.g., about a candidate's

disability) (Hernandez & McDonald, 2021). In addition, research shows that managers' report a lack of knowledge about the disability recruitment process (Kaye et al., 2019). This gap in knowledge can lead to increased lodging costs.

The effect of workers with disabilities on their co-workers

Company management is often concerned that employees with disabilitiesmay have a negative instead of positive impact on their co-workers (Kaye et al., 2019; Withered & Lengnick-Hall, 2014). Co-worker concerns may arise from the perception that employees with disabilities have reduced working hours or lower productivity, which could lead to colleagues having to work more, even though the compensation is the same for all employees.

The organisational integration of workers with disabilities

Including employees with disabilities within the corporate culture is an important part of developing a company's diversity and inclusion strategy. An organizational culture in which all team members (counting company pioneers) practice and adhere to inclusive practices will contribute to effective accommodation for employees with disabilities (Schur et al., 2018; Vornholt, Uitdewilligen, & Nijhuis, 2013). It should be noted that the significant number of disabled employees contributes to the socialization of new disabled workers (Kulkarni & Lengnick-Hall, 2019).

Work productivity of workers with disabilities

Among hiring managers, there's a common recognition that workers with disabilities are less profitable (Domzal et al., 2020; Fredeen et al., 2013). This can make it difficult for managers to implement a diversity and inclusion strategy when it comes to hiring disabled employees.

The occupational health and safety practices of workers with disabilities

Workers with disabilities are more concerned with safety in the workplace than those without disabilities (Kaletta et al., 2012). They pay attention to the fundamental inconsistencies.

Disciplinary action and termination of workers with disabilities

Hiring managers must have a great understanding of the legal considerations when hiring, working with, and terminating employees with disabilities (Kaye et al., 2019; Withered & Lengnick-Hall, 2014). terminating an employee can result in a lawsuit, which would not be in the company's best interest. Thus, it is imperative to establish a feedback system between employees and employers to communicate terminations without any negative repercussions (Gröschl, 2013).

Non-discrimination clauses

The non-discrimination clauses in standard laws, such as Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act, can have a significant impact on promoting the inclusion of people with disabilities in the workplace. While this legislation may not have as direct an impact on disability employment as quota legislation, it has the potential to have a substantial systemic impact. It often requires companies to assess their internal practices to ensure that their policies don't directly or indirectly discriminate against people with disabilities.

Theory

The field of disability research is spread out over many disciplines and there are various concepts and understandings of how disability is interpreted. How these terms are used in relation to the social model are important in discussing the findings later on in this study and in providing a framework for the study.

Social understanding

The social model of disability shifts the focus from an individualistic and medical perspective of disability to the person's environment and how it may create disabling barriers. This model can be seen as a response to the confinements of the one-dimensional restorative show of disability. According to Vedeler (2014a), there are two forms of the social model of disability: a strong version and a weak version. In the strong version, disability is explained by systemic and structural barriers established by society that exclude and oppress individuals with disabilities. These barriers can include inaccessible buildings and transport services, for example. The weak version incorporates subjective experiences of the body and illness as essential conditions for identity and understanding of self, highlighting how prejudiced elements can create disability (Vedeler, 2014b). In the social model of disability, impairment is not denied, but it is not considered the cause of the economic and social disadvantage of disabled people. Rather, the focus is on how society limits their opportunities to participate in mainstream economic and social activities. This implies that disability is seen as a result of an oppressive relationship between individuals with disabilities and society. The social model emphasizes the shared experiences of oppression and exclusion that disabled individuals face and highlights how political action and social change can improve their lives (Finkelstein in Oliver & Barnes, 2012).

Relational understanding

A relational understanding of disability emphasizes the significance of the social and physical environment in the interaction with the person's disability (Vedeler, 2014a). This understanding highlights that the meaning of physical characteristics is determined by the social conditions in which an individual is situated. In other words, the presence of a physical or mental disability does not solely determine the extent of a person's disability, because it is the interaction with

the environment that creates the actual disability. Therefore, to fully understand disability, it must be contextualized. Priestley (1998) also examines different models of disability and expands upon the idea that disability theory requires more than just the distinction between individual and social models. He argues that there are numerous approaches to disability that appear to be concerned with social phenomena but are, in reality, individualistic models. For example, Wood and Badley's study recognizes the role of attitudes and physical barriers in disability, but they don't fully consider how attitudes are reinforced by structural contexts and regulatory systems. Moreover, Priestley highlights the lack of foresight in assuming that changing individual attitudes would eliminate disability.

Conclusion

A survey of the literature demonstrates that having a diverse and inclusive workforce has a positive impact on team productivity and overall company performance (Cox & Blake, 1991; Levine et al., 2014; Phillips, 2014, etc.). Thus, many modern companies prioritize implementing diversity strategies. It is important to recognize, however, that diversity and inclusion management should be considered as part of human resource management (Shen et al., 2018).

Individuals with disabilities represent one of the largest diversity groups, according to Richard & Hennekam's (2021) study. However, companies may have different attitudes towards employees with disabilities, with some seeing them as having a positive impact and others viewing them as presenting risks. Factors such as the sort and degree of disability, working accessibility, and company size and industry can impact a company's attitude towards individuals with disabilities (Unger, 2019; Domzal et al., 2020; Gustafsson et al., 2014). Despite the importance of diversity and inclusion, companies often fail to provide additional specialized training for HR managers and colleagues on the subject of disability. As such, it should be a priority for development and ought to be considered when implementing a strategy of diversity and inclusion within the company.

Recommendations

The social policy of Nigeria regarding the hiring of people with disabilities may require reconsideration. Experience from Nigerian companies suggests that state support and a bonus system can increase their motivation to create job opportunities for people with disabilities. Collaborating with non-profit organizations that assist in hiring and legal documentation can also streamline the recruitment process. Due to the pandemic, remote work has become more common, making it easier to recruit professionals with disabilities, without incurring additional costs for workplace equipment. Nigeria's Disability Act of 2018 mandates the government to take steps to promote the employment of disabled persons, and prohibits discrimination against them. The National Commission for People with Disability should be empowered to monitor recruitment and institute legal action in cases of infraction by employers. In the development and implementation of disability inclusion policies, it is crucial to actively involve people with disabilities through their representative organizations. Employers should have a legal obligation to make reasonable

adjustments that enable a disabled person to work, but should not be liable if an adjustment is unreasonably expensive or cumbersome. Policies on vocational education and training, inclusive of students and trainees with disabilities, are necessary to address the issue of skills mismatch between job vacancies and jobseekers with disabilities. Effective employment and placement agencies and disability-based non-governmental organizations can assist in matching jobseekers with disabilities with appropriate job opportunities. Finally, disability-based organizations and the National Disability Commission can increase awareness of disability issues among staff, transforming mindsets and attitudes of both employees and managers.

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