

A study of various models of Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities at workplace by Enable India

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ABSTRACT

Diversity and inclusion as a function in an organisation has evolved more than a decade worldwide. In Indian context there are several organisations, especially in the IT and ITES industry has adopted diversity and inclusion as a policy. There are various domains based on which diversity is maintained such as on the basis of gender, education, ethnicity, sexual orientation, physical ability etc. Among these domains, accepting employees with disability background has been adopted by few organisations in last decade. Although it is not popular to employ persons with disabilities at workplace in India due to several constraints, yet some of them have realized the potential in these persons with disability contributing significantly not only in the support functions but also in the mainstream roles. This initiative has been made possible with the assistance of supported employment agencies.

One of those supported employment agencies is Enable India which helps the organisations to understand the suitability of the respective type of disability to the specific jobs which they can perform, thereby train them to make them employable. This research paper aims to understand the various ways by which Enable India transforms the persons with disability to employees with disability. It covers various models which Enable India constitutes for inclusion of persons with disability at workplace. An exploratory research design has been adopted to analyze various the models in depth through collection of secondary data from various web portals and reports. Qualitative approach has been adopted in analysis and interpretation of the data. Overall the research paper gives us an insight about the innovative ways that Enable India has implemented towards inclusion of persons with disabilities at workplace.

1. Introduction

Inclusion of persons with disabilities at workplace has not been quite popular among the non government organisations in India. Majority of the employers are not aware of the suitability of the type of disable person to respective job roles available with them. Moreover they lack in awareness with the necessary equipments, software required for the persons with disabilities in case they are included in the workforce. Third, the kind of infrastructural changes required makes them hesitate to employ persons with disabilities. Even if they want to make such alteration in infrastructure, they are not allowed to do so since majority operates from the rented premises. Therefore in spite of knowing the advantages of hiring persons with disabilities, many organisations do not employ persons with disabilities.

In such case Enable India, a non-profit organisation based out of Bangalore has taken an initiative in helping the organisations to employ different types of persons with disabilities. Enable India has functioned for economic independence and dignity of persons with disability since 1999. Enable India is taken into account as a leader in employability and employment of persons with disabilities. Enable India has associated with more than six hundred organisations across twenty five cities in the government and private sectors across India. Enable India discovers various roles that are suitable for persons with disabilities. More than 4500 persons with disabilities have realised meaningful employment directly and

1000+ through consultancy and capacity building of partner NGOs. Enable India provides solutions and services to organisations that employ the disabled. In fact 45% of employees working at Enable India belong to persons with disabilities category.

2. Literature Review

A report by American Indian Foundation stated a list of twelve organizations from the private sector which are prominent in employing persons with disabilities in India which are Vindhya E Infomedia, Titan, Revive Enterprise, Miracle Couriers, Lemon Tree Hotels, ITC hotels, Aegis and few others too. Mphasis has been the winner of Shell Helen Keller Award (most prestigious Indian benchmark for honoring people and organizations which have been working towards promoting employment opportunities for persons with disabilities) (DEOC, 2009).

There are quick service retail chains such as KFC, Café Coffee Day have changed the concept of disability by including them at workplace thereby changing disability stigma to disability value (Friedner, 2013). An analysis of annual reports of nifty fifty companies who employ persons with disabilities have been done to evaluate the disability inclusion initiatives taken by those companies in India wherein some common practices have been highlighted (Heera, Maini, & Chandan, 2017).

Apart from the companies, there are a number of supported employment agencies such as Enable India, Muskaan, Mobility India, Youth4 Jobs foundation, Able Disabled all people together (ADAPT), Association of people with disability (APD) and few others have joined hands with large scale organizations to generate employment of PwD. (DEOC, 2009).

3. Methodology

This research paper aims to understand the various models that Enable India has adopted towards inclusion of persons with disability at workplace. An exploratory research design has been adopted to analyze various the models in depth. The data collection has been made through analysis of several secondary data available from various web portals and reports. A Qualitative approach has been adopted in analysis and interpretation of the data. The research objectives have been explored with varying levels of depth since this is an initial research, which will form the basis of more conclusive research. More over rarely any research has been done till date regarding employment of persons with disabilities in Indian context hence this is an attempt to gain further insight.

4. Findings

The finding has been categorized into three parts. The first part describes that overall placement cell model that Enable India has established towards inclusion of persons with disabilities at workplace. The second part includes the initiatives taken towards generation of manual wage employment i.e. to enable persons with disability with no computer skills and the third part includes initiatives towards promoting the skilled wage employment aimed at persons with disability with computer skills.

Placement cell model of Karnataka for the persons with disabilities:

The state of Karnataka came up with a one of its kind concept of a placement cell for persons with disability. Enable India was chosen as the implementing agency to develop and implement this idea in its entirety in the year 2013. Under this model, Enable India reached out to persons with disability and enabled them to find gainful employment in close proximity to where they live. A framework of disability profile and segmentation was developed to understand the various supply and demand challenges. Based on the learning, various models were developed to include all kind of disabilities in the placement cell.

A business case for employing persons with disability, sensitization at workplace, a detailed job analysis, initial handholding, providing practical solutions and post placement follow ups have made it a good case for employers to employ persons with disability and help them realizing that persons with disabilities as a productive workforce.

Inclusion of all persons with disabilities:

Coverage of disabilities types:

- Vision Impairment
- Hearing Impairment
- Physical Impairment

- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Mental, Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
- Profound and Multiple Disabilities including Deaf Blind
- Coverage of regions: Urban, Semi-Urban, and Rural
- Coverage of disabilities based on qualifications: Educated, Less Educated and Illiterate

Models of Inclusion of persons with disabilities:

Manual Wage Employment: To enable persons with disability with no computer skills.

Enable India has been successful in placing people with different disabilities in various sectors including manufacturing and assembly, hospitality, retail, and food and beverages. Under manual wage employment, they have placed people with both mild and severe physical disabilities, people with hearing impairment and vision impairment and people with intellectual disabilities. The success rate in employment is higher in urban and semi-urban areas more than in rural areas, mainly due to the lack of industries in rural areas. The average monthly salary that a person after training could get is Rs.6152. The salary range is between Rs. 3000 to Rs. 12000 per month. The various types of job roles offered under manual wage employment are Cashier, Buttoneer, Helper, Telecaller and Watchman.

1. **Community Enterprise Program - Pilot Model:** This model, where the employment is within the community, enables such persons with disabilities. This program works with candidates with disabilities in urban slums and who are primarily suited for jobs in the unskilled sector. To understand the challenges of the sector, they have worked with NGOs working in the slums such as Mobility India and also DPOS (Disabled People Organisations) which work in the slums. Enable India initiated training within the slum and provided placement opportunity closer to the slum. Even after providing service closer they had found that most of the candidates left their job very soon because of lack of water and sanitary facilities, lack of transport to work, and improper infrastructure accessibility. People with severe disabilities faced the biggest challenges and there is a need to set up a shelter environment unit within the slum for the purpose of security at work.

2. **Collaborative Model:** Under this model, Enable India works in collaboration with companies for future hiring. This is a good model where the company gets the resources they require; the training organisation is able to work on employability of the candidate and the candidate also gets a better platform for getting ready for real work. Enable India has worked with Madura Garments where people with vision impairment were enabled and equipped with the right skills.

3. **Outsourcing Model within the Community:** This model enables an inclusive workforce so that the job can be given to the community, where people with disabilities and people with no disabilities can work together and complete a task. This model works in cases where companies are able to give piecemeal work.

4. **Incubation Model:** Under this model, large scale companies outsource their work to Small and Medium

Enterprises (SMEs). The training organisation gets involved for mobilisation of the workforce, which consist of people with disabilities. The advantage is that people with different disabilities can be trained and placed and also different employment models can be experimented with, including work shadowing and interning. This can enable entrepreneurs with disability to set up their own units which will in turn hire more people with disabilities.

Skilled Wage Employment: To enable persons with disability with computer skills

Enable India has focused on opening up skilled jobs in the private sector for persons with disabilities. Enable India had great success in this area and has placed many persons with even severe disabilities in skilled jobs. The candidates have the potential to earn between Rs. 10000 to Rs.20000 and even more. The jobs offered under skill wage employment range from IT Help desk executive, Back Office Assistant, Schedule & Dispatch Specialist, Technical Support Associate, Trainer, Quality Experience Engineer, Collateral Management Executive, Operation Executive, Administrator to Financial Analyst, Associate Software Engineer and Diversity Coordinator. This has truly enabled a mindset change regarding disability

1. Collaborative Model: Under this model, first job analysis is done where they observe which disability suits the job best. Then, Enable India's learning and development team works with the company to come up with a curriculum with participation from company training resources as well. Enable India gives the employability and disability specific training. The candidates also do work shadowing and get work experience exposure. They do the job matching where together with the company; we select which candidate is suited best for which job. At the end of the training, final interviews happen with candidates selected for the job in the company that they partner with. Enable India has worked with companies such as Deutsche Bank, Sales Force, SAP Labs and EMC.

2. University Model: This is an initiative of Enable India to build a model for creating pipeline of employable candidates at the university level for persons with disability. The objective of the model is to build a pool of employable candidates by doing early and targeted intervention through University model course and to create demand with local employers and connect them with the University/institution, thus employers have direct access to the pool of candidates. Currently Enable India is working with Bangalore University, Adarsh Group of Institutions and JSS Polytechnic Institute for the Differently Abled.

3. Outsourcing Model: Enable India's partnership with HCL has been unique, where some of the roles to be done by HCL were made into a project work. The project work was outsourced to a team of people with different disabilities. The project work involved scanning of HCL documents and was for a period of 8 months. The project was undertaken from May 2014 to December 2014 by a team of 5 people; the team lead was a person with physical disability. The team comprised of employees with hearing impairment, mental illness, and intellectual disability. The average salary earned was Rs 7000/.

Post placement, Enable India provided support to ensure consistency in productivity. This unique model ensured that the people were employed by Enable India Solutions, with the team lead ensuring that the team met targets. The payment was linked to performance and salary of two people was split among three people. The team delivered its targets and the people with mental illness and intellectual disability performed on par with others and was able to meet the target.

Workshops conducted by Enable India

Enable India offers a variety of workshops, activities and guest speakers to engage the corporate sector in our common goal of diversity and inclusion.

Disability Awareness for Support Staff: This workshop aims to ensure inclusion at every level. It empower support staff (from hospitality, security and housekeeping) to practice inclusion. The Disability Awareness Workshop for Support Staff is available in three languages – Hindi, Kannada, and Telugu and will be able to explain the need for inclusion and disability etiquette to support staff members. Companies like JP Morgan have benefitted from this service.

Disability Awareness Workshops: It is aimed to dispel disability myths, and help build an environment of inclusion. It is a basic workshop suitable for staff at all levels. It is an interactive and reflective workshop bringing a new perspective about disability by understanding every person's abilities and "inabilities". Companies can setup recurring workshops that assist staff to understand how people with disabilities work and get some of the burning questions answered on hiring and inclusion. It will explain basic technology solutions and more. Many companies, like EMC2, Cisco, JP Morgan, and Thomson Reuters have been able to foster inclusive environments by conducting disability awareness workshops.

Disability awareness for managers: It focuses to enable the upcoming leaders in an organisation. This sensitization program for hiring managers helps dispel myths about disability and gain enhanced perspective on hiring inclusively. This programme will talk about types of disabilities and the skills with which persons with disability can contribute to the company. It will also present a brief overview on the business case for employing persons with disability, and the ways in which the company benefits by the hiring. Companies like IBM, Barclays, Deutsche Bank and ANZ have availed this service.

Inclusive and Adaptive Leadership: This workshop aims to make the organisation an inclusion thought-leader. This workshop enables senior managers to reflect on their role in the inclusive processes and programmes of the organization. This sensitization program for senior managers and decision makers focuses on strategy for understanding and managing diversity within the organization, and the business case for a diverse workforce. The programme presents an overview of the kind of employees with disability that companies in a specific sector hire, and focus on the skills and abilities that these employees bring to the table. Finally, this programme presents some suggestions for creating inclusive work environments.

5. Conclusion

It has been observed that Enable India has specifically categorized their models based on the type of the disability, the skill level of the persons with disabilities and matched it with the industry requirement. However such program needs to be

increased to a larger scale to enable more and more persons with disabilities to get employed. Secondly the awareness of such programs to the persons with disabilities is imperative for the success of such inclusive models to be included and well accepted among the employers.

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