

# An Analytical Study on the Reasonable Accommodation of Differently-Abled Workforce Employed in Indian IT Organizations

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**Abstract:** Corporate is a place of targets and challenges. Survival of the fittest is the order of the day. In this research article we use the term differently-abled instead of disabled as the society is fast approaching to a pace where there is no discrimination. Providing Reasonable Accommodation to Differently-Abled is a major and visible factor of ethical business. The Paper focuses on Reasonable Accommodation of Differently-Abled Employees in Indian IT Organizations w.r.t to Chennai. A sample of 20 was collected from various Differently-Abled employees in IT Organizations. The aim of the paper is to find out if from the targeted respondents if they do not have any barriers in the work place with respect to reasonable accommodation and give suggestions for the same.

**Keywords:** Reasonable Accommodation, Differently-abled, IT industry

## INTRODUCTION

Employment is one of the most critical aspects of independent living, as also a primary aspiration of differently-abled people in India. Out of the total world population around six hundred million people are differently-abled, among this 8 percent live in India which comes to 40 -80 million thus having one differently-abled for every 12 house holds. Though the Constitution of India ensures to have equality and mandated to have an inclusive society, the results has not been very encouraging. It has been realized that a majority of differently-abled people can lead a better quality life if they have equal opportunities with reasonable accommodation.

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 desired to eliminate discrimination, and has been extended, notably by the DDA 2005, providing differently-abled people additional rights in their employment and education and placing duties on their employers and educational institutions. The thought behind using the term differently-abled that they should not be looked with sympathy and people around should treat them equally and give a feeling that being disabled is in no way a hindrance for success.

The purpose of reasonable accommodation is to revamp the hiring process for differently-abled and help them accomplish the absolute functions of a job. Reasonable accommodation eliminate the workplace barriers for differently-abled individual's. Though most of the differently-abled employees perform their jobs without reasonable accommodations, few barriers crop up from performing a job otherwise could have been done with some form of accommodation. Such barriers may be physical obstacles like inaccessible facilities or equipment, or there may be procedures or rules such as those specifying when work is to be performed, when breaks are to be taken, or how essential or marginal functions are to be performed. But the fact is most of the accommodations can be achieved relatively easily and at little or even no cost to the employer.

Few of them include:

- Clear explanation of job analysis and job description
- Proper communication to supervisors, employees and physicians regarding accommodation issues.
- Necessary anti-discrimination notices.
- Specific accommodation policies and procedures.

## REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

'Reasonable accommodation' refers to modifications which would allow a differently-abled employee to either continue or to take up a position to enjoy equal employment opportunities. It includes factors on adaptation of the workplace and workplace equipment to changing working time and hours, restricting of tasks, retraining etc. Once the company decides to provide the above, the burden to the organization should also be ascertained and if the same does not impose a disproportionate burden on the employer, then reasonable accommodation can be provided. Proper documents need to be maintained which includes the financial cost to the organization, the scale and financial resources of the company, public funding or other assistance.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

A huge number of research and evaluation studies have been published on differently-abled people and their employment.

**Bound & Burkhauser, 2000**, having impairment itself makes work more difficult, other factors also lead to lower employment rates for differently – abled employees which includes, lack of access to needed work accommodations, disincentives imposed by public disability benefit programmes and discrimination.

Lot of initiatives has been taken in the past to remove the barrier and improve employment rates of differently-abled people. One such effort was the Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995, which makes statutory provision for three per cent reservation for differently – abled people. One major source for research on disabilities is the Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTC) funded by National Institute for Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR).

**Madaus, Gerber and Price 2008**, clarifies the concept of self-efficacy as it applies to successful careers. Self-efficacy involves goal setting and ability to reframe the weakness in a positive manner. Successful people understand their strengths and weaknesses and could clearly describe them to others and believe that they have the power to control their own lives and are flexible enough to capitalize on opportunities when they arose.

The following are the outcomes of employment of differently-abled people

- Employment levels vary significantly depending on type of disability.
- Education and age influence employment.
- Employment for people with disabilities tends to cluster in management, professional and technical, service sector, and sales and office occupations.
- Research on business is limited, but suggests that a number of workplace factors influence employment outcomes.
- Disability employment systems need to focus on employer needs in addition to job readiness.
- Disclosing disability is difficult and may influence hiring and retention trends.
- Job placement is an essential component of employment development strategies.
- Self-efficacy and self-determination play an important role in successful careers.

Employers can create an organizational atmosphere or workplace culture that encourages differently-abled people. They can achieve this by being clear about the skills required for a job; giving as detailed information about recruitment and selection processes and allowing opportunities for the individual to talk and disclose. When someone comes with a feedback, employers should take time to consider the situation and, if needed, consult with human resource specialists. Many workplace accommodations differently-abled people are actually about managing effectively rather than making exceptions: about having clear expectations, open communications and inclusive practices.

## OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR THE STUDY

The primary objective is to conduct a study on the Reasonable Accommodation of Differently-Abled Workforce Employed in Indian IT Organizations.

Organizations are now far more willing to recognize the crucial importance of their people power especially with regard to Equal Employment and Opportunity and how they deal with their personnel with regard to reasonable accommodation is now considered a fundamental concern and a matter of their highest priority.

## METHODOLOGY

A sample size of 20 from IT industry was taken for the study. Questionnaire was distributed to the samples based on Likert's Scale. As the study focuses on IT industry, respondents were also from IT companies. The selections of the samples were based on the presence of differently-abled employees in the Organization.

## HYPOTHESES

1. There is no significant difference on reasonable accommodation of differently – abled employees in the Organization.
2. There is no significant difference between the gender of the respondents and the way they are treated in the organization.
3. There is no significant difference between the gender of the respondents and their opinion of denial of discrimination in their workplace with respect to their physical conditions.

## DATA ANALYSIS & INTREPRETATION

Table 1: Mann Whitney U Test

Gender of the respondents	I am treated fairly in my organization
Mann Whitney U	31.000
Wilcoxon W	109.000
Z	-1.451
Aymp. Sig. (2 – tailed)	0.147

$H_0$  = There is no significant difference between the gender of the respondents and the way they are treated in the organization.

$H_1$  = There is a significant difference between the gender of the respondents and the way they are treated in the organization.

**Inference:** From the above table, it is found that p value is 0.147 which is greater than 0.05. Hence, null hypothesis is accepted and alternate hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the gender of the respondents and the way they are treated in the organization.

Table 2: Mann Whitney U Test

Gender of the respondents	There is no discrimination in my work place due to my condition
Mann Whitney U	46.500
Wilcoxon W	124.500
Z	-.121
Aymp. Sig. (2 – tailed)	0.904

$H_0$  = There is no significant difference between the gender of the respondents and their opinion of denial of discrimination in their workplace with respect to their physical conditions.

$H_1$  = There is a significant difference between the gender of the respondents and their opinion of denial of discrimination in their workplace with respect to their physical conditions.

**Inference:** From the above table, it is found that, p value is 0.904. Hence, null hypothesis is accepted and alternate hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the gender of the respondents and their opinion of denial of discrimination in their workplace with respect to their physical conditions.

## CONCLUSION

The results of the study revealed accepted the null hypotheses and thus is is concluded that there is not significant relationship with regard to gender discrimination and denial of discrimination. Ultimately differently-abled people want to be looked upon as a normal individual and this treatment will act as a motivating and give a kind of feeling that they are as at par when it comes to organizational efficiency.

Organizations need to be very clear while addressing the issue on Reasonable Accommodation. Employers need not be sympathetic to differently-abled people but see to that there is no discrimination with regard the various clusters on work. Justification should be provided for the acts of employers and any changes should be communicated to differently-abled employees well in advance .An environment free of disabilities is the need of the hour.

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