

ISSUES AT JOB FACED BY THE EMPLOYEES WITH DISABILITIES

A CHALLENGE FOR HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

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LIKE other countries, in Pakistan also many persons with disabilities have been reduced to objects of pity, despite the fact that they are more than willing to support themselves, only if opportunities of education, skill development and suitable work environment are made available to them which is a challenge for the human resource management. For interviewing hundred employees with disabilities in Karachi, structured questionnaire was used to investigate the issues faced by them at their work place. Hypotheses were tested through chi-square tests. The results of the study indicate that employees with physical disability faced mobility problem and employees with hearing impairment faced communication problems at work place. There were no special provisions made for employees with disabilities to give them a barrier free environment and to cater their special needs. Jobs provided to them through quota have been characterised as being low paying; having low status and fewer privileges and majority has no awareness about their legal rights.

Key Words: *Employee Disability, Job Satisfaction, Employee's Attitude.*

Introduction

There is a large and growing number of persons with disabilities in the world today. "The estimated figure of 500 million is confirmed by the result of surveys of segments of population, coupled with the observations of experienced investigators. In most countries, at least one person out of 10 is disabled by physical, mental or sensory impairment, and at least 25 percent of any population is adversely affected by the presence of disability." (UN and Persons with disabilities, 2003). Many persons with disabilities are denied employment or given only menial and poorly remunerated jobs. In times of unemployment and economic crises, the disabled are the first to be fired and last to be hired. "Many disabled persons are excluded from the active participation in society because of doorways that are too narrow for wheelchairs; steps that cannot be mounted leading to buildings, buses, trains and aircraft; telephones and switches that cannot be reached; sanitary facilities that can not be used. Similarly they can be excluded by other types of barriers, e.g. oral communication which ignores the needs of hearing impaired and written information which ignores the needs of visually impaired." (UN and Persons with disabilities, 2003). These barriers exist because of lack of concern, and awareness about the special needs of disabled persons. Many of these can be removed without incurring heavy cost but just through careful planning and a little bit concern for the persons with disabilities. Human resource management can perform vital role in formulating policies and procedures in critical Human Resource (HR) matters like equal employment opportunities for disabled, compensation, promotion, job security, working conditions, career development and advancement, fair treatment, reward systems, and job design.

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Human Resource Management (HRM) is “the design of formal system in an organisation to ensure effective and efficient use of human talent to accomplish organisational goals” (Mathis and Jackson, 2004). HRM has been undergoing a transformation. “In the 1970s, the job of HR manager was to keep their companies out of court and in compliance with the increasing number of regulations governing the workplace. In the 1980s, HR managers had to address staffing costs related to mergers and acquisitions and downsizing (also known as “rightsizing”). The year 1990s is characterized by economic issues related to an increasingly global and competitive workplace. (Bateman and Snell, 1996). In year 2000, “HR challenges faced by managers and organisations included economic and technological changes, workforce availability and quality concerns, demographics, and organisational restructuring” (Mathis and Jackson, 2004).

This study was designed to investigate the issues faced by the persons with disabilities at their work place in Pakistan and the role of Human Resource in dealing with these issues. The findings would highlight the status of employees with disabilities in our society; helping them to improve their quality of life and also to enhance the awareness in the employers about the importance of job for disabled persons.

Methodology

Hundred employees (25 hearing impaired (H.I.), 25 visually impaired (V.I.), 25 mentally retarded (M.R.) and 25 physically handicapped (P.H.) persons) with disabilities, from different organisations/institutes of Karachi were selected through convenience sampling. The data was collected with the help of a structured questionnaire using both pre-coded and open-ended items by interviewing these hundred disabled employees.

Objectives of the Study

1. To find out the nature of job employees with disabilities are doing in Pakistan.
2. To investigate the issues faced by the employees with disabilities at their work place.
3. To find out the special provision made for employees with disabilities in their organisations.
4. To observe the attitude of employers regarding compensation, training and incentives provided to the employees with disabilities.
5. To explore the awareness of employees with disabilities about their legal rights.
6. To find out the satisfaction of employees with disabilities with 2 per cent employment quota fixed for them.

Findings

Nature of the Job Performed by Employees with Disabilities

Majority of the hearing impaired employees were found working as clerical assistant and as teachers (40 per cent each), majority of the visually impaired were working as lectures and also as telephone operators (40 per cent each), majority of the mentally retarded were working as teacher aid and as shopkeeper (40 per cent each) and physically handicapped were equally designated at various jobs including assistant manager, clerical assistant, lecturer, physiotherapist, and teacher (20 per cent each).

Transportation used by Employees with Disabilities

Majority of the employees with disabilities (65 per cent) used their own arrangements where as some (25 per cent) of them were using company’s transportation to reach their job. 2 per cent did not require any transportation as they were living in premises of same building where they were doing their job.

Table 1
Nature of the job performed by employees with disabilities

Designation	H.I.		V.I.		M.R.		P.H.		Total	%
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Assistant manager	zero	zero	zero	zero	zero	zero	05	20	05	05
Braille instructor	zero	zero	05	20	zero	zero	zero	zero	05	05
Clerical assistant	10	40	zero	zero	zero	zero	05	20	15	15
Computer operator	05	20	zero	zero	zero	zero	zero	zero	05	05
Helper to Physiotherapist	zero	zero	zero	zero	05	20	zero	zero	05	05
Lecturer	zero	zero	10	40	zero	zero	05	20	15	15
Physiotherapist	zero	zero	zero	zero	zero	zero	05	20	05	05
Teacher	10	40	zero	zero	zero	zero	05	20	15	15
Teacher aid	zero	zero	zero	zero	10	40	zero	zero	10	10
Telephone operator	zero	zero	10	40	zero	zero	zero	zero	10	10
Shopkeeper	zero	zero	zero	zero	10	40	zero	zero	10	10
Total	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	100	100

Problems Faced at Job by the Employees with Disabilities

The problems faced by employees with disabilities at their job included problem of communication faced by hearing impaired employees (80 per cent) and problem of mobility faced by all physically handicapped employees (100 per cent).

Table 2
Transportation used by employees with disabilities

Transportation	H.I.		V.H.		M.R.		P.H.		Total	%
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Use their own arrangement	15	60	15	60	15	60	20	80	65	65
Use company's transportation.	10	40	zero	zero	10	40	05	20	25	25
Residential facility so no need of transport.	zero	zero	10	40	zero	zero	zero	zero	10	10
Total	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	100	100

Feelings of Employees with Disabilities at Work Place

Majority of the employees with disabilities i.e., 65 per cent did not feel isolated at work place. Some (20 per cent) frequently felt isolated at work place and few (15 per cent) of them some times felt isolated at work place.

Types of Special Provisions Made at Workplace for the Employees with Disabilities

Majority of the employees with disabilities had no special provision according to their special needs. Only 5 per cent physically handicapped employees had provision of special seating arrangement and 3 per cent visually impaired had provision of Braille library, 2 per cent visually impaired had helper to read books for them.

Table 3a
Problems faced at job by employees with disabilities

Problems	H.I.		V.I.		M.R.		P.H.		Total	%
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Inappropriate behavior of other people	zero	zero	05	20	zero	zero	zero	zero	05	05
Communication problem	20	80	zero	zero	zero	zero	zero	zero	10	10
Lack of experience	05	20	zero	zero	10	40	zero	zero	25	25
Lack of facilities (Braille books & audio library)	zero	zero	05	20	zero	zero	zero	zero	05	05
Mobility problem	zero	zero	zero	zero	zero	zero	25	100	25	25
No problems	zero	zero	15	60	15	60	zero	zero	30	30
Total	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	100	100

Table 3b
Feelings of employees with disabilities at work place

Response	H.I.		V.H.		M.R.		P.H.		Total	%
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Frequently feel isolated	zero	zero	10	40	10	40	zero	zero	20	20
Don't feel isolated	25	100	15	60	zero	zero	25	100	65	65
Some times feel isolated.	zero	zero	zero	zero	15	60	zero	zero	15	15
Total	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	100	100

Table 4
Types of special provisions made at workplace for employees with disabilities

Types of special provisions	H.I.		V.I.		M.R.		P.H.		Total	%
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
No Special Provisions made	25	100	20	80	25	100	20	60	90	90
Seating arrangement according to convenience.	zero	zero	zero	zero	zero	zero	05	20	05	05
Braille library	zero	zero	03	12	zero	zero	zero	zero	03	03
Helper to read book for blind.	zero	zero	02	08	zero	zero	zero	zero	02	02
Total	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	100	100

Satisfaction of Employees with Disabilities with 2 per cent Employment Quota

None of the employees with disabilities (zero per cent) responded as satisfied with 2 per cent employment quota, where as only 10 per cent were satisfied to some extent with 2 per cent quota.

A considerable number of disabled employees (30 per cent) did not even know about the quota system.

Table 5
Satisfaction of employees with disabilities with 2 % employment quota

Response	H.I.		V.H.		M.R.		P.H.		Total	%
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Satisfied	zero	00	00							
Not satisfied	20	80	25	100	zero	zero	15	60	60	60
Satisfied to some extent	05	20	zero	zero	zero	zero	05	20	10	10
Do not know about quota	zero	zero	zero	zero	25	100	05	20	30	30
Total	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	100	100

Equal Treatment for Promotion of Employees with Disabilities

More than half (65 per cent) of the employees with disabilities were equally treated as their able-bodied colleagues regarding their promotions, where as 30 per cent mentioned inequality in promotions.

Table 6
Equal treatment for promotion for employees with disabilities

Response	H.I.		V.I.		M.R.		P.H.		Total	%
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Equally treated	25	100	15	60	10	40	15	60	65	65
Not equally treated	zero	zero	10	40	15	60	10	40	35	35
Total	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	100	100

Nature of Incentives Provided to Employee with Disabilities

Majority (65 per cent) employees with disabilities were getting incentives at their jobs, including increments (10 per cent), promotions (40 per cent), appreciation letters (05 per cent), and bonus (10 per cent).

Table 7
Nature of incentives provided to employees with disabilities

Incentives	H.I.		V.H.		M.R.		P.H.		Total	%
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
No incentive	zero	zero	05	20	20	80	10	40	35	35
Increments	10	40	zero	zero	zero	zero	zero	zero	10	10
Promotions	05	20	20	80	05	20	10	40	40	40
Appreciation letter	zero	zero	zero	zero	zero	zero	05	20	05	05
Bonus	10	40	zero	zero	zero	zero	zero	zero	10	10
Total	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	100	100

Provision of Training for Employees with Disabilities in Organisation

Less than half (30 per cent) of the employees with disabilities were getting training at their jobs where as majority (65 per cent) were not getting any training. Some (05 per cent) also mentioned that they did not require any training.

Table 8
Provision of training for employees with disabilities in their organizations

Response	H.I.		V.H.		M.R.		P.H.		Total	%
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Training provided.	05	20	05	20	10	40	10	40	30	30
Training not provided.	20	80	20	80	15	60	10	40	65	65
Training not required	zero	zero	zero	zero	zero	zero	05	20	05	05
Total	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	100	100

Awareness of Employees with Disabilities about their Legal Rights

Majority of employees with disabilities (70 per cent) did not have awareness about their legal rights and only 30 per cent have some awareness about their legal rights.

Table 9
Awareness of employees with disabilities about their legal rights

Response	H.I.		V.H.		M.R.		P.H.		Total	%
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Disabled have awareness about their legal rights.	05	20	20	80	zero	zero	05	20	30	30
Disabled do not have awareness about their legal rights.	20	80	05	20	25	100	20	80	70	70
Total	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	100	100

Satisfaction of Employees with Disabilities with their Job

Majority i.e. 70 per cent responded that they were satisfied with their present jobs, where as 30 per cent showed their dissatisfaction from their jobs.

Table 10
Satisfaction of employees with disabilities with their jobs

Response	H.I.		V.I.		M.R.		P.H.		Total	%
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Yes satisfied with their job.	20	80	20	80	15	60	15	60	70	70
Not satisfied with their job.	05	20	05	20	10	40	10	40	30	30
Total	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	100	100

Needs of Employees with Disabilities that should be Fulfilled by the Employers

As mentioned in previous table 10, there were 30 per cent employees with disabilities who were not satisfied with their present jobs. The needs that still to be fulfilled by their employers included; salary increment (by 66.6 per cent), equal treatment with employees with disabilities as with other able-bodied people (by 16.7 per cent), and foreign training (by 16.7 per cent).

Discussion

Free trade and globalization are putting most of the organisations in fiercely competitive markets where the success depends on the quality of human resources. The emerging trend in human resource (HR) management is based on the following principles (Carrell, Elbert and Hatfield, 1995);

Table 11
Needs of disabled that should be fulfilled by their employers

Response	H.I.		V.H.		M.R.		P.H.		Total (out of 30)	%
	No (out of 5)	%	No (out of 5)	%	No (out of 10)	%	No (out of 10)	%		
Equal treatment like others.	zero	zero	zero	zero	zero	zero	05	50	05	16.7
Foreign training	05	100	zero	zero	zero	zero	zero	zero	05	16.7
Salary increment	zero	zero	05	100	10	100	05	50	20	66.6

- *Employees are investments that will, if effectively managed and developed, provide long-term rewards to the organisation in the form of greater productivity.*
- *Policies, programs and practices must be created that satisfy both the economic and emotional needs of employees.*
- *A working environment must be created in which employees are encouraged to develop and utilize their skills to the maximum extent.*
- *HR programs and practices must be implemented with the goal of balancing the needs and meeting the goals of both the organisation and the employees.*

Although the HR programs vary from organisation to organisation, the HR department of most organisations have common responsibilities including job design and analysis; recruitment and selections; appraisal, training and development; compensation; and employee relations. The scope of HR functions has broadened to include attracting, training and motivating workforce including the persons with disabilities.

Nature of Jobs Performed by Disabled Employees

Our study reveals that majority of the employees with disabilities were hired as low grade employees in limited fields like; peons, messengers, clerks, office assistants, cooks, laundry men, telephone operators, where as very few were hired as high grade employees like computer operators, lecturers, and assistant managers. A research study reveals that “Generally, the disabled who are trainable lacked the vocational skills for work in the manufacturing and commercial sectors. The vocational training programmes for the disabled are not relevant to the job requirements in the industries hence it is more difficult to place the disabled on the jobs.”(Vasoo, 1997)

The hearing impaired persons were doing various jobs including office assistant, peon, computer operator, typist, tailor, vocational teacher in schools for hearing impaired persons, working in advertising agencies, in laundry of five star hotels, as cooks in five star hotels, and also in various art works like embroidery, handicrafts, dress designing etc. The visually impaired persons were hired as teachers, as assembly technicians in factory of Pakistan Air Force workshops, as musician and as telephone operators. There were few mentally retarded persons employed, and those employed were found working as teacher aid, peons in bank, working in shoe factory and as shopkeepers or sales persons in their family business (self employment). The physically handicapped were also working as teachers, assistant managers, nurses, and helpers of physiotherapist.

“There are a number of other jobs that disabled can do and can be easily absorbed into employment, e.g.

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hearing impaired can work as editing assistants, map drafters, animal caretakers, machine operators, upholstery repairers, glass cutters, managers in ware houses, accountants, auto-mechanics, small engine re-builders, bricklayers, air conditioning mechanics, horticulture workers, etc.”(Brolin, 1982)

“Visually impaired persons can be accommodated as X-ray attendants, assembly technicians, lathe operators, medical laboratory technicians, teacher aides, watch repairers, etc.”(Brolin, 1982)

Mentally retarded persons can perform many jobs. They can be animal caretakers, bindery workers, building maintenance workers, card punch operators, carpenters, clerks, cooks, dishwashers, elevator operators, farm labourers, food service workers, furniture repairman helpers, grocery men, laboratory workers, laundry workers, library assistants, mail clerk, medical technicians, messengers, nursery workers, photocopy operators, porters, sales store workers, etc.

The physically handicapped can also be involved in different jobs like cashiers, office- assistants, computer operators, and other jobs where frequent mobility is not required. Harper and Momm (1992) pointed out that business such as operating phone booths or obtaining railway tickets and licenses for a fee are also excellent examples of ways in which people that have restricted physical ability but are persistent, patient and efficient can make a living.

Issues Faced by Employees with Disabilities

Transportation

The transportation problem is one of the major issue persons with disabilities are facing all over the world and, therefore, they are confined to their places rather becoming a productive member of the society. “Singapore has an excellent transport infrastructure, with many unique schemes found no where else in the world, such as its Electronic Road Pricing system and Restricted Zones. However, the excellence of Singapore’s transport infrastructure is applicable only to its majority (currently) non-disabled and ambulant disabled citizens. Taxi services in Singapore are very expensive, and private cars are even more expensive, with many models being 8 to 10 times more expensive than similar models in Europe and the US. This has considerable impact on (PWDs) persons with disabilities who are non-ambulant, who often do not bother to find employment because the bulk of their salaries will go towards paying for their transport to and from work.”(Tuen, 1999)

More than half of the employees with disabilities had their own arrangements of transportation; where as the rest of them used company’s or school’s transportation or had the residential facility in job premises in case of blind employees.

Job satisfaction

Most of the employees with disabilities were not satisfied with their present jobs. All hearing impaired, more than half of physically handicapped and some visually impaired employees were getting salaries same or similar to their normal colleagues, majority mentally retarded employees said that their salary was less than their colleagues. Almost more than half of all the employees with disability said that regarding promotion and incentives, their employer treat them equally as their normal colleagues. A number of psychologists e.g. Abraham Maslow, consider salary, promotion and other incentives as crucial factors for job satisfaction and motivating employees for greater productivity. “Fredrick Herzberg suggested that pay, job security, supervisors and working conditions if seen as inadequate, could lead to feelings of dissatisfaction.” (Moorhead and Griffin, 1992)

Problem of Disabled at Workplace

Few visually impaired and mentally retarded employees felt isolated at their work place where as all hearing impaired and physically handicapped had no such feelings. Hearing impaired employees faced problem of communication and some of them also faced problems of lack of experience. The visually impaired employees faced behaviour problems of other people at work place, lack of Braille books and audio library. The mentally retarded employees faced problem of lack of experience and physically handicapped employees faced mobility problems.

Considering the status of persons with disabilities with respect of Human rights “It is strongly urged that the United Nations systems make all its facilities totally barrier-free, ensure that communication is fully available to sensorially impaired and adopt an affirmative action plan that includes administrative policies and practices to encourage the employment of disabled persons in the entire United Nation system.” (UN and Persons with Disabilities, 2003)

Employers’ Attitude

In our study, the employers’ attitude towards employees with disabilities was measured in terms of compensation, promotion, incentives, and training facilities provided to disabled. The results of our study indicate that majority of the employees with disabilities do not get same or similar salaries as other able-bodied employees. More than half of the employees with disabilities of our study mentioned that they were given promotions and incentives. The incentives were given in the form of increments, promotions, awards, bonuses, appreciation letters, and achievement certificates. Majority of the employees with disabilities also admitted that they were not provided opportunity for training.

An ILO study reveals, “There is general prejudice and discrimination against disabled people. The attitude of employers varies from the enlightened and enthusiastic to the blessed and disinterested. Often they are not as disinclined towards engaging disabled workers as many in the rehabilitation profession believe. But it must be kept in mind that private sector enterprises are required to be profitable. Policy objectives for integrating disabled into jobs must be shaped within this reality.”(International Labour Office, 1984)

The skills and performance of employees with disabilities must be continually upgraded. Meeting this requirement involve training and development activities and appraising performance for the purpose of giving feedback and motivating people to perform at their best and this is one of the important functions of HR. Companies invest in training to enhance individual performance and organisational productivity. Our study reveals that majority of the employees with disability had no provision of training which is against the ILO recommendation 99 paragraph 7 which states that “ wherever possible, disabled persons should receive training with and under the same conditions persons.”(International Labour Office, 1985)

“In order to ensure its economic survival, companies in Singapore are urged to move into high value-added industries and to make use of information technology to keep one step ahead of its competitors. Great importance is, therefore, placed on multi-tasking and skills retraining and upgrading of Singapore workers. This has serious implications for Person with disabilities (PWDs) especially those who are not well educated and are low functioning, such as the intellectually disabled and visually impaired. Singapore’s wage cost is also relatively high, and this results in low-value added industries/jobs being relocated to other countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, and China, etc., where wage costs are much lower. The result of this is that many jobs that are suitable for low-functioning PWDs who have difficulties in acquiring basic skills, have dried up. So a large sector of PWDs are left with little or no employment options, save for employment in sheltered workshops where pay is extremely minimal or even non-existent” (Tuen, 1999) It was also mentioned by ILO that measures should be taken to encourage

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employers to provide training for disabled persons and should include appropriate financial, technical, medical or vocational assistance. (International Labour Office, 1984)

“Many employers do not see disabled people in terms of their abilities, but only in terms of their disabilities. Even workers injured at work are not protected, and may lose their jobs.”(International Labour Office, 1992) In many countries, the Employment Placement for the Disabled has been encouraging employers to give disabled workers fair opportunities and to adopt policies that allow them to fulfill their potentials in employment. HRM can play a vital role in this regard. The employers have the following attitude towards the disabled employees.

A study conducted in USA reveals the perception of employers about hiring disabled persons. The result indicates that “majority of the employers believed that it would be easier for persons with heart impairment, with a cancer diagnosis, or persons living with HIV to fill the positions. A majority of the employers believe that it would be more difficult for persons with moderate or severe mental retardation or persons who are blind to perform the job duties of a specified job.” (Gilbride, 2000)

Legal Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The rights of persons with disabilities have been the subject of much attention in the United Nations and other international organisations over a long period of time. The most important outcome of the International Year of Disabled Persons, 1981, was the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, adopted by the General Assembly by its resolution 37/52 of 3 December 1982. The Year and the World Programme of Action provided a strong impetus for progress in the field. They both emphasized the right of persons with disabilities to the same opportunities as other citizens and to an equal share in the improvements in living conditions resulting from economic and social development.

“American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Civil Rights Act of 1991, together put emphasis on the rights of the disabled”(Carrel, Elbert and Hatfield, 1995). “The ADA prohibits discrimination against disabled persons if they can perform the “essential functions” of the job they are applying for or wish to retain and the new Civil Right Act puts the burden of proof on the employers to demonstrate that these essential functions are, in fact, essential to job performance” (Carrel, Elbert and Hatfield, 1995). These regulations put emphasis on job analysis to identify and define basic job duties and HRM is mainly responsible for that. How essential functions are determined and to what extent an employer is expected to accommodate the disabled persons, are tricky and challenging issues.

Our study reveals that more than half of the disabled employees had no awareness about their legal rights. The mentally retarded employees were not even aware of the quota system for the disabled persons.

The legal system influences HR managers by placing constraints on the ways, potential and actual employees are treated. “Equal opportunity law states that companies do not discriminate in hiring and training practices. The Fair Labour Standards Act and the Equal Pay Act ensure that people earn fair compensation for the contribution they make to the organisation. The Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) ensure that employees have a safe and healthy work environment” (Bateman and Snell, 1996).

Special Provision Made For Disabled Persons

The employers need to make reasonable accommodations in several areas to hire disabled persons. “First architectural barriers should not prohibit disabled individuals’ access to work areas or restrooms. A second area of reasonable accommodations is the assignment of work tasks. Satisfying this requirement

may mean modifying jobs like work area layouts, work schedules, or providing special equipments” (Mathis and Jackson, 2004).

It is observed that employers spent lot of money on building construction, renovation, furniture, etc., but don't consider the accessibility of disabled persons specially the wheel chair users by making ramps and installing elevators.

In our study majority of the physically handicapped pointed out that there were no special provisions made at job site to give them barrier free environment and hence job satisfaction, except one person who said that there was modified seating arrangement to his facility. Hearing impaired also need environment, free of sound pollution, which is not being provided in the organisations. One visually impaired employee mentioned about having the facility of Braille library and a helper to read books for blind employees. A daily newspaper of Pakistan also confirms the provision of special needs for the persons with disabilities on the occasion of international day for the Disabled by saying that “We have to work on making our cities more helpful towards disabled people. A law for removal of physical barriers is needed for the disabled to fully participate in daily activities in the society. In the absence of such a law, public buildings such as government offices, schools and parks are built without ramps, lifts and special toilets. This bars wheelchair users from visiting such buildings. It also limits education and job opportunities for the disabled.”(Special People's Needs, 2003)

It is also mentioned in National policy for persons with disabilities 2002 and Proposed Draft National Plan of Action (p.10) that “in order to ensure safe and easy access of persons with disabilities in public places/ buildings, code of practice for the design of new buildings and the adaptation of existing premises etc., will be prepared and issued in association with the Pakistan Council of Architects and Planners (PCAP) and Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC)”. (Government of Pakistan, 2002)

If we see the situation of amendments for the disabled in other countries we will come to know that rehabilitation engineering principles are being used more widely to modify jobs and training sites for physically disabled persons in advanced countries like USA, where as in Indonesia, the schools and universities have few or no facilities for disabled except one special school for disabled persons that provide suitable facilities such as ramps and special toilets. In Japan the buildings of universities, colleges and schools have only partial improvements made for disabled, thus most existing buildings remained inaccessible to disabled persons. (ILO, 1984)

In USA the Department of Labour's guidelines for contractors require them to make a “reasonable accommodation” for the handicapped which generally includes the following (Carrel, Elbert and Hatfield, 1995):

- **Job Accessibility:** adding wheelchair, ramps, Braille signs on elevators, air conditioning for workers with respiratory problems, and so on.
- **Job Design:** Eliminating tasks that a handicapped person cannot perform and those are not necessary to do a job.
- **Qualifications:** Eliminating unnecessary job specifications, such as physical examination that might limit the entry of handicapped applicants.
- **Unprejudiced Treatment:** Eliminating hiring decisions based on people's fear or uneasiness about handicaps such as epilepsy or speech impairment.

“The ADA requires that employers should make a “reasonable accommodation” to qualified individuals with disability which require employers to make workplace changes that permit the employment of

disabled persons- as long as the changes are reasonable in terms of cost and business necessity” (Carrell, Elbert and Hatfield,1995), Job descriptions are important to serve this purpose and this is a challenge for HR.

Quota System

“Many countries in Asia region such as Pakistan, China, Korea, Japan and Taiwan have adopted the quota system, which requires a certain proportion of the workforce to be filled by disabled workers as major measures for promoting employment opportunities for people with disabilities” (Lee, 1999). In Pakistan also under the government laws, both private and public sector organisations are supposed to reserve two percent job quota for disabled persons Our study also reveals that the employees with disabilities, hired on quota were mostly physically handicapped suffered from polio or having artificial leg or limb, considerable number of employees were hearing impaired, very few were visually impaired, negligible number of the employee were mentally retarded. None of them was satisfied with the quota system although majority of them think quota system as essential for providing them jobs.

Conclusion

- Hearing impaired employees faced problem of communication; visually impaired employees faced behaviour problems, lack of Braille books and audio library; mentally retarded employees faced problem of lack of experience; and physically handicapped employees faced mobility problems.
- Generally all the employees with disabilities were not satisfied with their jobs although most of them were equally treated like other colleagues in terms of salary, promotion and incentives.
- Majority have no awareness about their legal rights, and none of them show satisfaction with the 2 per cent quota fixed for the employment of persons with disabilities.
- Mostly there are no special provisions made for the employees with disabilities to provide them facilities of barrier free environment in the organisations where they are working.

Recommendations

- There is a need to increase public awareness about the potentials of the persons with disabilities to improve the employment opportunities of the disabled.
- The employers need to have a paradigm shift by focusing on abilities of disabled rather their disabilities.
- HRM can arrange training on “diversity management” to address diversity issues at work place including that of persons with disabilities.
- The media should play a strong role to promote an understanding of the rights of persons with disabilities and overcoming traditional stereotypes and prejudices against them.
- As suggested by ILO recommendation 168. “Workers organisations should adopt a policy for the promotion of training and suitable employment of disabled persons on an equal footing with other workers.”(ILO, 1992)
- The ergonomic approach or rehabilitation engineering involving scientific analysis of work posture, movement, effort and stress need to be used more widely to modify jobs and training sites. This will increase the employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.
- The government should encourage adopting a policy ensuring persons with disabilities, access to all public buildings and facilities, and public transport systems.
- 2 per cent quota fixed for employees with disabilities by the Government of Pakistan, need to be implemented immediately and HRM can play a key role in its implementation.

- Sheltered employment should be made available, self-employment may be encouraged and supported employment should be introduced in Pakistan like in other countries.
- An effective vocational assessment service can play a key role in finding the right job for the right person. This requires HRM to provide information about job opportunities, the job's requirements and working conditions to be matched up with an employee's capability.
- Co-operation between government, employers' and workers' organisations is needed to develop a joint strategy and joint action to ensure more and better employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. (ILO, 1989).
- Community based rehabilitation services projects aiming at vocational rehabilitation and employment services for the disabled should be started at different places.
- Tax incentives or grants can be given to encourage employers to make work site adjustment and to employ disabled, e.g., in Japan "grants are provided to business establishments hiring a large number of severely disabled persons (10 or more as a rule) to improve facilities and install special equipment"(Niwa, 1997).
- The ILO's recommendation regarding vocational rehabilitation and employment need to be discussed with HRM to find out the attitude of senior management and organisational policies on the issues of disabled persons.
- HRM needs to conduct research in the area of measurement and evaluation of personal policies, programs, and activities with special reference to employees with disabilities.

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