Employers views on disability, employability and labor market inclusion

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Background

• Low labor market inclusion among vulnerable and disadvantaged groups such as people with disabilities.

• Lack of cooperation between actors working within vocational rehabilitation/labor market services and employers.

• Employers central role within labor market inclusion- lack of knowledge of their needs and driving forces.
Aim of the study

To increase the knowledge and understanding for employers views on employability and labor market inclusion for people with disability.

- What different views on employability for people with disability were seen among the employers?
- What are the distinctive features?
- How can these different views be understood?
Method

- **Data collection**
  - Qualitative semi-structured interviews

- **Selection**
  - 27 employers, maximal variation

- **Analysis**
  - Phenomenographic

### Professional field

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional field</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Employer/Company</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health care and social care</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Personal assistance company, Elderly care company, Health center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales, hotel, restaurant and service</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Office technology company, hotel, Security company, Grocery store, Sports store, Fast food restaurant, Cleaning company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data, engineering, and science</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>High technology manufacturing company, Natural environmental consulting company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy, administration, culture, and media</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Municipal property management, Insurance company, News and media company, Bank, Authority operator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing, operations, and maintenance</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Recruitment company, Public energy company, Property company</td>
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<tr>
<td>Natural resources</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Packaging company, Dairy company, Agriculture, Agriculture organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building and construction</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Painting company</td>
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</table>
What different views on employability for people with disability were seen among the employers?

- Employability as *constrained* by disability
- Employability as *independent* of disability
- Employability as *conditional*
How can the different views be understood?
Distinctive features:
Employability as *constrained* by disability

- Problem-oriented ”Us-and-them” thinking
- Lack of trust in people with disabilities
- People with disabilities are low contributive- energy, time and resource demanding.
- Lack of support– non employer oriented.

“I have to be sure that if it is decided that you will begin at seven this week, you won’t come in at nine and say you couldn’t get up…”

“The wage subsidy can suddenly disappear, you never know…You can be left standing there with an employee who doesn’t work well…”
Distinctive features: Employability as *independent* of disability

- A solution oriented "look-for-the-good" thinking
- Trust in people with disability.
- Contribution- People with disability add value, high contributive, despite the disability.
- Support- Authorities no central role, support can facilitate employment but is not a prerequisite.

*When we recruit, we use a skill-based method, and then it is the person who has the best competence for the job who gets it. If this happens to be a person with a disability, we get the support that the person needs.*

"*This is not an obstacle for us, because we know that it’s worth it*"
Distinctive features: Employability as *conditional*

- A relative "depending-on" thinking, situational, not predetermined.
- Trust or distrust?
- Contribution - People with disability perceived as an asset or a load?
- Support - Employer oriented, employee oriented or authority oriented?

“*A limitation doesn’t have to be an obstacle to their work. You can’t look at an individual’s diagnosis, you have to look at what they can do*.”
Conclusion from the study

• Knowledge of variation in views of employability, enables for authorities to tailor employer-oriented support & build up long-term trustful partnership.

• This may:
  • enhance employers’ trust in people with disabilities
  • enable employers to view people with disabilities as being contributive
  • increase labor market inclusion
What is employer-oriented support?

- One contact person
- Organizational agreements
- Individual plans with follow ups
- Personal support
- Financial support
- Physical support
- Administrative support
- Employer oriented education
How can the results be implemented?

1. Knowledge and understanding of the model.

2. Set the structure, organize for change.

3. Tailor employer oriented support and build up trustful relationships with the employers.
Going from theory to practice

• A labor market service at the municipal labor market unit in Linköping, Sweden
• Aim: Stimulate increased labor market inclusion among municipal employers
• Inspired by the results – focus on employer oriented support
• Process evaluation during 2017-2018
• Evaluate different perspectives
Some challenges...

• Lack of dissemination of information of the model in the organization.

• The organization is not prepared for the new working method.

• Lack of interprofessional cooperation between staff members concerning roles and missions.
Bring-home-message

**CONTRIBUTION**

**EMPLOYERS VIEWS ON EMPLOYABILITY AS:**
- CONSTRANGED by disability
- INDEPENDENT of disability
- CONDITIONAL

**WORKPLACE RELATED ASPECTS**
- Need for labor
- Character of the work tasks
- Character of the workplace
- Knowledge

**AUTHORITY RELATED ASPECTS**
- Structure of the cooperation
- Character of the Support
- Labour and regulatory framework

**INDIVIDUAL RELATED ASPECTS**
- Character of the disability
- Workabilities
- Competence & work experience
- Personal characteristics
- Interest and will
- Well-being
Thank you for the attention!

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Employers' views on disability, employability, and labor market inclusion: a phenomenographic study
Lena Strindlund, Madeleine Abrandt-Dahlgren, Christian Ståhl
Disability and Rehabilitation 2018 June 30, : 1-8