Assessment of Employment Needs of Persons with Disability in Assam and Meghalaya

Centre for Disability Studies & Action

and

ATLMRI (Adecco-TISS Labour Market Research Initiative), TISS, Mumbai

in collaboration with

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We wish to thank all the participants in this study for staying with us through the data collection and their active participation. We hope that together we can create an inclusive society in Assam and Meghalaya.

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Srilatha Juvva

Introduction

In today's world employment is considered as a boon, as it enhances quality of life, determines financial security, builds self-esteem (Delsen, 1989) and achieves a sense of satisfaction of contributing to society. Employment motivates persons with disabilities greatly in gaining independence and achieving social inclusion (Hart, 1999).

Employment for person with disabilities is a major concern and challenge to the modern technology and dynamic world. Non government organizations and government bodies are trying to reduce the unemployment rate of persons with disabilities. NGOs are concentrating largely on inclusion, accessibility and employment, whereas government focuses on the judiciary system such as policies and acts related to disability. .

The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 provides for 3% reservation in jobs of Government establishments and Public Sector Undertakings in identified posts. Special Employment Exchanges were also initiated to ensure livelihood opportunities for people with disabilities. However, while large numbers of people with disabilities remain on the live registers of the special employment exchanges, the Government manages to place only about 4000 people with disabilities every year into jobs through its Employment Exchanges[1].

In 1999, NCPEDP conducted a study on the status of employment of people with disabilities in the Indian corporate sector. It sent a questionnaire to super 100 companies in the public and private sectors and also the multinationals ranked by the Business India as playing a major role in changing the trend of industrial growth in post-liberalized India. Out of the 100 companies, 70 companies responded. Out of the total number of 7,96,363 employees in the respondent companies, the employees with disabilities counted only 3,160 which was just 0.40 per cent.

[1] http://www.ncpedp.org/policy/pol-res02htm

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A study conducted by the organization Disability KaR in India to assess the scenario regarding persons with disability found strong relation between disability and poverty. Most of the participants in the study who had acquired disability at a later stage of life, informed that they had become poorer after affected by the impairment.

The surveys conducted in villages of Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh (Klasing, 2007) found that in Andhra Pradesh, 51% of those who had disability and were of working age had absolutely no opportunity to work and were fully dependent on the members of their family. In Rajasthan, the figure was 62 %. Although many of these persons, especially blind adults, are capable of doing some productive work, their families and the larger community regarded them to be incapable (ibid.).

Literature reveals (World Bank Report, 2004) that the employment rate in 2002 is lower than 1990; and there is very less employment opportunities for person with disabilities. The reasons for this could be from an employer's perspective such as the stereotypes attached to the word "disability", lack of awareness about the ability of persons with disabilities and the culture of the organization. Looking at the same from the perspective of the employee, it can be found that socialization, education, lack of opportunities, awareness, accessibility, technology, and vocational training are the important factors for contributing employment (Bebarta, 2010).

One has come a long way in the area of disability from isolation-segregation-integration and now inclusion. A few achievements have been made yet more obstacles are to be overcome in the areas of education, advocacy of persons with disabilities, policy and of course employment. Even if person with disabilities have the skills and qualification, still they struggle against prejudice biases to obtain employment and many remain unemployed (Sharma, 2008)

Economic empowerment of people with disabilities is one of the main concerns of the disability sector in India. But, societal prejudices, lack of awareness of various possibilities of training and employments and physical barriers to access have turned even the idea of empowering disabled persons into an illusion.

At a micro-level it might appear that there has been progress since several corporate houses are taking pro-active measures to employ disabled people. But at the macro-level, and especially in the Northeast, where economic growth is stunted, the picture appears bleak.

The first hurdle that civil society organizations face in advocating for employment, or even training of persons with disabilities, is the pathetic lack of reliable figures on the extent of unemployment among people them. This is unfortunate, but not surprising, considering the relative insignificance attached to disability issues in India. Hence a research to ascertain needs and strategies is envisaged to plan and provide for comprehensive services. To fill this gap the study has been proposed with the intention to understand the employment situation of disabled persons particularly in North-eastern states of Assam and Meghalaya.

Objectives of the study

The current study aims at conducting a baseline research to understand the current situation of employment potential for persons with disability. The objectives of the research will be as follows:

1. To explore the current status of employment of persons with disability in different organized and unorganized sectors
2. To identify the employment and livelihood needs of persons with disability and the related training that they might require
3. To identify the employment solutions that their employers might have to implement at the workplace
4. To explore culturally sensitive and creative options with regard to employment of persons with disability from different stakeholder perspectives

Partners in the study:

The partners in this research are Shishu Sarothi and TISS. The TISS group includes members from the Centre for Disability Studies and Action (CDSA), Adecco TISS Labor Market Research Initiative (ATLMRI) and members from the Guwahati Campus.

The research proposal was developed by Shishu Sarothi in consultation with the CDSA and ATLMRI team members. Subsequently, to carry out the study, the research tool was prepared after a thorough review of relevant studies in this area and necessary variables for the study were identified. The study tools were prepared by the ATLMRI team in consultation with the CDSA faculty. The identification and selection of field investigators were done by Shishu Sarothi. The training for the investigators was arranged by the TISS team from Guwahati Campus. A one day workshop was arranged and all the field investigators were trained before the start of the field work.

Methodology:

The study follows a descriptive research design, which describes the needs and employment status of persons with disability. The Universe of the study consists of all persons with disability in the two states of Assam and Meghalaya. Using simple random sampling procedures, a sample of 384 persons with all types of disability in Assam and 150 in Meghalaya was decided. However due to logistical constraints, the sample size was further reduced to 258 in both states.

Sampling plan for Assam

ASSAM	Disabled Persons*	Sample size
Seeing	282056	204
Speech	56974	41
Hearing	51825	38
Movement	91970	67
Mental	47475	34
TOTAL	530300	384

*Data from Census 2001

Sampling plan for Meghalaya

MEGHALAYA	Disabled Persons*	Sample size
Seeing	13381	69
Speech	3431	18
Hearing	3668	19
Movement	5127	27
Mental	3196	17
TOTAL	28803	150

*Data from Census 2001

The study was conducted by using two pre tested research tools one for persons with disability and other for the organizations. The tools used for the study are semi structured interview schedules, which includes demographic and disability details, personal and family details, details about their educational and vocational training, and employment details. Information related to details of discrimination faced during job interview and during work life, attitude of coworkers and supervisors, in addition to work environment including physical access, social environments, barriers for further vocational training and career advancements if any were also collected. The details related to the extent of family and social support received by the disabled persons both during employment and unemployment periods were also collected. The organization Scheduled elicits information related to profile, information related to persons with disability working in the organization, recruitment processes and entitlements provided by the organization for the person with disability, information related to physical and social accessibility and inclusive policies of the organization. In the organizational interview Scheduled the questions were designed to capture the employee's perspectives also included. A randomly selected 38 organizations, HR heads or related professionals were included in this study in chosen study area namely the states of Assam and Meghalaya.

The data was collected by trained field investigators, who were trained in basics of sampling and administering the interview schedules. They were also trained in basic interviewing skills and the

ethical principles to be adhered to. They include, informed consent, confidentiality and were assured that the data would be used for research purposes only. Data was collected either at the residence or the office of the respondents.

Limitation:- There are missing values in the data related to education, vocational training and few aspects of employment therefore the analysis is restricted remaining variables.

SECTION-1, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The demographic details of the respondents are given in the following tables:

Demographic details of the sample

States	N	Percentage
Assam	149	57.75
Meghalaya	109	42.25
Total	258	100

District		
Districts	N	Percentage
Tinsukia	130	50.39
Kamrup	19	7.36
West Garo Hills	23	8.91
East Khasi Hills	86	33.33
Total	258	100

Table 2: Age across Gender

Age recode	Gender		
	Male	Female	Total
Up to 20 years	7.8%	10.9%	18.6%
20- 29 years	22.9%	16.3%	39.1%
30-39 years	17.4%	7.8%	25.2%
40-49 years	8.9%	5.8%	14.7%
50-59 years	0.8%	1.2%	1.9%
60 years & above	Nil	0.4%	0.4%
Total	57.8%	42.2%	100.0%

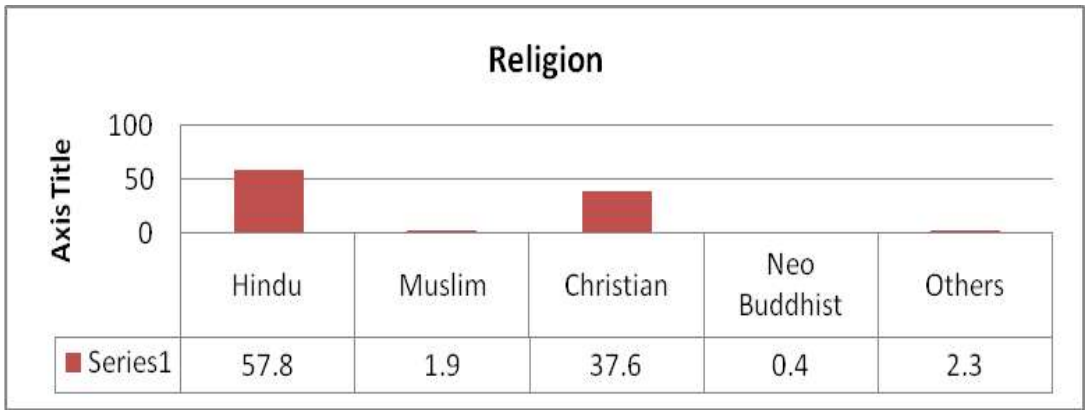
The table shows the age of the respondents who participated in the study. The majority of the respondents belong to the age group of 20 to 29 years which is 39% of the total respondents. It is also clear from the table that 58% are male respondents and 42% are female respondents.

Table 3: Age across Marital status

Age	Marital status		Total
	Unmarried	Married	
Up to 20 years	18.6%	Nil	18.6%
20- 29 years	34.5%	4.7%	39.1%
30-39 years	11.2%	14.0%	25.2%
40-49 years	3.9%	10.9%	14.7%
50-59 years	0.8%	1.2%	1.9%
60 years & above	Nil	0.4%	0.4%
Total	69.0%	31.0%	100.00%

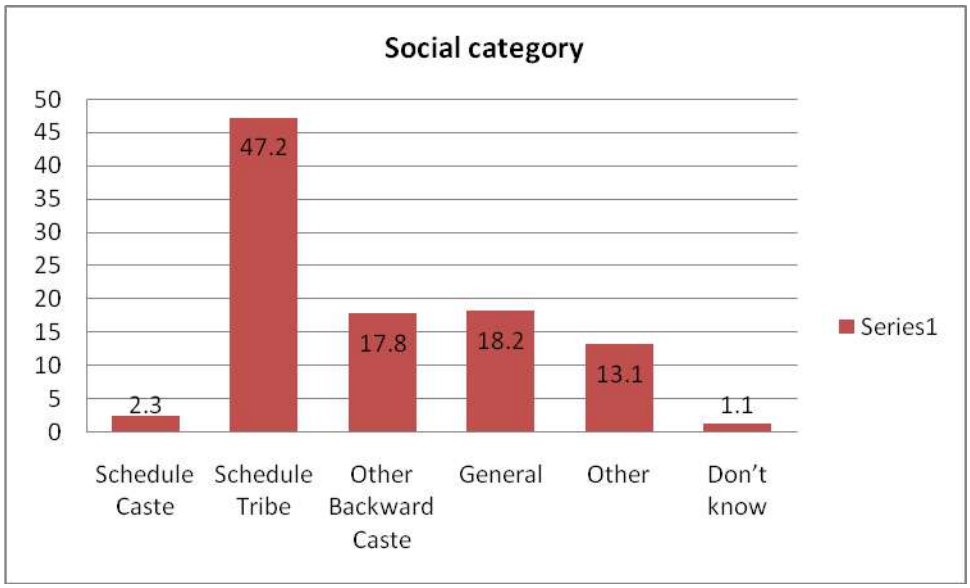
The above table denotes the age across marital status and it states that 69% of the respondents are unmarried. It is also clear that the age group 20-39 years has maximum (34.5%) respondents who are not married.

Figure 1: Religion of the Respondents



The majority of the respondents in this study are Hindus (57.8%) followed by the Christian community (37.6%). Muslim consists of a minor (1.9%) section of our sample. However even though insignificant neo Buddhist are also seen in this sample (0.4%) and others (2.3%) are the followers of other religions including tribal religions.

Figure 2: Caste of the Respondents



Most of the respondents are from the Scheduled Tribes (47.2%); OBC comprise (17.8%) of the sample and General Category constitutes 18.2% respondents, interestingly 1.1% of the respondents stated that they do not know about the social category to which they belong. A large number of the ST sample reflects the demographic reality of the region.

Table 4: Education of Respondents

Education	**Percent**
Illiterate/Non formal Education	29.8
Primary school dropout	27.6
Secondary school dropout	9.7
SSC	14.3
HSC	8.5
Graduate	7
Post Graduate	3.9
Total	100

The table shows that around 30% of the respondents are illiterate, 37 % of the respondents fall under the primary and secondary school dropout category. Around 33% of the respondents are matriculate.

Table 5: Type of School attended

School	**Percent**
Special school	12.4
Regular school	56.2
NIOS(National Institute of Open School)	1.6
NA	29.8
Total	100.00

The above table explains that only 12.4% of the respondents have attended special school whereas 56% of the respondents have attended regular school. This shows that only few respondents have availed the special education and this could also mean that lack of special schools in this region might have forced them to go to regular school. However, it is important that regular schools must be inclusive and accommodate the diverse needs of children/students/people with disability.

Table 6: Number of family members

Response	Percent
1	0.8
2	3.9
3	10.1
4	19.4
5	17.8
6	14.0
7	13.2
8	7.4
9	6.6
10	3.5
11	2.7
12	0.4
14	0.4
Total	100.0

This table explains that 51% of the respondents have 1 to 5 members in their family. 30% of the respondents either have 6 or 7 members and 6% of the respondents have minimum 10 members in their family.

Table 7: No of working/earning members in the family

Members	Percent
1	54.3
2	29.1
3	12.0
4	3.5
5	0.8
9	0.4
Total	100.0

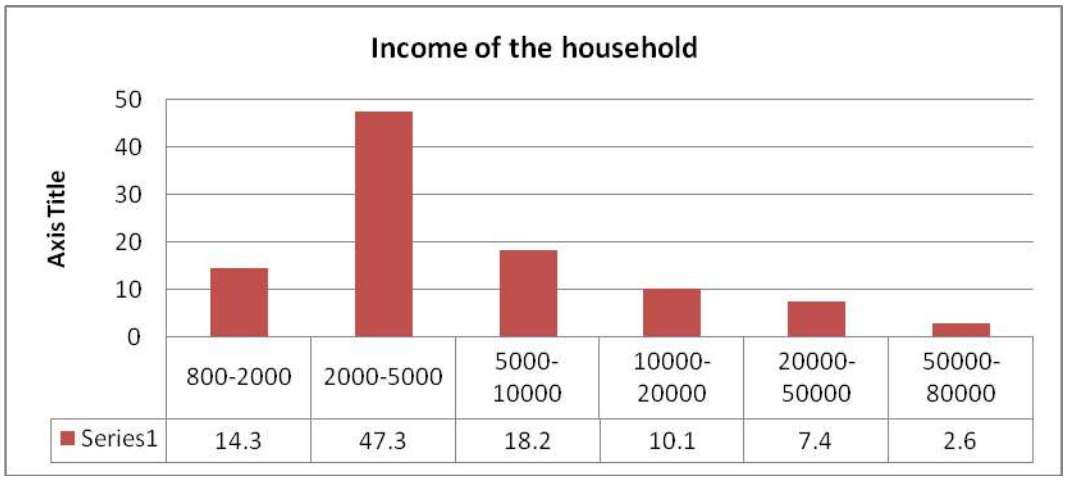
This table shows that more than half of the respondents (54.3%) are having 1 working member in their families. Around 30% of the families have 2 working members in their family. This implies that most of the households are economically independent. In fact, around 0.4% of the respondents have 9 working members in their family.

Table 8: Social category across the occupation

Social category	Currently working		
	Yes	No	Total
Schedule Caste	0.8%	1.6%	2.3%
Schedule Tribe	**10.9%**	**36.4%**	**47.3%**
Other Backward Caste	1.9%	15.9%	17.8%
General	2.7%	15.5%	18.2%
Other	Nil	13.2%	13.2%
Don't know	0.4%	0.8%	1.2%
Total	16.7%	83.3%	100.0%

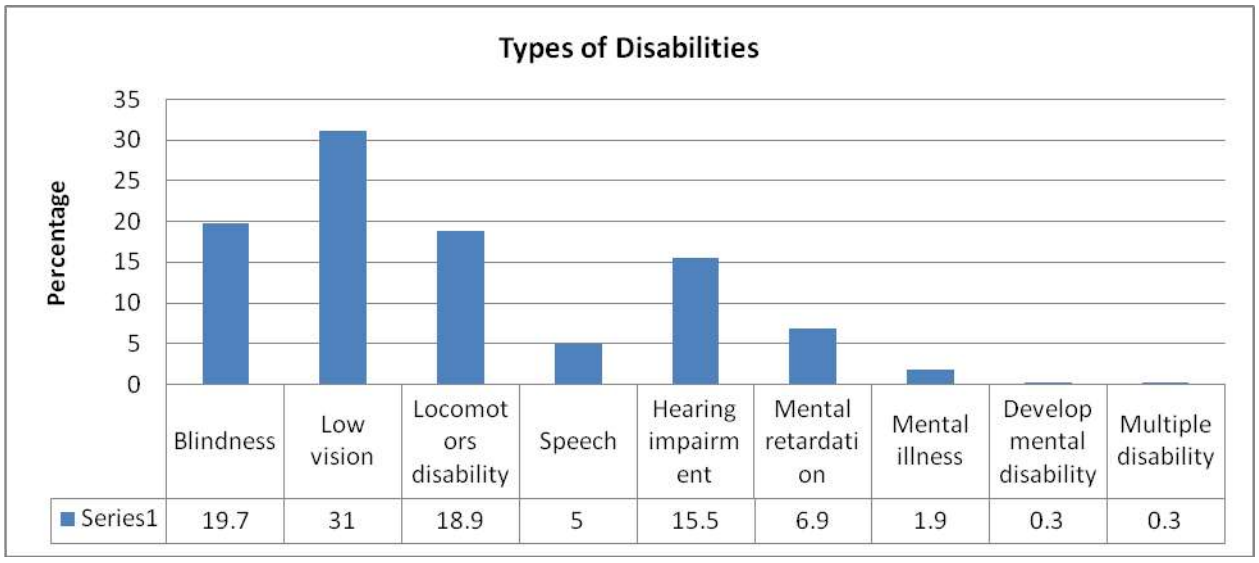
The table highlights that the majority (47.3%) of the respondents belongs to Scheduled tribe and among them 36.4% respondents are unemployed and rest 10.9% are employed. This table also found that employment status among Scheduled Tribe is higher than other caste groups.

Figure 3 Income of the Household



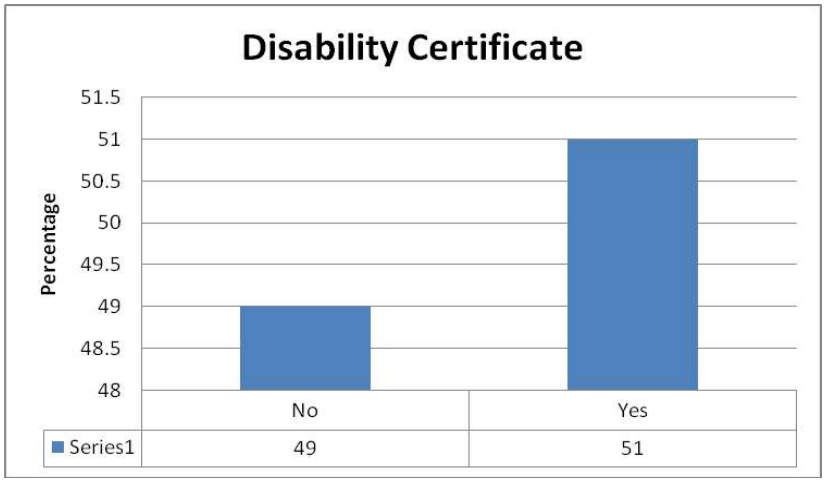
The above chart describes the income of the households. As it is clear that 47.3% of the respondents earn Rs.2000 to Rs.5000 per month whereas 18.2% of the respondents of the families earn Rs.5000 to Rs.10,000 , 7.4% of the household earn Rs.20,000 to Rs 50,000. Only 2.6% of the families earn more than 50,000 per month.

Figure 4: Type of Disability



The charts denotes that the majority of the disability fall under the vision impairment (50.7%) followed by locomotor disability (18.9%) and hearing impairment (15.5%), mental retardation (6.9%), speech impairment (5%), mental illness (1.9%) and 0.3% of developmental and multiple disability each.

Figure 5: Disability Certificate



Half of the respondents do not have a disability certificate and the reason for this as follows

- 18.6% of the respondents do not know about what is disability certificate
- 28.7% of the respondents did not know the procedure to procure it.

Table 9: Usage of aids and appliances

Response		Percent
	Yes	20.2
	No, never used	78.3
	Was using them before nut not any more	1.6
	Total	100.0

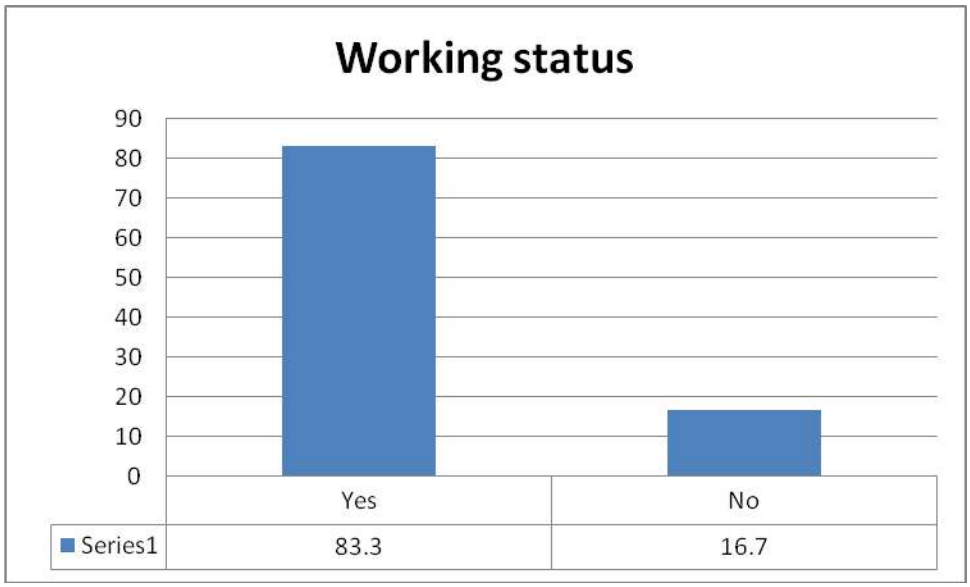
The above table shows that 78% of the respondents have never used any aids and appliances. This could be because they are not aware about such assistive device or do not know from where to procure it or it could be the financial constraint.

Table 10:

Aids and Appliance	**Percent**
Staff	2.3
Cane	4.7
Spectacle	0.8
Wooden staff	0.4
No response	13.6
NA	78.3
Total	100

The table denotes that only 7.8% of the respondents have used different aids and appliances. The majority of them (4.7%) use cane/stick, followed by staff (2.3%) and spectacle (0.8%). It is also found that few respondents (0.4%) who are still using the wooden staff as their assistive device. This could mean that most of the respondents are either not aware of other types of aids and appliances or they do not know where to procure such appliances.

Figure 6: Employment Status



This chart shows the status of the participants who are currently engaged in some form of employment as 83% of them are unemployed and only 17% are employed. This could be because either they are continuing their education or have not received any skills training.

Table 11: Gender across employment

Gender	Currently working		
	Yes	No	Total
Male	12.8%	45.0%	**57.8%**
Female	**3.9%**	38.4%	**42.2%**
Total	**16.7%**	**83.3%**	100.0%

The table depicts that male employment ratio is 3 times greater than female employment rate. This implies a great scope to work and generate activities related to women employment in this region. As it shows that out of 42.2% of the women participants only 3.9% of them are employed. The activities like building up SHGs and provide them platform to be self-dependent can be instrumental. Efforts can also be made to generate employment from the home and

opportunities for home based employment for persons with disability and their families may be explored.

Table 12: Usage of aids appliances across working status

Usage of aids appliances	Currently working		
	Yes	No	Total
Yes	**4.3%**	15.9%	**20.2%**
No, never used	12.0%	66.3%	**78.3%**
Was using them before but not any more	0.4%	1.2%	**1.6%**
Total	**16.7%**	**83.3%**	100.0%

The above table-12 shows that only 4.3% respondents who are currently working and using different kind of aids and appliances This could be because either people are not aware about different assistive devices and its usefulness. Being at home may also limit the opportunities to use assistive devices.

Table 13: Disability across employment

Type of disability	Currently working		
	Yes	No	Total
Blindness	2.7%	17.1%	19.8%
Low vision	1.6%	29.5%	31.0%
Locomotors disability	**5.4%**	13.6%	19.0%
Speech	3.1%	1.9%	5.0%
Hearing impairment	1.9%	13.6%	15.5%
Mental retardation	1.2%	5.8%	7.0%
Mental illness	0.4%	1.6%	1.9%
Developmental disability	Nil	0.4%	0.4%
Multiple disability	0.4%	Nil	0.4%
Total	**16.7%**	83.3%	100.0%

The above table denotes the cross tabulation among disability and employment. It was found that that out of the 16.7% employed population, 5.4% are Locomotor Disability and it is followed by speech and hearing impairment together (5%) and vision impairment (4.3%).

Figure 7: Routes to employment



It is clear that, out of all the employed participants, 66% of them have got the job through word of mouth. 9.5% respondents have got the jobs through job fair and through references. About 19% had responded to advertisements in newspapers and the internet and thus found an employment.

It is also found that out of the working participants 13.6% of the respondents are satisfied with their jobs where as only 2% of the employees neither like the jobs that they are currently engaged with nor happy with the working hours. 10% of the employees are satisfied with the working hours in their current jobs.

8% of the employees are satisfied with their current salary whereas 6% of the respondents feel that the salary is inadequate as they are being paid less than non-disabled colleagues. Further, 9.3% of the respondents state that their wages are on par with nondisabled employees.

13.6% of the respondents would like to change their current job, whereas 2% are fully satisfied and do not wish to change their jobs

2.7% of the participants feel that the work is physical exhausting in terms of communication, transportation and inaccessible spaces and information while 12% respondents feel that the work is convenient and they do not experience work related stress.

Only 3% of the employees are able to state their problem to their employers whereas 7% of them never dare to convey and discuss their problems with their boss.

1.2% of the employees get the accommodation in their workplace and 0.4% of them have been helped by employers whenever they had difficulties.

Out of the working employees only 5% of them are using the computer for their office related work.

Attitude of the coworkers

15.5% of the respondents feel that the attitude of the coworker was encouraging and helpful and only 0.4% of the employees feel that the attitude was indifferent in terms of being insensitive towards their needs.

4.7% feel isolated with respect to certain tasks. 1.6% of them revealed that co-workers have been spoken disrespectfully to them.

Major Findings

Demographic Profile

- The majority of the respondents belong to the age group of 20 to 29 years which is 39% of the total respondents.
- The male respondents constitute 58% and female respondents are 42% of the sample.
- 69% of the respondents are unmarried and the age group 20-39 years has maximum (35%) respondents who are not married.
- The majority of the respondents are Hindus (57.8%) followed by significant propitiation Christian community (37.6%). Muslim consists of a minor (1.9%). Even though insignificant neo Buddhist are also seen in this sample (0.4%) and others (2.3%) are the followers of other religions including tribal religions
- Most of the respondents are from Scheduled Tribe (47.2%) OBC consist of (17.8%) of the sample and General category respondents are consisting of 18.2% in this study.
- 70% of the respondents are literate and attended some form of education and around 33% of them are matriculate
- Only 12.4% of the respondents have attended special school whereas 56% of the respondents have attended regular school.
- 51% of the respondents have 1 to 5 members in their family. 30% of the respondents either have 6 or 7 members. 6% of the respondents have minimum 10 members in their family. Hence employment is an immediate need, not only to support the family but also to take care of their own needs without adding to financial constraints of the family.
- More than half of the respondents (54.3%) are having 1 working member in their families. Around 30% of the families have 2 working members in their family. Further, 0.4% of the respondents have 9 working members in their family.

- 47.3% of the household earn Rs.2000 to Rs.5000 per month whereas 18.2% of the respondents of the families earn Rs.5000 to Rs.10,000, 7.4% of the household earn Rs.20,000 to Rs 50,000. Only 2.6% of the families earn more than 50,000 per month.

Disability

- The majority of the disability fall under the vision impairment (51.7%) followed by locomotor disability (18.9%) and hearing impairment (15.5%), mental retardation (6.9%), speech (5%), mental illness (1.9%) and 0.3% each of developmental and multiple disability.
- Half of the respondents do not have a disability certificate as 18.6% of the respondents do not know what disability certificate is; 28.7% of the respondents did not know the procedure to procure it.
- 78.3% of the respondents have never used the aids and appliances

Employment

- It was found that 83% of the respondents are unemployed.
- Employment ratio is higher among male than female as found that out of 17% employed respondents, 13% are male and remaining 4% are female employees.
- The majority (46.9%) of the respondents belong to Scheduled Tribe which is the combination of Unemployed respondents (36.4%) and Employed respondents (10.9%).
- Only 4.3% respondents who are currently working and using different types of aids and appliances.
- The majority of the participants (5.4%) who fall under the locomotor category are currently working followed by speech and hearing impairment (5%) and vision impairment (4.3%).
- 66% of the working respondents have got a job through word of mouth. 9.5% of the respondents have got the jobs through job fair and through references.

- 13.6% of the respondents are satisfied with their jobs, 10% of the employees are satisfied with the working hours in their current jobs.
- 8% of the employees are satisfied with their current salary whereas 6% of the respondents feel that the salary in inadequate.
- 13.6% of the respondents would like to change their current jobs and 2% are fully satisfied and do not like to change their jobs.
- 9.3% of the respondents state that their wages are on par with nondisabled employees.
- 2.7% of the participants feel that the work is physical exhausting in terms of communication, transportation and inaccessible spaces and information while 12% respondents feel that the work is convenient and they do not feel that the work is physical stress.
- Only 3% of the employees are able to state their problem to their employers whereas 7% respondents never dare to convey and discuss their problems with their boss.
- 1.2% of the employees get the accommodation in their workplace and 0.4% of them have been helped by employers whenever they had difficulties.
- Out of the working employees only 5% of them are using the computer for their office related work.

Attitude of the coworkers and employers

- Out of the 17% of the working employees, 15.5% feel that the attitude of the coworker was encouraging and helpful
- 4.7% feel isolated with respect to certain tasks, such a sedentary telephone job as it does not give them an opportunity to interact with others, a job that they are not interested in such as sales, no clear job description. 1.6% revealed that their co-workers have spoken to them disrespectfully.
- Employers and co-worker's attitudes are more helpful and supportive towards persons with locomotor disability than other types of disability in the workplace.

Recommendations

Recommendations for interventions at multiple levels including various stakeholders are suggested for Shishu Sarothi to implement.

For individuals or persons with disability

1. There seems to be a lack of systematic and sustained inputs and vocational training for persons with disability in skill development and trades of their choice.
2. It would help to map the interests and available skills of persons with disability and the skills sets required to procure employment in the North East especially using resources, including natural resources for generating sustainable employment solutions. There seems to be a lack of direction and market analysis while planning for employment initiatives.
3. Given that majority of the participants or respondents attended regular schools, introducing relevant, culturally competent and market driven vocational training is imperative. This training should be made accessible for all persons with disability and should also cater to disability specific needs.
4. Strengths of persons with disability must be respected and taken into account while planning for employment options.
5. Given that most respondents in this study experience a congenial and helpful relationship with their co-workers and employers, efforts must be made to reinforce inclusive practices within the workplace.
6. Efforts may be made to expand the horizons of the persons with disability in order to find a suitable employment option.
7. Involving the family acts as a facilitating factor in the person with disability procuring as well as retaining employment.

For the Employer

1. It is important to sensitize prospective employers to issues related to disability, with particular reference to accessibility and employment.

2. Efforts must be made by the employer to ensure equitable disbursement of salary for the person with disability
3. It is important that the employer respects the strengths of the employee with disability and allocates tasks commensurate with his or her abilities.
4. It would be helpful if the employer identified creative options and work tasks for a person with disability.
5. Periodic consultations with the employee with disability and addressing disability specific work needs are important.
6. Regular feedback and work incentives motivate anyone including a person with disability to strive further. This can be a strong reinforcing gesture at the workplace.
7. A reported lack of discrimination is the strength in the employment potential of persons with disability in Assam and Meghalaya. This can be capitalized upon to reinforce and strengthen inclusion.

For policy and action

1. The 3% reservation as mandated in the PWD Act 1995 should be adhered to. It is imperative that PSUs and the private sector implement this reservation policy at the earliest. This would ensure that no jobs reserved for persons with disability are lying vacant.
2. Given that Indian is signatory to the UNCRPD, efforts must be made to make the workplace UNCRPD compliant.
3. Local ITIs and Vocational Rehabilitation Centres can be nodal centres for providing need based skills training. Hence the functioning and implementation of training programs must be strengthened and supported.

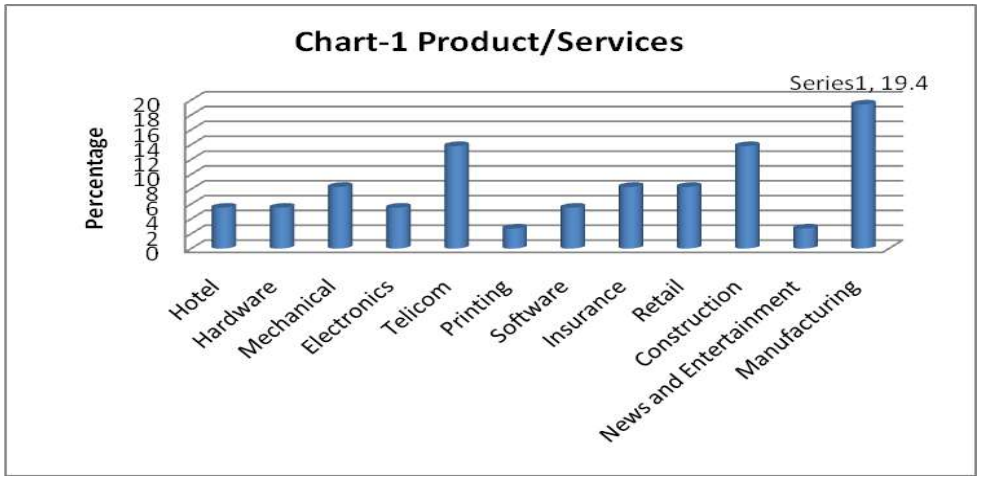
SECTION-II , ANALYSIS OF EMPLOYING ORGANISATION DATA

Table-1 Type of the Organization

Response	Frequency	Percent
Proprietorship	13	36.1
Privet Ltd Co	22	61.1
PSU	1	2.8
Govt	Nil	Nil
Total	36	100.0

Table 1 shows the different types of organizations have been included in this study. It is clear from the table that the majority of the organizations belong to private units (61.1%) and only one (2.8%) organization is PSU whereas none of Government organizations are included in the study as the main focus was to find out whether the private sectors and PSUs follow the norms of employing people with disability in their organization. As known, government organizations have the mandatory 3 per cent reservations for persons with disabilities.

As seen in the table-1, 36 organizations have been undertaken for the study. The following chart shows the different types of product and services they are involved with.



The above chart-1 depicts that the majority of the companies in this sample work on Manufacturing (19.4%), Telecom (13.9%) and Construction services (13.9%). They manufacture

and process products related to telecommunications, cement, medicine, agriculture, tea, polymer and plastic.

Table-2, Number of employees

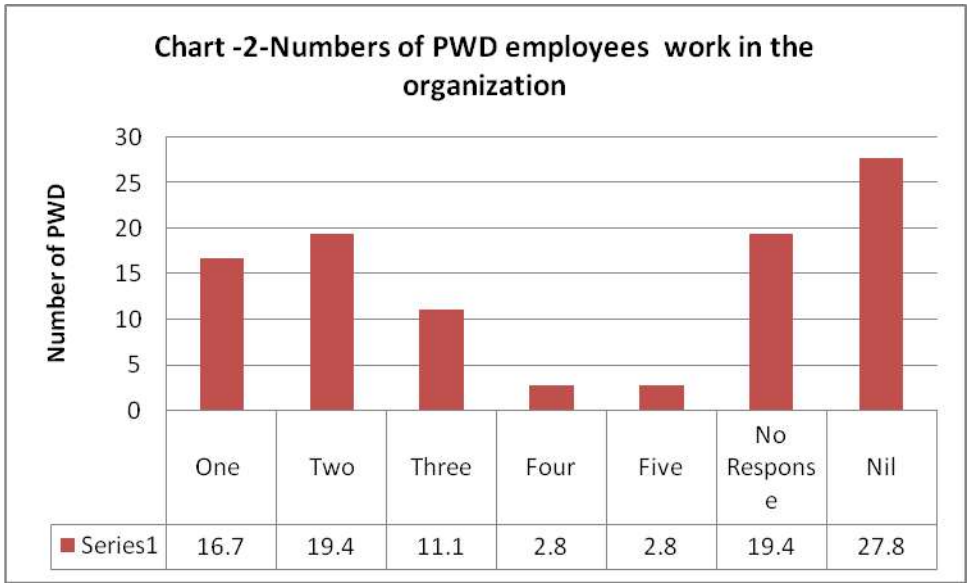
Response	Percent
0-5	8.3
6-10	27.8
11-20	19.4
21-50	11.1
51-100	5.6
101-200	13.9
More than 200	5.6
No response	8.3
Total	100.0

The above table-2 shows the number of those employed in the sample of the organizations. About 27% of the organizations have 6 to 10 employees followed by 19.4% organization with a strength of 11 to 20 employees and 25% percent of the organizations have more than 50 employees**.** These figures include those with and without disability.

Table-3 Employees with Disability

Response	Percentage %
Yes	52.8
No	27.8
No Response	19.4
Total	100.0

As seen in the above table-3, more than half of the organizations (52.8%) have employees with disability. It was also found that 27.8% organizations have not employed a person with disability; whereas 19.4% organizations did not respond to this question as they seem to be unaware about the concept of disability. They also feel that disabled people are not suitable for their works.



The Chart-2 denotes the number of employees with disability have been employed in the organizations. The majority of the organizations have either one employee (16.7%) or two

employees (19.4%), or 3 employees (11.1%). About 2.8% of organizations have a maximum of 5 employees with disability.

The study also found that only 3 categories of disability have been employed, namely **visual impairment, hearing impairment and locomotor impairment**. This is also in keeping with the stipulated mandate of the Persons with Disability Act, 1995, that persons with these types of disability should have a 1 % reservation each in any government offices. However it is encouraging to note that even private organizations have taken such steps. It would help organizations to enhance their employment rates by about 5% in order to avail of government concessions (PWD Act, 1995, Section-41) Section 41 talks about Incentives to employers to motivate both in public and private sectors to ensure that at least 5 per cent of their work force is composed of persons with disabilities

Table-4 Organisation's compliance with government norms

Response	Percent
Yes	19.4
No	80.6
Total	100.0

The table-4 denotes that about 80% of the organizations do not follow the government norms of fulfilling the mandated reservation of people with disabilities as per the PWD Act of 1995. Even though they maybe private organizations and the mandate of the government does not directly bind them, as a matter of duty, in the spirit of inclusion, it would benefit organizations to not only adhere to these norms, but it would go a long way in enabling the country to be compliant to the spirit of the UNCRPD (2006). This can serve as a vantage point for advocacy and policy changes in the states of Assam and Meghalaya.

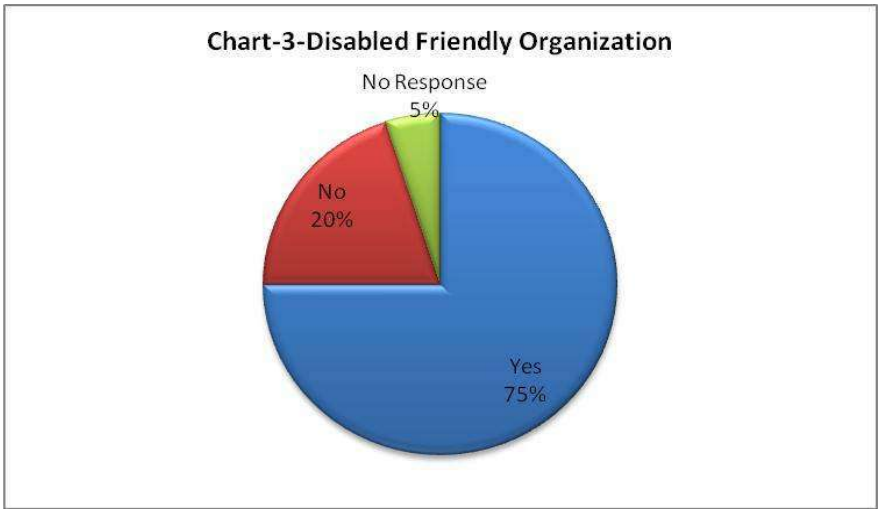
Table-5 Organization's willingness to employ more disabled persons

Response	Percent
Yes	69.4
No	27.8
No response	2.8
Total	100.0

The table -5 describes that about 70% of the organizations would like to employ persons with disability. This implies the positive attitude of employers towards the skills and abilities of persons with disability. This also emphasizes the need for making PWD skilled in various areas based on the needs of the organizations. About 28% of organizations do not wish to hire persons with disability and the reasons for this from the employer's perspectives are as follows:

- People with disability cannot take risks at work (2.8%)
- No vacancy currently in the organization (8.4%)
- Work processes are slowed down when we employ PWD (2.8%)

The misconceptions and stigma related to disability is obvious in the above responses. An attempt to highlight the strengths of PWD and sensitize employers is an urgent need that can be undertaken by Shishu Sarothi. This also calls for sensitization of state actors, such as media, policy makers who can play an important role in addressing such stigma and misconceptions. Here it would be helpful to refer to the UNCRPD and advocate for the social model to remove environmental barriers to employment of persons with disability.



A disability friendly organization caters to the needs and concerns of people with disability. It means that a person with disability is able to physically access each space within the organization. It also means equal access to the information and services that the organization offers. Therefore the disability friendliness would recommend having provisions such as a ramp, elevator, accessible offices rooms and toilets, accessible computer and Braille books and tactile descriptions. Further, attitudinal access is also an important component that is often assumed to be present or ignored. This is practiced both by employers as well as co-workers. Attitudinal access would facilitate an ease of social interactions and work culture for both persons with disability and those within the spaces of work (employers as well as co-workers). As seen in Chart-3, 75% of the organizations reported that their premises are disabled friendly whereas 20% of the organizations are not accessible. This is a self reported response. The actual accessibility would need to be verified through access audits of workplace environment.

Shishu Sarothi can work towards this through a participatory process of partnering with employing organisations as well as their employees with disability. Shishu Sarothi could train the employees in using the Access Audit Checklist.

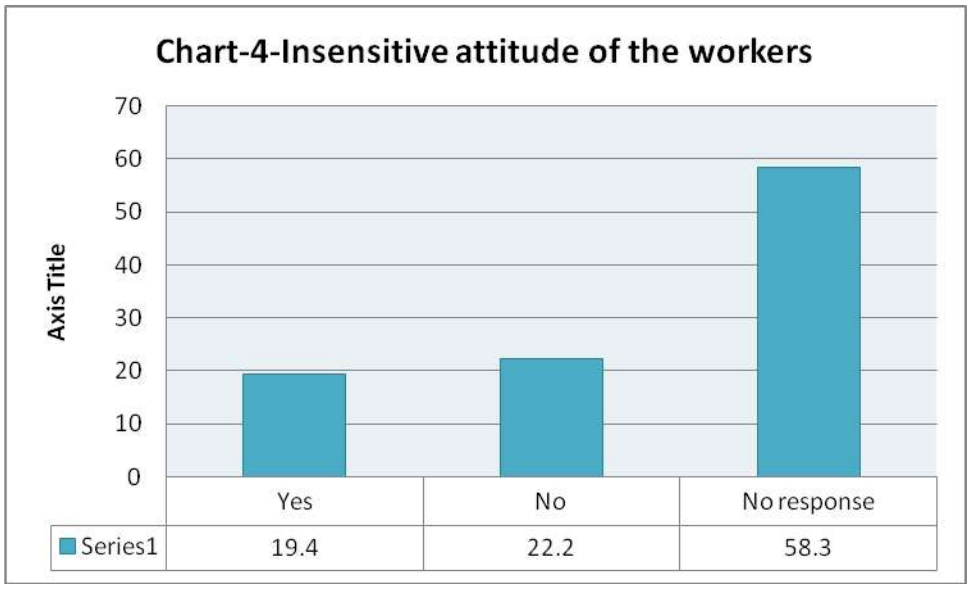


Chart 4 explains employers' perception about the attitude of the co-workers towards the person with disability. When employers were asked about the attitude of the coworkers or staff members towards disability it was found that around 22% employers feel that the attitude of co-workers towards PWD is positive and sensitive whereas other 20% employers feel that the co-workers are not sensitive and discriminatory; The co-workers are not sensitive in the sense that they are not interested to communicate and help them in their official works. In fact some respondents commented that some co-workers make groups where people with disability are not permitted to share their views during leisure time. It has also been noticed that there are no ramps or lifts in some office premises. The employees with disability are forced to take the help from others. In such situation some co-workers don't even volunteer help them.

Table-7-Need for training to sensitize the need / rights of the disabled workers

Response	Percent
Yes	88.9
No Response	11.1
Total	100.0

As seen in the table-7, about 89% of the organizations are agreed to the fact that they need training and sensitization programs about disability in their organization. This openness of organization heads is an indication that they are not only willing to learn, but are willing to provide space for affirmative action so that others can be encouraged to develop appropriateness of attitude and action to facilitate the rights of persons with disability to a healthy work environment. Here, Shishu Sarothi has an important role to play in developing, designing and conducting such training and sensitization programs.

Table-8-Utlitilization of government schemes

Response	Frequency	Percent
No	29	80.6
No Response	7	19.4
Total	36	100.0

From the table-8, it can be inferred that none of the organization have consciously used or implemented any of the government schemas related to employment and training programs for people with disabilities. This could be due to a lack of awareness about the same. If such an

awareness can be provided to the organizations, perhaps they would not only increase the employment of persons with disability, but they would also ensure to facilitate inclusion in their workplace both in terms of physical as well attitudinal access. This can be made possible if there is an availability of information in various forms, such as audiovisual material highlighting such relevant and useful government schemes and concessions for implementing them. Inclusive and facilitative practices can also be a part of the information document. These documents or material should also be worldwideweb accessibility guidelines compliant. Such information should be given to both employers and all employees, irrespective of impairment in order to promote awareness about inclusive policies of the government.

Table-9-Highest Position

Response	Percent
Junior Management/Supervisory	47.2
Skilled craft/technician	2.8
Semi-skilled	8.3
Unskilled	2.8
No response	38.9
Total	100.0

Table 9 explains the highest level of responsibility that a disabled employee holds or has held in the organizations. As seen, the majority (47.2%) of the organizations have offered the position of Junior Management/Supervisor for a PWD. While this maybe a respectable position and post, we still have a long way to reach UNCRPD compliance and promote inclusiveness at workplace at all levels. Further this is only a small step towards realizing the rights of persons with disability

to employment. It would help employers to be mindful of this fact and promote access for employment.

Employer's Suggestion to improve employment

Employers have given various suggestions for training and skill development of persons with disability. They perceive a lack of opportunities or sanction to employ a person with disability. This means that their line of work, for example a job related to technology and the relevant skills of an employee do not match and hence does not facilitate employment of PWD; perhaps the employer is either unaware of creating such opportunities or is unable to match skills with existing work profile. Since they perceive a strong need for training, it is imperative that both employers and all employees (with and without disability) be sensitized to employment solutions for PWD in order to create an accessible and inclusive workspace. Information and implementation of government schemes is an important factor that would encourage employment of PWDs. This would require support and assistance from the government in terms of subsidies, aids and appliances, assistive devices and the goodwill of the state to recognize and provide such facilities for the organizations. This would require the help of NGOs like Shishu Sarothi in enabling the organization to not only receive material and monetary support from the state, but also the due recognition it merits.

Major findings

- Around 53% organizations have employees with disability
- About 2.8% of organizations have a maximum of 5 employees with disability
- Three categories of disability have been employed, namely visual impairment, hearing impairment and locomotor impairment.
- About 80% of the organizations do not follow the government norms of fulfilling the mandated reservation of people with disabilities as per the PWD Act of 1995.
- About 70% of the organizations would like to employ persons with disability.
- Employers (2.8%) feel that people with disability cannot take risks at work, About 9% employers said currently they do not have vacancy for PWD in their organizations. And about 3% employers feel that work processes are slowed down when they employ PWD.
- 75% of the organizations reported that their premises are disabled friendly whereas 20% of the organizations are not accessible.
- Around 20% of the employers feel that the co-workers are not sensitive and discriminatory; whereas 22% employers feel that the attitude of co-workers towards PWD is positive and sensitive.
- 89% of the organizations are in need training and sensitization programs about disability in their organization.
- None of the organization have consciously used or implemented any of the government schemes related to employment and training programs for people with disabilities.
- The majority (47.2%) of the organizations have offered the position of Junior Management/Supervisor post for persons with disability.

Recommendations for Employing Organizations:

4. Abiding by the rules and guidelines related to employment is not only a good practice for the organizations but also indicates an adherence to the spirit of the UNCRPD. Both private and public sector organisations may get incentives if they ensure that at least five percent of their workforce includes persons with disabilities.
5. Organisations and employers must ensure provision of accessibility in all ways such as physical, sensory, attitudinal, communication, and web accessibility.
6. Organisations must cater to the needs and concerns of people with disabilities and ensure the accessible information, Braille books, screen reader software and assistive devices.
7. Organisations should ensure more participatory and inclusive approach of activities and training programs between employees with disability and other coworkers to facilitate a healthy work environment.
8. Employers should be sensitive to emotional needs of employees with disability.

Recommendations for Employees with Disability and Co-workers:

8. Awareness and sensitization activities to be conducted to make employees aware about the strengths and abilities of people with disabilities. These activities should highlight the stigma and the consequences of discrimination, ways to deal with PDW and language praxicon, especially people's first language.
9. Employees with disability should also take initiative in expressing their needs, assisting organisations to cater to their needs and taking co-workers along with them in order to make the work environment inclusive. In other words, employees with disability have a huge responsibility to participate in enabling inclusive work spaces.

Recommendations for Shishu Sarothi:

8. The scope of work for Shishu Sarothi to highlight the strengths of PWD and sensitize employers about them is an urgent need that can be undertaken. This also calls for sensitization of state actors, such as media, policy makers who can play an important role in addressing such stigma and misconceptions. Sishu Sarothi may refer to the UNCRPD and advocate for the social model to remove environmental barriers to employment of persons with disability.
9. Shishu Sarothi can work towards verifying the actual accessibility in the workplace through access audit checklist. This can be done through a participatory process of partnering with employing organisations as well as their employees with disability. Furthermore, Shishu Sarothi could train the employees in using the Access Audit Checklist.
10. Since the organizations have expressed the need for having the training and sensitization programs about disability in their organization, Shishu Sarothi can be instrumental in developing and designing and conducting such training programs to facilitate the rights of persons with disability to a healthy work environment.
11. Shishu Sarothi even can conduct awareness programs about the government schemes, accessibility and inclusion practices for the employers and employees. The information can be given in various forms such as audiovisual material highlighting such relevant and useful government schemes and concessions for implementing them. These documents or material should also be worldwideweb accessibility guidelines compliant.

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