

## DESIRABLE CHARACTERISTICS FOR EMPLOYMENT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTOR

BILJANA SLADOJE – BOŠNJAK

University of East Sarajevo, Faculty of Philosophy, [biljana.sladoje.bosnjak@ffuis.edu.ba](mailto:biljana.sladoje.bosnjak@ffuis.edu.ba)

RANKA PERUĆICA, OLIVERA KALAJDZIĆ

University of East Sarajevo, Faculty of Medicine, [rankaskrkar78@gmail.com](mailto:rankaskrkar78@gmail.com)

**Abstract:** *Employers often have prejudices and negative stereotypical attitudes regarding the employment of persons with disabilities (PwD). This is a part of the conclusion of D1.1 Report - Identify and analyse the needs of Employers from School-to-Work Transition for Higher education students with disabilities in Serbia, Bosnia & Herzegovina and Montenegro (Trans2Work project). We wanted to know if there was a difference in attitude between employers in the public and employers in the private sector in separating the desirable characteristics of persons with disabilities in employment. In this piece of paper we were specially interested in characteristics that employers consider desirable in hiring persons with disabilities. This was the main aim of this research. We started from the hypothesis that there are differences between employers from the private and employers from the public sectors in separating the desirable characteristics of students with disabilities in employment. The data show that there are differences between employers in the selection of desirable characteristics in hiring persons with disabilities. As desirable characteristics employers from the public sector extracted: communication skills (23.3%), the accuracy and responsibility (21.7), team orientation and motivation (21.7%). As the most desirable characteristics employers in the private sector allocated: accuracy and responsibility (26.7), the effort (25%) and expert knowledge and skill to correspond to a position (16.7). Our hopes are that the results will contribute to the existing literature related to the employment of persons with disabilities and project Trans2Work at all.*

**Keywords:** *Desirable characteristics for employment, private and public sector, persons with disabilities, Trans2Work.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Persons with disabilities in the labor market are faced with numerous obstacles and barriers in the both private and professional life. The lack of the opportunities for gaining work experience after completing education or training for a specific job represents a significant obstacle in the employment of persons with disabilities. Among the main reasons that affect (non)employment of the persons with disabilities are the opinions and the prejudices of the employers themselves and their stereotypes towards that group of people. Prejudice towards the people with disabilities have the roots in the lack of knowledge and the maintenance of negative stereotypes [1, 2]. Many employers share the opinion that persons with disabilities are not reliable in performing their duties and responsibilities, that they are unreliable, conflicting, that they are more often out of work than those who do not have disabilities, etc. An important component of the successful functioning of each person's life are beautiful and desirable characteristics that characterize the particular behavior of each individual. Suitable behavioral characteristics are a necessary factor for any successful and reticent work. Researches done in the world show that many people with disabilities can carry out their work assignments at about the same level as people without disabilities. Many of them also lose their job because they cannot integrate into the workplace

[3]. Many people with disabilities have left the job because they cannot integrate into a particular social group. Especially in this paper we are particularly interested in the characteristics that private and public sector employers find desirable in the employment of the persons with disabilities, since it is known from the past time that the number of unemployed grows steadily. Finding ways how to help the unemployed persons with disabilities to get work becomes also political and public theme. Our goal is to examine what are the desirable qualities that employers consider most desirable, and whether there is a certain difference in opinion between private sector employers and public sector employers in that.

### 2. METHODOLOGY

There is a small number of surveys in our country dealing with the employment of people with disabilities. In this piece of paper we were specially interested in characteristics that employers consider desirable in hiring persons with disabilities. This was the main aim of this research. We started from the hypothesis that there are differences between employers from the private and the employers from the public sectors in separating the

desirable characteristics of the persons with disabilities in employment.

During the research we used two scientific - research methods:

- Theoretical analysis method and
- Descriptive method

The method of theoretical analysis was used for theoretical processing of the research problem, where different sources were analyzed, as well as the researches that were done in this field. The descriptive method is suitable for examining differences among employers in selecting desirable behavioral traits and collecting empirical facts, as well as for analyzing, comparing, interpreting and performing certain conclusions. A survey research technique was used to collect the necessary material. In this research, we used a questionnaire about the employment of the persons with disabilities, which examines the attitude of employers towards the employment of the persons with disabilities. The questionnaire consists of 19 questions. The reliability of the instrument was checked using by Kronbach alpha coefficient and amounted the 0.89. We used the quantitative processing of the collected data in the study. The hi - square test was applied.. The study sample consisted of companies from the private and public sectors in one of two entities in Bosnia and Herzegovina – Republic of Srpska (60 companies in the private sector and 60 companies in the public sector). The selection of companies was not accidental, but was adapted to the possibilities, and therefore the sample had characteristics of convenience sample.

### 3. RESULTS OF RESEARCH WITH DISCUSSION

The main task of our research was to determine whether there are differences between the employers in the private and in the public sector in allocating desirable qualities in the employment of the persons with disabilities. Table 1.shows the differences between private sector employers and public sector employers in allocating preferences for employment the persons with disabilities.

**Table 1.** Differences between the private and the public sector in the allocation of desirable qualities in the employment of the persons with disabilities

What qualities do you consider the most important for people with disabilities to recruit?							Total
Employer	AAR	WD	CP	TPCP	TOMW	AKSP	
Private Sector	16 26.7%	15 25.0%	9 15.0%	6 10.0%	4 6.7%	10 16.7%	60 100%
Public Sector	13 21.7%	4 6.7%	14 23.3%	9 15.0%	13 21.7%	7 11.7%	60 100%
Total	29 24.2%	19 15.8%	23 19.2%	15 12.5%	17 14.2%	17 14.2%	120 100%

*Legend – aar Accuracy and responsibility, wd - Work diligence, cp - Communicative personality, tpcp - That person is not a conflicting person, tomw - Team orientation and motivation for work, aksp - Acquired knowledge and skills that match the position.*

The obtained hi - square ( $\chi^2 = 13.660$ ), and its significance level ( $p = 0.018$ ), tell us that there is a certain statistically significant difference between employers from the private and from the public sector in allocating desirable qualities in the employment of the persons with disabilities. Private sector employers highlighted accuracy and responsibility (26.7%), followed by work diligence (25.0%), third place were acquired knowledge and skills that correspond to employment positions (16, 7%), the communicative personality was selected as the fourth preferred feature (15%), then the person is not conflicting (10%), and ultimately team orientation and motivation for work (6.7%). Public sector employers highlighted communication as the most desirable feature in the employment of the persons with disabilities (23.3%), followed by accuracy and responsibility (21.7%), followed by team orientation and motivation for work (21.7%), after that the person is not conflicting (15.0%), and than they have allocated the acquired knowledge and skills that match the position (11.7%), and work diligence (6.7%).

Private sector employers primarily decide for the persons who are accurate and responsible in their work, who are diligent, have a certain level of knowledge in the area they are being elected, they have communicative personality and they are not conflicting and who are team-oriented for work and professional development. On the other hand, public sector employers distinguish communication as one of the most desirable qualities of the PwD in employment, then accuracy and responsibility in carrying out work as well as motivation for work, that a person is not conflicting and has knowledge in the given field. In the last place, they identify the diligence as a feature that on their opinion is the least desirable for employment.

According to the modern perspective, public sector employers are not only interested in whether a person with disabilities will be communicative, accurate, motivated to work, and so on, but also will integrate into the entire organization and the existing climate, the culture that operates in the company, while the private sector employers do not emphasize these qualities so much. Private sector employers will decide for a person

who is ready to perform tasks on time, accurately and precisely, to be diligent in fulfilling their obligations, and then only in the last place are they involved in the team and organization of the work.

We can say that sometimes the emphasis was on the person being admitted to be able to perform work tasks, while today the emphasis is on the person being able to work in cooperation with the others. Many persons with disabilities can perform different tasks at approximately the same level as people without disabilities. It is known in the literature that most persons with disabilities lose their jobs because they are difficult or poorly integrated into a particular social environment. Also, the most common reason for the unemployment of this group of people is the misconception of employers that people with disabilities are not able to work and therefore they reluctant to provide employment opportunities [4].

The first known research about that what employers are looking for with employees, was carried out in the US in 1991. by the Department of Labor [5]. At that time, the desirable competences were grouped into the five categories:

- 1.Resources - the ability to use time, money,
- 2.Interpersonal skills - skills of cooperation with other people, such as team work, training others, etc.,
- 3.Information - the ability to adopt and use information,
- 4.Systems - the ability to understand social, organizational and technological systems,
- 5.Technology - ability to work with various technologies [5].

When making a decision as to which qualities employers prefer when employing the persons, they mostly rely on three desirable characteristics: good interpersonal skills, learning and work skills, as well as high motivation and desire to work. We can conclude that interpersonal relations are one of the important features for the employment of persons with disabilities and in general. The question is why special attention is paid to interpersonal relations in the public sector. One of the answers to the given question could also be that jobs today become less formal, structured, routine, and require the mutual cooperation of all employees with different educational, cultural, technical and other experiences.

#### 4.CONCLUSION

The role of employers in the employment of persons with disabilities is important and of great importance. The greatest obstacle in the employment of persons with disabilities is reduced ability to work, which is conditioned by the kind of damage that an individual encounters.

In relate with the many social changes in recent years in our country, employers are not enough informed about the

needs of persons with disabilities. Thus would be desirable to develop programs to help employers integrate into the process of hiring this group of people. Employability depends not only on employment policy, but also a range of other factors such as the relations between employers and persons with disabilities, changes in the labor market, measures to encourage employment, demographic characteristics, and the similar (Uršić, Vidmar, Bilić, 2002 ). In this paper, we tried to answer the question about the characteristics that employers consider desirable in hiring persons with disabilities in the private and public sector.

The results of this research have shown that there are certain differences, and that private sector employers are most likely to evaluate as desirable qualities - accuracy and responsibility to work, work diligence, possession of certain level of knowledge from the area for which an employee is being sought, communicative and non-conflicting skills, as well as readiness for teamwork and professional development. Public sector employers believe that persons should be preferably communicative, accurate and responsible in carrying out their tasks, to be motivated to work in teams, not conflicting and ready for professional training and acquiring new knowledge. On the basis of the obtained results we can conclude that the obtained results can serve to improve the strategy for employment of persons with disabilities. The conclusion of this paper is that persons with disabilities should be notified that the possession of additional skills, traits and abilities is an important factor in finding a job and it is necessary to motivate them to work on their activation on. Our hopes are that the results will contribute to the existing literature related to the employment of persons with disabilities and project Trans2Work at all.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

One of the objectives of Trans2Work – School-to-Work Transition for Higher education students with disabilities in Serbia, Montenegro and Bosnia & Herzegovina project (project no. 561847-2015) is to identify and to analyse the needs of employers and of the students with disabilities. The goal of this paper–Desirable characteristics for employment of persons with disabilities in private and public sector–is to examine whether there is a certain difference in opinion between private sector employers and public sector employers for employment of the persons with disabilities what can be used for the purposes of Trans2Work project.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Unger, D.D. (2002). Employer's attitudes toward people with disabilities in the workforce: Myths or realities? *Focus on Autism and other Developmental Disabilities*, 17, 2-10.
- [2] Wells, S.J. (2001). Is the ADA Working? *HR Magazine*, 45 (4), 38-46.

[3] Stošljević, L., Odović, G. (2006). *Profesionalno osposobljavanje tjelesno invalidnih lica*, Zavod za udbenike i nastavna sredstva. Beograd

[4] Odović, G. (2005). Radon osposobljavanje osoba sa invaliditetom. međunarodni naučni skup, Specijalna edukacija i rehabilitacija - Koraci i iskoraci, Beograd, 14-15.

[5] Santini, M.(2013). Šta poslodavci traže? Organizacijskapsihologija.  
<http://www.istrazime.com/organizacijska-psihologija/sto-poslodavci-traze/>.

[6] Uršić, C., Vidmar, J., Bilić, B. (2002): Profesionalna rehabilitacija i zapošljavanje invalida u Sloveniji – od pravnog uređenja do primjera dobre prakse, Zbornik radova 1. Međunarodnog stručnog simpozija – Aktualnosti i perspektive zapošljavanja osoba s invaliditetom, Zagreb.

[7] Dev 1.1 Report (WP1) - Identify and analyse the needs of Employers from School-to-Work Transition for Higher education students with disabilities in Serbia, Bosnia & Herzegovina and Montenegro (Trans2Work project)