Disability Inclusion

CWRU Faculty Recruitment & Retention Journal Club

—

Julia Knopes, Ph.D., Bioethics

Anne Bryden, Ph.D., OTR/L, Institute for Functional Restoration

Erin Lamb, Ph.D., Bioethics

Brian Gran, Ph.D., Sociology, Law, and Applied Social Sciences

Introduction

Introduction

—

"Disability" refers to conditions that fundamentally alter how someone engages in the world around them, including physical, psychological, cognitive, and developmental

- ○ Can be temporary, chronic, or episodic
- ○ How does this compare or contrast with how you might define disability? Does this definition surprise you?

Introduction

———

Often, disability is described in terms of "impairment" to "normal" function, which is challenging to define

- What constitutes "normal" function? Highly contextual
  - Ex. if everyone in a community has a form of dwarfism and their homes and businesses are built to suit short stature, are they disabled?
  - Ex. neurodiversity movement: are autism and other mental conditions simply forms of human difference, or disability that limits one's abilities?

Introduction

Disability is an important type of human diversity

- 26% of American adults are disabled (CDC)
- Includes many types of disabilities
  - Blindness, deafness, mobility disabilities, cognitive disabilities, mental illness, developmental conditions like Down syndrome, etc.
- Intersectionality: disability intersects with other forms of diversity such as gender and race, which together shape someone's lived experience

Introduction

___

Disability Impacts ALL of US
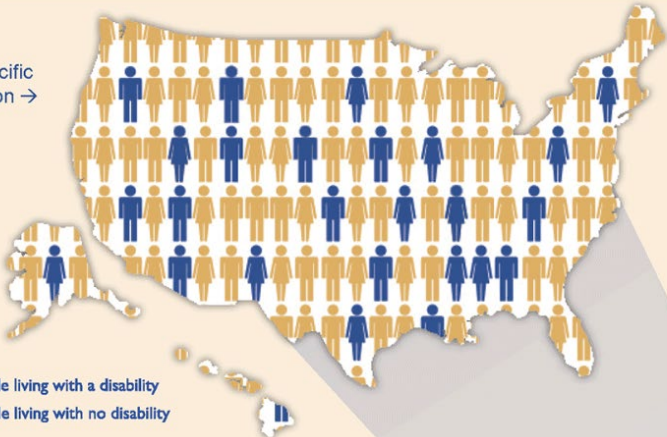
COMMUNITIES   HEALTH   ACCESS

61 million adults in the United States live with a disability

Click for state-specific information →

People living with a disability
People living with no disability

26% of adults in the United States have some type of disability

(1 in 4)

The percentage of people living with disabilities is highest in the South

Introduction

——

Language considerations around disability (Ladau 2021)

- Person-first language VS identity-first language
    - Person with autism VS autistic person
    - Use the language chosen by individual or community
- Reflect on nuances of language; "wheelchair bound" suggests dependence, "wheelchair user" is more accurate and focuses on the "user" or person
- Avoid stigmatizing language; "that's insane!" could be replaced with, "that's unbelievable!"

Challenges and Benefits

Challenges and Benefits

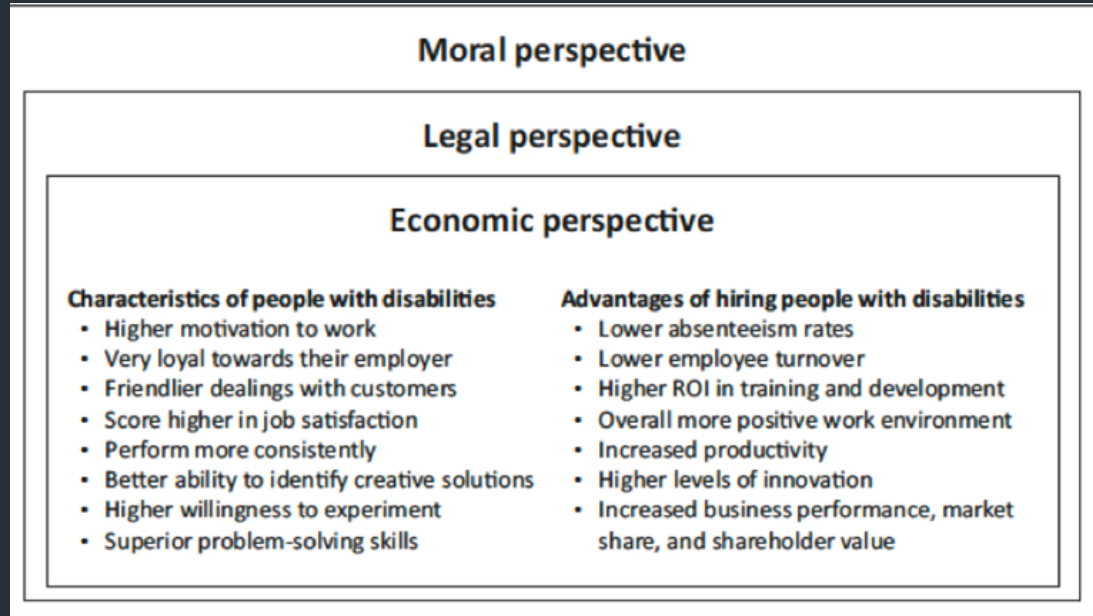——

Types of issues encountered by disabled people in the workplace

- ○ Physical barriers
- ○ Knowledge & attitudinal barriers
- ○ Systemic barriers
- ○ Occupational marginalization and injustice (Durocher et al., 2014; Wilcock & Townsend, 2009)

Challenges and Benefits

___

Economic Benefits of disabled people in the workplace

Moral perspective

Legal perspective

Economic perspective

Characteristics of people with disabilities
- Higher motivation to work
- Very loyal towards their employer
- Friendlier dealings with customers
- Score higher in job satisfaction
- Perform more consistently
- Better ability to identify creative solutions
- Higher willingness to experiment
- Superior problem-solving skills

Advantages of hiring people with disabilities
- Lower absenteeism rates
- Lower employee turnover
- Higher ROI in training and development
- Overall more positive work environment
- Increased productivity
- Higher levels of innovation
- Increased business performance, market share, and shareholder value

Disability in Higher Education

Disability in Higher Education

——

- The challenges encountered by disabled people in the higher education workplace are likely also experienced by students and other constituencies
- Both disabled students and faculty members face barriers and discrimination in higher education (Price 2011)
- "To ensure full inclusion of students with disabilities and campus staff, the work must be done both **campus wide** to ensure universal access and **individually** to ensure students and staff receive accommodations." (Hill et al 2020)
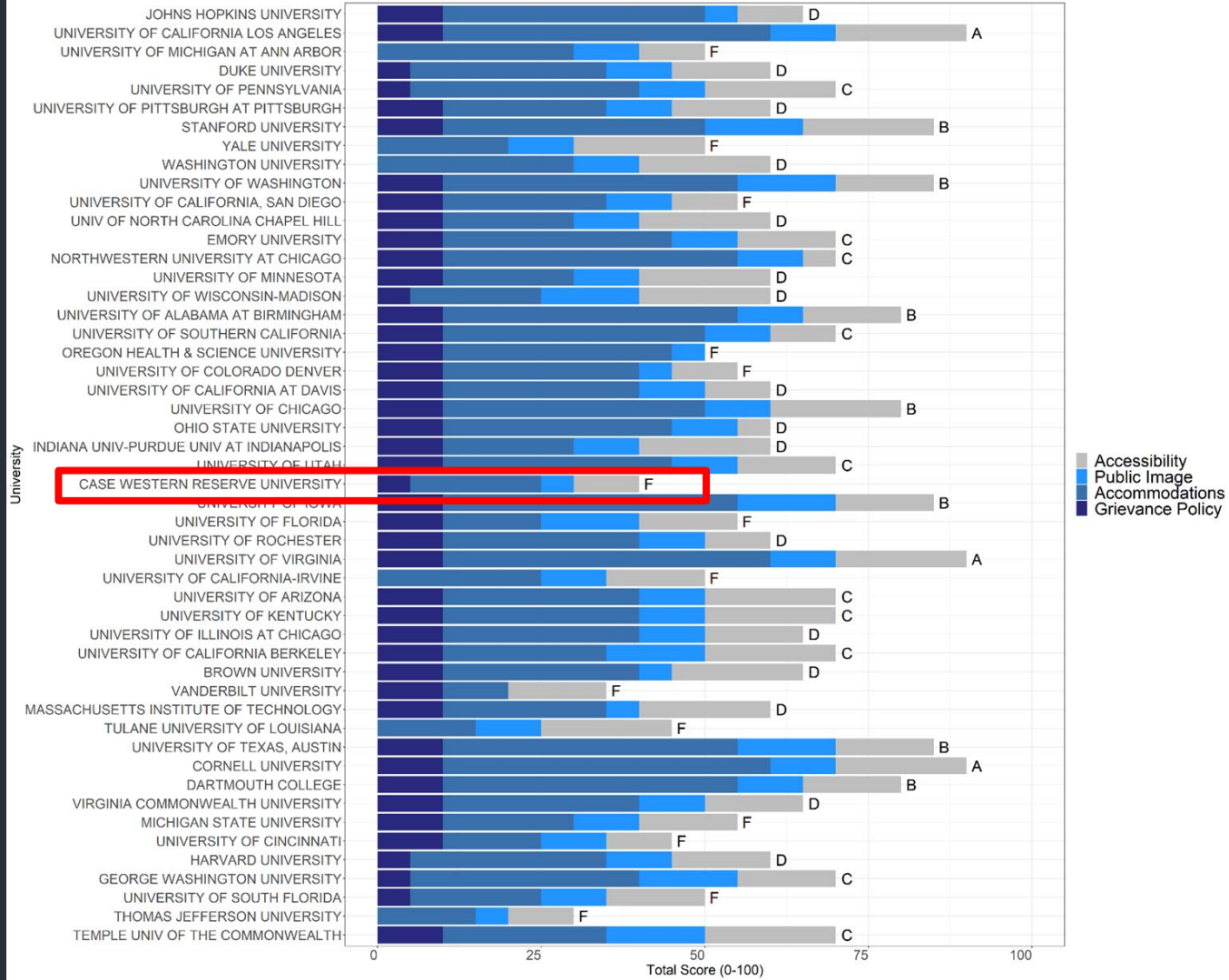
Figure 1. The Johns Hopkins Disability Health Research Center (DHRC) University Disability Inclusion Total Scores and Category Scores for the top 50 Undergraduate Universities by National Institutes of Health (NIH) Funding, November 2021

(Campanile et al 2022)

Disability in Higher Education

A Disability Diverse Workforce Supports Disability Inclusion in Higher Education

- "Hiring staff who reflect that diversity of thought will provide insights into design and development of higher education approaches, curricula, and more, while offering mentoring to all students, including those with disabilities." (Hill et al 2020, p..7)

- "Review your current hiring practices and include a statement that the college or university encourages applicants with disabilities. For the Board of Trustees, require that the governance committee include criteria for identifying members with disabilities. An effective way to increase student diversity is to encourage diversity throughout all levels of the system." (Hill et al 2020, p.9)

Summary

___

In all, disability is an important consideration for diversity, equity & inclusion efforts in the workplace

- ○ Defining "disability" is itself a political act, and we need to attend to using appropriate and accurate language when we talk about disability
- ○ Disabled people encounter barriers in the workplace, but they also bring valuable perspectives and advantages (see Lindsay et al 2018)
- ○ In higher education, a disability diverse workforce is important for institution-wide diversity efforts and disability inclusion

Disability Inclusion is Big Business

—

https://www.weforum.org/impact/disability-inclusion/

Discussion

Discussion

—

- How can higher education be more inclusive for disabled employees?
- What challenges exist in higher education to greater inclusion of disabled employees?
- What opportunities are there in higher education to enhance disability representation and meet the needs of disabled employees?

References

—

Campanile, J., Cerilli, C., Varadaraj, V., Sweeney, F., Smith, J., Zhu, J., Yenokyan, G., & Swenor, B. K. (2022). Accessibility and Disability Inclusion Among Top-Funded U.S. Undergraduate Institutions. *MedRxiv,* 2022.02.17.22271105. https://doi.org/10.1101/2022.02.17.22271105

Durocher, E., Gibson, B. E., & Rappolt, S. (2014). Occupational Justice: A Conceptual Review. Journal of Occupational Science, 21(4), 418–430.

Hill, E., Shaewitz, D., and Queener, J. (2020.) Higher Education's Next Great Challenge: Ensuring Full Inclusion for Students with Disabilities. Washington, DC: Institute for Educational Leadership.

References

—

Ladau, E. (2021) *Demystifying Disability*. Ten Speed Press, Berkeley CA.

Lindsay, S., Cagliostro, E., Albarico, M., Mortaji, N., & Karon, L. (2018). A systematic review of the benefits of hiring people with disabilities. *Journal of occupational rehabilitation*, *28*(4), 634–655. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10926-018-9756-z

Price, M. (2011) *Mad at School: Rhetorics of Mental Disability and Academic Life.* U of MI P, Ann Arbor, MI.

Wilcock, A., & Townsend, E. (2009). Occupational justice. In E. B. Crepeau, E. S. Cohn, & B. A. B. Schell (Eds.), Willard and Spackman's occupational therapy (11th ed., pp. 192 199).

Thank You

—

Julia Knopes, **julia.knopes@case.edu**
Erin Lamb, **erin.lamb@case.edu**
Anne Bryden, **anne.bryden@case.edu**
Brian Gran, **brian.gran@case.edu**