

**A Qualitative Study on Inclusion of Differently Abled Persons in Pakistani Organizations:  
Perceptions and Challenges.**



**Labeeqa Saeed**

**MS-HRM 2018**

NUST Business School

National University of Science & Technology

Islamabad, Pakistan

2022

**A Qualitative Study on Inclusion of Differently Abled Persons in Pakistani Organizations:  
Perceptions and Challenges.**



**Labeeqa Saeed**

**MS-HRM 2018**

A thesis submitted to NUST Business School for the degree of Master of Science in Human  
Resource Management.

**2022**

**A Qualitative Study on Inclusion of Differently Abled Persons in Pakistani Organizations:  
Perceptions and Challenges.**



**Labeeqa Saeed**

**MS-HRM 2018**

**Supervisor**

**Dr. Asfia Obaid**

A thesis submitted to NUST Business School for the degree of Master of Science in Human  
Resource Management.

**2022**

## **THESIS ACCEPTANCE CERTIFICATE**

It is certified that final copy of **MS HRM** thesis written by Ms. Labeeqa Saeed Registration No. **00000277015** of 2018 has been vetted by undersigned, found complete in all aspects as per NUST Statutes/Regulations/MS Policy, is free of plagiarism, errors, and mistakes and is accepted as fulfilment for award of MS degree. It is further certified that necessary amendments as pointed out by GEC members and foreign/local evaluators of the scholar have also been incorporated in the said thesis.

Signature of Supervisor with stamp: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Programme Head Signature with stamp: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of HoD with stamp: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Countersign by**

Signature (Dean/Principal): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Declaration**

No portion of the work referred to in the dissertation has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

## **Acknowledgements**

First and foremost, I am thankful to Allah Almighty for showering His blessings and providing me patience for completing my research work successfully.

I would like to pay my special regards and love to my parents Mr. Saeed Ahmad Nawaz and Msl. Tasleem Saeed who supported me in every thick and thin during this time. I wish to express my sincere appreciation to my supervisor, Dr. Asfia Obaid, who has the substance of a genius: she convincingly guided and encouraged me to be professional and do the right thing even when the road got tough. Without her persistent help, the goal of this research would not have been realized. I express my deepest gratitude to her as she was the one who motivated me to do this research. She has been a great mentor, supporter and counselor during all times. I would also take this opportunity to thank Dr. Zujaja Wahaj; who has been constant support in tough times and helped me to keep my research on track and refined it by providing valuable feedbacks. I am also very grateful to Dr. Saleem Ullah Khan Sumbal for guiding and helping me in enhancing the value of research findings. I would love to thank my special friend Ms. Sameen Shakir who bore with me during all the hardships and encouraged me for completing my research work.

## Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	7
1 Chapter One: Introduction.....	2
1.1 Background .....	2
1.2 Rationale and Objectives of the Research .....	5
1.3 Thesis Structure .....	9
2 Chapter Two: Literature Review .....	10
2.1 Introduction .....	10
2.2 Differently Abled Persons as Minorities Social Identity Group.....	11
2.3 Differently abled persons and Developing Countries .....	16
2.4 Diversity Management and Inclusion Management.....	17
2.5 Historical Perspective of Inclusion .....	20
2.6 Theoretical Perspective of Inclusion Management .....	22
2.7 Inclusion Constructs.....	24
2.7.1 Workgroup Inclusion.....	25
2.7.2 Leader Inclusion .....	26
2.7.3 Perceived Organizational Inclusion.....	26
2.7.4 Organizational Inclusion Practices .....	27
2.7.5 Inclusive Climate .....	28
2.8 Differently abled Persons and Inclusion in Organizations .....	28
2.9 Link of Human Resource Management with Inclusion Management .....	31
3 Chapter Three: Methodology .....	34
3.1 Research Philosophy .....	34
3.2 Ontological Stance .....	34
3.3 Epistemological Stance .....	34
3.4 Research Strategy and Design.....	35
3.5.1 Sample Size .....	36
3.5.2 Sampling Technique .....	36
3.5.3 Demographic Details.....	37
3.5 Semi- structured Interview Guide.....	39
3.6 Data Collection Process.....	39
3.7 Data Analysis.....	40
3.8 Measures of the Data.....	42

3.9	Ethical Issues & Consideration .....	43
3.10	Summary of the Chapter.....	44
4	Chapter Four: Findings and Analysis .....	45
4.1	Introduction .....	45
4.2	Stigmatization at the Workplace .....	46
4.2.1	Risk Taking Factor .....	46
4.2.2	Hiring a Differently Abled Persons.....	49
4.2.3	Lack of Recognition .....	51
4.2.4	Lack of Acceptability .....	53
4.2.5	Authority and Decision-Making Power .....	55
4.2.6	Sympathetic element.....	57
4.3	Structural Issues.....	59
4.3.1	Building Infrastructure .....	59
4.3.2	Misconception of Inclusion for differently abled persons .....	61
4.3.3	Communication a Key to Inclusion.....	62
4.3.4	Equal Employment Opportunity .....	63
4.3.5	Reality of Quota System.....	64
4.4	Organizational support system for inclusive culture .....	66
4.4.1	Special Arrangements .....	66
4.4.2	Open Door Policy .....	69
4.4.3	Special Programs.....	69
4.4.4	Inclusive Climate .....	72
4.5	Critical Success Factors .....	75
4.5.1	Self-Motivation is a Key .....	75
4.5.2	Bridge between Parents, Education System & Employment System .....	77
4.6	Summary of the Chapter.....	79
5	Chapter Five: Discussion .....	81
5.1	Introduction .....	81
5.2	Overlapping concept of Diversity Management & Inclusion Management .....	81
5.3	Struggles of differently abled persons in the organizations .....	83
5.4	Inclusion Constructs.....	85
5.5	Summary of the Chapter.....	88
6	Chapter Six: Conclusion.....	89
6.1	Key Findings .....	89



6.2	Theoretical and Practical Implications.....	92
6.3	Limitations and Future Directions.....	93
7	References .....	95
8	APPENDICES .....	110
8.1	Appendix A: Verbal Informed Consent .....	110
8.2	Appendix B: Interview Guide .....	112
8.2.1	Demographic Profile of Participant.....	112
8.2.2	Basic/ Ice-breaking discussion with participants. ....	113

**List of Tables**

Table 1: Important Inclusion Constructs .....25  
Table 2: Demographic Details .....39  
Table 3: Example Coding .....42

**List of Figures**

Figure 1: Inclusion Framework.....23

## **Abstract**

Differently abled persons are physically or mentally different from others and belong to a minority group within the society. They are marginalized and do not get due respect from the society. This research explores the issues and challenges differently abled persons face at the workplace. It also highlights the perception of differently abled persons about their inclusion and the organizational support system present. For this thesis data was collected from differently abled persons working in public and private sector organizations of Pakistan, irrespective of their age and designation. 18 online interviews were conducted to explore the workplace experience, career history, issues, perceptions and organizational support systems related to inclusion. Review of literature indicates, very less work has been done in the area of perceptions of differently abled persons, especially, in developing countries. Findings of this research highlight that differently abled persons are stigmatized at the workplace and there are also structural issues. Some of the organizational support systems are present in private sector organizations but self-motivation is the key for differently abled persons to get their due place within the organization.

***Key Words: Diversity and Inclusion, Differently Abled Persons, Organizational Support Systems, Pre-Conceived Notions, Perception***

# 1 Chapter One: Introduction

## 1.1 Background

It has been seen that disability is more common in the developing countries as compared to the developed countries because of the fact of poverty, malnutrition, limited medical facilities, psychological depression (Anwar & Ullah, 2020). In most of the research the term disability or persons with disability is used (Bilić, 2017; Iezzoni, 2006; Yan, Go, Tamura, & Tanno, 2014). These terms give a negative connotation as they don't give the feeling that other person should be treated differently because they are disabled (Bilić, 2017). The more suitable term introduced is differently abled persons (Schriempf, 2001). This term was proposed in 1980's but is less used in the literature. It gives a more positive message by indicating to avoid discrimination towards people with disabilities (Bilić, 2017), this is the reason this research has used differently abled rather than disability or people with disability. Differently abled persons are the part of community but they need to put an extra effort to get adjusted because of being in the minority group (Seyranian, Atuel, & Crano, 2008). For the minority group of persons social adjustments in the atmosphere is hard. According to Plato "The Man is a social Animal" so he can't live alone in the society. Though every person living in the society is different but differently abled person suffer because of the already set perception from majority group of persons in the society hence creating problems for the social adjustments of differently abled persons (Anwar & Ullah, 2020).

As, differently abled persons face discrimination in the society so they, face discrimination at workplace as well. This discrimination can be direct or indirect. Direct discrimination occurs when someone is directly treated unfairly however, indirect discrimination occurs when the rule or policy is same for everyone and it affects negatively to a specific group of people which shows the lack of accommodation and social adjustment in the society or workplace (Saleh, 2020). There are

many laws, principles, conventions and policies internationally and nationally in Pakistan that ensures to prevent indirect discrimination and equal rights in pre-employment but the implementation level is weak (Gul, 2020; Saleh, 2020) and it is important to make sure that employers have no set perceptions for differently abled persons on the basis of which they discriminate them.

In addition to these challenges, COVID-19 has created an additional challenge for differently abled persons. As within the pandemic differently abled persons have faced the adverse socioeconomic consequences as compared to the persons without disabilities. Differently abled persons have faced the barriers to overall social and economic inclusion as, many of the public transport ceased because of pandemic, inadequate access to information was there as specific print media in Braille, captions, graphics were not available, stigmatization of society, unavailability of assistive technology and much more (Bank, 2021). In regard to this, employers should treat differently abled persons fairly in all the aspects including hiring, promotions, retirement, discipline, trainings benefits (Bell & Klein, 2001; Saleh, 2020).

This research has specifically focused on the perception of differently abled persons in terms of their inclusion in the organizations of Pakistan. Among the differently abled persons this research has focused on the physically differently abled persons either by birth or accidental who are working in any formal setup. Physically differently abled persons are the ones who have condition that's affects his/her physical capacity or mobility. This can include various conditions including injuries of brain or spinal cord, epilepsy, visual or hear impairment, multiple sclerosis and more (Rajati et al., 2018).

Diversity and Inclusion are two different concepts. While diversity is having diverse workforce in the organization in terms of numbers, inclusion is related to actual involvement via uniqueness and

belongingness of differently abled persons at the workplace (Michàlle E Mor Barak, 2015; Shore, Cleveland, & Sanchez, 2018). According to Michàlle E Mor Barak (2015) inclusion is the key to diversity management as through diversity organizations hire diverse workforce but inclusive practices and inclusive culture which respect the diverse workforce same as the majority group present at the workplace, make the diverse workforce to be managed properly.

According to Shore et al. (2018) there are different inclusion constructs which basically highlights the extent of inclusion present at the workplace. This includes workgroup inclusion, leader inclusion, perceived organizational inclusion, organizational inclusion practices and inclusive climate. These constructs tells about the perception of differently abled persons about their inclusion at workplace, organizational support systems and practices available and needed, inclusion from direct supervisors and overall environment for the inclusion of differently abled persons (Shore et al., 2018).

The research has the grounds in the Brewer's Optimal Distinctiveness Theory which tells about the importance of having uniqueness and similarity to others at the same time for differently abled persons (Brewer, 1991). Depending upon this inclusion of differently abled person is defined as the extent to which they feel as the valuable part of the organization while having their unique characteristics to be respected. And they are not stigmatized because of their physical disability (Seyranian et al., 2008). As, physically differently abled persons experience employment exclusion despite being get employed within the organization so, it is important to highlight their perception and challenges to overcome those challenges and making the workplace inclusive for differently abled persons (Sefotho, 2014). HR plays an important role in the inclusion of differently abled persons (Boehm & Dwertmann, 2015; Schloemer-Jarvis, Bader, & Böhm, 2021). HR practices like equal employment opportunity, setting up diverse recruitment team, targeting specific group

for recruitment, mentorship programs, awareness sessions, anti-stereotype trainings, leadership trainings, public recognition, recruiting diversity managers and many more helps in creating and setting up the culture that is inclusion friendly for differently abled persons (Boehm & Dwertmann, 2015; Jayne & Dipboye, 2004).

Present study has made significant contribution in the literature of human resource management specifically in inclusion management of one of the minority groups present at the organizations i.e., differently abled persons. This research has highlighted all the issues faced by differently abled persons at the workplace for making it visible for the organizations to understand about the hardships this minority group has to face in Pakistan. This study has open up the discussion related to special education system, and the solutions to the problems that are present at the workplace. It will help the policy makers in organizations to develop the policies that cater the issue of inclusion of differently abled persons in order to increase the acceptability from employers and colleagues' side. It will help the human resource professionals to know about the perception of differently abled persons (if any) working in their organizations. This study highlighted the importance of having organizational support systems for differently abled persons in order to have diverse workforce and to have competitive environment within the organization and market.

## **1.2 Rationale and Objectives of the Research**

Existing research on HR practices has explored various categories of minorities. These include, but are not limited to race, ethnicity, differently-abled persons, religion, gender (Levine & Relations, 2017). Within the category of minorities at workplace, though in Europe, US and South East Asia (Beatty, Baldrige, Boehm, Kulkarni, & Colella, 2019; Suresh & Dyaram, 2020) differently abled persons have been researched by HR academicians. However, in Pakistan, this population has remained largely underexplored. It is only recently that under the directive of

Human Rights Ministry in Pakistan that the work on legislation for differently abled persons has started (Rights, 2020). The present study would make a strong continuation in enhancing the area of inclusion for differently abled persons in the organizations. The prerequisites of inclusion area are equality and diversity. From equality to diversity there are significant number of publications but the aspect of inclusion is still under explored with the exception of few publications (Allison, 1999; Amaram, 2007; M. Bana, Guyo, & Odhiambo, 2016; W. M. J. I. J. o. E. Bana & Research, 2019; Green, López, Wysocki, & Kepner, 2002).

Differently abled persons are the members of society so they need an equal treatment as the majority group of employees are getting. They want to play their active roles in the social economic life and want to earn money for their living without being discriminated due to their disability so it is important to know about their perception of inclusion at workplace in order to highlight their issues and solutions can be sorted out (Chajduga & Ingaldi, 2021).

Suresh and Dyaram (2021) study about the perception of workplace inclusion from employer's perspective, they suggested to study it from different stakeholders' point of view. So, this research has studied the perception of inclusion from the differently abled persons point of view. Suresh and Dyaram (2020) have reviewed the scholarly studies from 2011 to 2019 in the area of disability inclusion. They have studied the organized sector in India among which nineteen research articles were qualitative and three were quantitative. They have identified the inclusive practices at three levels which are organizational, group and individual. Furthermore, they have suggested that an integrative strategy in the workplace for disability inclusion is needed. Integration strategy for creating inclusive culture for differently abled persons can be created by describing human resource management practices and interventions, challenges faced by differently abled persons in



the specific context and individual (differently abled persons) experiences of being inclusive in the organization.

Certain organizational factors that affect the disability inclusion within the organization involve the inclusive culture, top management commitment, disability-HRM fit and supportive workplace. Merely offering the job to the differently abled persons is not sufficient but the culture that promotes and energizes the organizational factors are important. The development of inclusive culture is not possible without adhering to sound HRM network. Sound HRM network refers to the certain HR practices which includes, but not limited to, recruitment, selection, training, development, compensation (Fredericksen, Witt, Patton, & Lovrich, 2015). So, it is important to highlight the certain HRM practices and policies for overcoming the challenges faced by differently abled persons (Maini & Heera, 2019).

Shore et al. (2018) have reviewed the inclusion literature and found out that mostly empirical studies related to inclusion are U.S. dominant so there is a need to discuss this from multiple context point of view as legislations, political, economic factors play an important part in defining inclusion in the organizations of a country. Farndale, Biron, Briscoe, and Raghuram (2015) stated that cultural and national context effects the way inclusion practices are carried out in the organization therefore inclusion should be studied in multiple contexts such as from developing country aspect. There are very few published studies that have studied the differently abled persons perspective on the inclusion, challenges and inclusion practices in integration of HR practices in the context of Pakistan (Farndale et al., 2015; L. Mor Barak, Erica Leeanne et al., 2016; Shore et al., 2018; Suresh & Dyaram, 2020) so this research will fill this existing literature gap in the literature of differently abled persons as well as inclusion. After reviewing the existing literature, it is found that most of the research on inclusion of differently abled persons is conducted in

developed countries. Current literature lacks the Pakistan's and extensive research in developing country context so, present study fulfills the existing contextual gap.

The rationale for this research in the organizational context of Pakistan is to fill the gaps in already existing literature by studying the challenges that differently abled persons face in Pakistan while working in organizations and it will help in development of policies and HR practices for their inclusion at workplace because this research will figure out the perception and experiences of individuals who are facing it in real terms i.e. differently abled persons. Present study aims to address the discriminatory behavior differently abled persons face at workplace.

In view of the research gaps identified from the existing literature, following three research objectives and questions are formulated in view of the inclusion of differently abled persons working in the organizations of Pakistan.

The three key research objectives are:

- To explore the perception of differently abled persons about their inclusion in organizations.
- To explore the challenges that differently abled persons, face at the workplace.
- To understand the HR initiatives for differently abled persons in the organizations.

The three research questions are:

- How do differently abled persons perceive the HR practices and Organizational support systems to influence their inclusion in the organization?
- Which are the challenges that differently abled persons face in organizations and why?

- Which are the practices/ organizational support system that organizations implement to enhance the inclusion of differently abled persons and how are they implemented?

### **1.3 Thesis Structure**

Chapter 1 provides an overview of the topic chosen for the research with problem statement, its contribution and significance in the field of inclusion management.

Chapter 2 presents the secondary research which includes the contribution to the literature by earlier researchers previously carried out in the similar field to identify the research gaps and further elaborates on research context and motivation.

Chapter 3 is designated to define the research design and methodology undertaken for the study. It basically highlights the philosophical reasoning in following qualitative research and the data collection process for this research. For the selected method a concise justification is also provided.

Chapter 4 presents the findings revealed through the interviews with the use of verbatims to highlight findings.

Chapter 5 outlines the discussion and analysis in the light of comparison and contrast of findings and literature.

Chapter 6 concludes this dissertation by summarizing all the findings. It also discusses the limitations and future research directions.

## **2 Chapter Two: Literature Review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

Inclusion of differently abled persons also known as disable persons is an emerging topic in the literature with having grounds in different disciplines (Bento & Kuznetsova, 2018). Differently abled persons are considered as persons other than normal persons and so they face difficulties of acceptability in the organizations. Organizations are reluctant to induct such persons because of the fear and extra efforts they must make for the adjustment of differently able persons. In the past, such persons were not inducted despite of being sharp, intelligent and progressive, just because of having different body structure (Maini & Heera, 2019). But, within the past decade, with the raise of voice against this practice, the scenario has been changed and organizations are in cooperating them by introducing the policies as well as erasing the line between the superiority and inferiority, which was there because of being related to a certain group of people (Maini & Heera, 2019). Now, the question here arises, if the organizations have only set policies to induct them in the organizations or are their contribution respected and valued by the organizations. So, to answer this question the research was designed to explore three of the concepts related to inclusion of differently abled persons within the organizations of Pakistan. The first one is to explore the HR Practices specifically design to include the differently abled persons within the organizations. The second one is to analyze the perception of differently able persons about their inclusion in the organizations and last but not the least is to analyze about the challenges differently able persons in the organizations of Pakistan are facing.

The following section will discuss the existing body of knowledge on inclusion of differently abled persons in the organizations. The section is dedicated to present the review of the research already done in the area of Inclusion, Diversity, Minorities and Differently abled Persons. Moreover, it has

developed the transition of diversity management to inclusion management as per information extracted from the relevant articles. Furthermore, it will be followed by identifying the research gap which is specific to the inclusion of differently abled persons in the organization and in the last, research objectives and questions designed for this research are explained.

## **2.2 Differently Abled Persons as Minorities Social Identity Group**

This section of literature discusses the major two groups that are present at workplace. This relates to the first objective of this research which is to explore the challenges differently abled persons face at workplace. While, defining the challenges of differently abled persons, it is important to define the majority and minorities groups as differently abled persons are the part of minorities group and minorities group face challenges because of the majority group in the organization. So, the following section will differentiate between minorities and majority social identity group which is then followed by differently abled persons as minorities social identity group.

Majority and Minority groups are considered as two different ends of groups dimensions (Seyranian et al., 2008). Majority group is that social group which is positively looked upon and is considered of a high status (Tajfel, 1981). In contrast, the minority group is that social group which is looked upon as oppressed and stigmatized and is considered of a low status (Blanz, Mummendey, & Otten, 1995). In fact, in the literature of sociology it is suggested to replace the term of minority with “‘oppressed’, ‘subordinated’, ‘inferiorized’ or even ‘economically, politically, or racially hindered population’ ”(Wilkinson, 2000). The dimensions through which majority and minority groups are differentiated are: “social categories, power, disposition, being the target of treatment and numeric size”. So, majority is that social identity group who has more power and is big in number which states that more people are like them and minority is the one who is in contrast to these dimensions (Seyranian et al., 2008).

The definition of minority is very broad. Different researchers have included different perspectives for defining the minorities (Berbrier, 2002). Louis Wirth who was a sociologist define the minority group as “any group of people who, because of their physical or cultural characteristics, are singled out from the others in the society in which they live for differential and unequal treatment, and who therefore regard themselves as objects of collective discrimination” (Shore et al., 2011). Furthermore, the crux of minority in the society or organization is that a social group who possess less power of decision making or else than the other individuals of that place (Berend, 2019). Within minorities there are several groups who are being differentiated as compare to majority groups. These groups can be women, ethnic diversity, religious diversity, differently abled persons, cultural diversity (Levine & Relations, 2017).

Moving towards one of the group of minorities, differently abled persons which is the focus of this research. Differently abled persons have been the part of minority groups in the organizations and so is that, there remains a significant gap of employment between the two groups i.e. disabled persons and non-disabled persons. Although in past years the employment rate of differently abled persons has been increased but there is a difference. Almost 80% of non-disabled persons are employed and as compared to it only 50% of disabled persons are employed in UK (Hall, Wilton, & Society, 2011). Differently abled persons face difficulty while searching for employment. According to statistics, unemployment rate of differently abled persons in some countries is 80% or even more. Globally, because of the chronic diseases persons with differently abled bodied are increasing with every passing year (Vashishth, Verma, Saini, Jhamb, & Development, 2019). Within India 2.21% of population falls under the category of differently abled which is almost an increase of 0.8% since 2011 census. According to WHO (2020), overall, 1 million people are living in the world with some form of disability and more importantly the number of differently abled persons across the world are increasing with because of the health conditions. Furthermore, due to

the pandemic of COVID-19 people with differently abled are affected more so, it is significant to study about employment of differently abled persons within organizations (WHO, 2020).

Disability is a term which is used for the persons who have deficiency of something. This research has utilized the definition of World Health Organization which stated disability as “an umbrella term, covering impairments, activity limitations and participation restrictions. An impairment is a problem in body function or structure; an activity limitation is a difficulty encountered by an individual in executing a task or action; while a participation restriction is a problem experienced by an individual in involvement in life situations” (WHO, 2020).

Oliver is the person who have established one of the most important concepts of differently abled persons and that is “social model of disability”. This model has discriminated between impairment, disability and handicapped. According to this model impairment is related to lack of any part of body and disability is the restriction caused by society which hinders a person to perform a task and thus it excludes the participants from the mainstream of social activities. Oliver as of Shakespeare has insisted upon the difference between individual and social model. Individual model explains disability as a result of impairment. On the other hand social model explains disability as a result of social exclusion and oppression (Terzi, 2004). So, disability is not defined as lack of any part of body as the restriction. It is caused by a temporary social group on account of the physical impairments which ultimately lead them to be socially excluded (Shakespeare, 2006). This social model is called as “the big idea” of the British disability movement (Hasler, 1993) which is effective in building of the social movement of differently abled persons. The concept of able and disable people has been discriminated by the society. Therefore, “social model” approach says that it is actually the society which creates the obstacles of discrimination, oppression for disable persons (Oliver & society, 2013). This model has been proven good

psychologically as it has increases the self-esteem of the differently abled persons (Shakespeare, 2006).

There were weaknesses of the social model also. One of the most important weaknesses was that it strongly disowns the concept of individual and medical impairment that it is left far behind. Although, disability is because of impairment and social exclusion. (Shakespeare, 2006). To add and extend the social model in terms of physical impairment is also not justified so there is a need to extend the social model of disability in terms of ensuring the concept of physical impairment as well or to replace it with something else (Oliver & society, 2013).

The most important factor while defining the disability is the type of disability which highlights the level of undesirableness of employer for disabled persons. It is because of the support an employer has to provide in terms of equipment, trainings, extensive on-the-job support. Moreover, this also depends upon the level of disruptions for the organization, a disabled person can create. Disabled persons can create tension in work and in workers social interaction (Nota, Santilli, Ginevra, & Soresi, 2014). So, in regard to this it has been observed that people with physical disabilities are more acceptable in the organization rather than mental disabilities and so is the reason that this research has specifically focused on the people with physical disabilities working in the organizations (Bell & Klein, 2001).

As explained, disability is diverse and so are differently abled persons. However, all the differently abled persons have needed the general healthcare. Article 25 of the UN convention reinforces the rights of persons who are differently abled but in reality few countries provide adequate services and attention towards the people who are differently abled and not all (WHO, 2020).

Apart from having limited opportunities for the disabled people in the organizations, a study in China was conducted to research about the denial of discrimination act by the disabled persons



and it concluded that many disabled persons do not stand up for their rights because of institutional, environmental, societal, familial, and psychological causes. Disabled persons think that society has nothing to do with the protection of their rights, but it is their attribute which discriminates them with others. This personal denial from disabled persons can hinder the transformative change for creating the inclusion of disabled persons in the organizations. So, it is important to notice that disabled persons should not show the reluctant responses towards discrimination (Lin, Yang, & Society, 2018).

An additional challenge for differently abled persons has been created because of COVID-19. COVID-19 is a pandemic which has been since 2019 throughout the world. And is creating dual trouble for the differently abled persons across the world. According to World Health organization, the key factor to see about the differently abled persons is to see in relation with the COVID-19. People with differently able bodied are suffering more than the normal persons because of having limited healthcare facilities (WHO, 2020).

Differently abled persons have raised their voices against the exclusion issues they are facing because of the emerging spread of the virus through social and digital media. Because of the pandemic, diversity and inclusion of differently abled persons is threatened and affected by the health, social and political dimensions (Goggin & Ellis, 2020). Disability is not only the health issue but also the social inclusion issue. One of the key barriers is to have the perception that there is no need of special attention towards the differently abled persons and they should be treated as same as rest of the population. This become challenging in COVID times as no extra support was there for differently abled persons. This was in contrast with the social model of disability which says that people with differently able bodied cannot be treated the same as everyone else. The one-size-fit-all in case of this scenario is not acceptable(Goggin & Ellis, 2020).

Making it a base it can be considered as it's difficult for differently abled persons to be inclusive within the organization even, to maintain the diverse workforce it was not up to the mark.

### **2.3 Differently abled persons and Developing Countries**

Almost 15% of world's population suffers from some type of disability around the globe and this percentage is high for the developing countries specifically (Bank, 2021). One of the major reasons of high disability percentage in developing countries is poverty. Poverty may lead to malnutrition which ultimately causes disability. There are several other reasons which includes poor health conditions, lack of health care and emergency rehabilitation, limited resources and much more (Mitra, Posarac, & Vick, 2013). On the other hand, the disable persons who become adults have limited opportunities to work which results in lowering their family income hence moving forward towards poverty (Gertler & Gruber, 2002; Mitra et al., 2013). In developing countries, disability is highly associated with the concept of multidimensional poverty. Moreover, different countries have different type of deprivations so, different policies should be there to cater the differently abled persons across countries. In addition to it, in the developing countries persons experience low educational conditions and low employment rates (Mitra et al., 2013).

These kinds of situations suggest to have policies and legislations that support the differently abled persons and protect their well-being in the developing countries specifically. Legislations and policies help a lot in setting and resolving any kind of issue in the country. So, is the case with differently abled persons. They are the ones for whom there are legislations and policies set but within third world countries there is a challenge that these legislations and policies are just words and are not implemented. They cannot bring positive changes in the society (Gul, 2020). Like many countries, Pakistan has drawn on UN policies to develop their own policies for the differently abled persons. Some of the policies include declaration on the rights of disabled persons ordinance

1981, national policies for persons with disabilities 2002, national plan of action 2006, special citizen act 2008, special citizen act 2009 (Gul, 2020).

Despite the presence of laws within Pakistan to protect the rights of disability, society creates pressure in the inclusion path of the differently abled persons in the organizations. Differently abled persons continue to have the limited opportunities of employment, promotions, work-related activities within the workplace which otherwise are open for other societal members who are without any disability (Lin & Yang, 2018). Within Pakistan differently abled persons are the largest “underestimated and ignored minority” social identity group. Like many other countries, differently abled persons face barriers to information. There is also an attitude problem which can be shown through the official documents of Pakistan in which the word mentally retarded is used for them (Heymann, 2014). There are many challenges faced by differently abled persons within the organizations of Pakistan so it is important to study about the challenges, perception and policies and practices to cater this issue.

#### **2.4 Diversity Management and Inclusion Management**

Diversity management and inclusion management are often regarded the same, but they have a huge difference in literature (Roberson, 2006; Shore et al., 2011). As, mentioned by Nkomo (2014), it is not merely “old wine in new bottle” (P.580) which means that it is not just renaming the prior concept of diversity management as inclusion management (Shore et al., 2018). This section of literature review will discuss about the distinction between diversity management and inclusion management as the main objective of this research is to study the inclusion management at the organization and how organizations are practicing it with the diversity management.

Diverse is related to the employees who “differ in ethnicity, nationality, gender, function, ability, language or religion” (Bassett-Jones, 2005) and diversity management in organization is defined

as “ the systematic and planned commitment on the part of the organization to recruit and retain employees with diverse backgrounds and abilities” (Bassett-Jones, 2005). While diversity is just related to increase the representation of individuals related to different groups in the organization, inclusion is to include them in real essence by giving value to their contribution (Nkomo, 2014). Inclusion in organizations is defined as “the individual’s sense of being a part of the organizational system in both the formal processes, such as access to information and making channels, and the informal processes, such as ‘water cooler’ and lunch meetings where information and decisions informally take place” (M.E. Mor Barak, 2011). Michàlle E Mor Barak (2015) extended the definition of inclusion as “the employee perceptions that their unique contribution to the organization is appreciated and their full participation is encouraged”. Hays-Thomas and Bendick (2013), also contributed in defining and contrasting the concept of diversity and inclusion. They define diversity as “the mixture of attributes within a workforce that in significant ways affect how people, think, feel, and behave at work, and their acceptance, work performance and satisfaction or progress in the organization.” As compared to it, they highlight that inclusion “focuses new attention on the policies, practices, and climate of the workplace – the workplace culture – that shapes the experiences of employees with those characteristics.”

As, studied by (Winters, 2014) the major difference between diversity and inclusion management is “diversity can be mandated and legislated, while inclusion stems from voluntary actions” (P. 206). While diversity management is to increase the representation of social identity groups of discrimination in organization in the form of numbers like bringing in people of color, women and members of other marginalized groups at the workplace, inclusion is to value their contribution and identity by creating equal access to processes of organization (Shore et al., 2018). Not only diversity is important in organization but real essence is that there should be inclusion (Daya, 2014; Shore et al., 2011). Inclusion is the necessary key of successful diversity management (Michàlle

E Mor Barak, 2015). Equity is also an essential part of inclusion as inclusive climate is not possible without the equity concept. Equity theory “attempts to understand people's perceptions of fairness, evaluations of equity, and behavioral judgments” (Lim & Services, 2020). So, in terms of moving from disability to equity means that differently abled persons perceive the overall treatment with them fair (Lim & Services, 2020). Many scholars have pointed out the advantages that a diverse workforce bring into the organization (Ferdman & Deane, 2014). However, alone diversity does not ensure the benefits that organization can get (Jackson & Joshi, 2011), in fact it can bring conflict and turnover in the organization so focus should be given to introduce inclusionary practices in order to gain advantages from diverse workforce (Shore et al., 2018).

Inclusion in organization is the combination of two things. For individuals to be included in the organization he/she should be satisfied by his/her two needs i.e. belongingness and uniqueness. This states that an individual feels inclusive in an organization only when he/she feel that he/she is a part of that group with his/her own unique characteristics and he/she has not to compromise on his/her uniqueness (Shore et al., 2011). There have been many approaches discussed in literature to manage the diversity in organization. These includes activities like alternative work arrangements, diversity committees, family-friendly programs, openness in superior-subordinate communication, accountability, language courses, personal growth process, training, multicultural work groups, employee mentoring, succession planning, diversity workshops, mentoring programs, intercultural trainings (Kellough & Naff, 2004; Pitts, Hicklin, Hawes, & Melton, 2010; Podsiadlowski, Gröschke, Kogler, Springer, & Van Der Zee, 2013; Sadri & Tran, 2002). But these programs do not ensure the inclusion climate in the organization (Groeneveld & Verbeek, 2012).

So, now the question arises how a diverse workplace can be converted into inclusive workplace while having the equity at the workplace. So there are two major contributors, one is work

organization itself means the overall environment and the other is the manager who is a true leader (Barak, 2016). And when these two contributors successfully implements the inclusion climate through diversity management then there are positive organizational outcomes (L. Mor Barak, Erica Leeanne et al., 2016).

The differences presented above are significant in understanding the difference between inclusion and diversity and to highlight the importance of inclusion management. To sum up, it can be concluded that inclusion management is a step ahead of diversity management. Diversity plays an important part in setting up the inclusion as diversity ensures the physical representation from marginalized group and inclusion includes those marginalized groups.

## **2.5 Historical Perspective of Inclusion**

This section will discuss about the historical evolution of inclusion management concept in the literature and the organizations. This is important to discuss as it will highlight the journey of the concept of inclusion management in the organizations because it emerged from practice rather than literature. Moreover, as the objective of this study is to research about the perception of inclusion in the organizations of Pakistan, so this will help to understand how inclusion has been emerged with the passage of time.

The employees who were not considered in the group of White males has been a consistent challenge from the past i.e. from the era of rapid industrialization in U.S. Women, people with color, European ethnic immigrants, blacks, racial minorities and other marginalized group were not encouraged to be the part of the organization and if they were the part of the organization then they were not seen in the supervisory positions or top management level (Roediger, 1999). At that time very little research focused on the issues of exclusion of minorities from the workplace (Nkomo, 1992). President Roosevelt, in 1941, considered this issue and issued Executive order

8802 to ban discrimination which resulted in the establishment of Fair Employment Practices Committee to integrate the workplace by rectifying the issues of marginalized groups (Delton, 2007) in result of that some companies hired industrial psychologists (Nkomo, 2014) and the little research was also seen on this topic (Delton, 2007).

After that, the legislations related to have different groups at the workplace came with the establishment of equal employment opportunity commission. The concepts of firstly the affirmative action and then the equal employment opportunity came. (Kelly & Dobbin, 1998). This was called as compliance. As, HR managers do not focus on including previously excluded group, but their main objective was that how their organization do not discriminate in order to avoid any legal complications. So it was rather a defensive approach towards catering exclusion of marginalized groups (Nkomo, 2014). After the compliance the next turn in evolution was of diversity. According to Kelly and Dobbin (1998), HR practitioners experiences and noted the importance of affirmative action as well as most significantly, the employee market demographics were changing as white men were not present in the market as they were. It was demonstrated that by 2000 only 15% of new entrant will be white males in the US workforce. So, affirmative action/ equal employment “develop a life of their own” and HR practitioners started to have diversity practices such as training programs, antidiscrimination policies etc. at the workplace.

Recently, there is a shift in debate where many scholars are debating on the shift of diversity management to inclusion management (Barak, 2016; Daya, 2014; Ferdman & Deane, 2014; Roberson, 2006). This basically has been emerged from practice (Nkomo, 2014). This was emerged to fill the gap between the diversity promise and abilities of individuals to lift organization towards efficiency (Ferdman, Avigdor, Braun, Konkin, & Kuzmycz, 2010; M.E. Mor Barak, 2011). Where diversity was to include physically the diverse workforce inclusion is related to give

voice to all the groups of individuals in the organization without any discrimination (Nkomo, 2014). This has been observed that evolution from equality to diversity is majorly backed up by the change of demographics of employees in market but the evolution from diversity to inclusion is different in the essence that diversity lonely fails to fulfill the promise of competitive advantage (Kelly & Dobbin, 1998).

So, to conclude the concept of inclusion is the subsequent stage in the evolutionary process after assimilation through legal compliance in terms of affirmative action and equal employment opportunity and diversity management. It is important here to highlight that only diversity management cannot provide the advantage to the organization, but inclusive climate is important and inclusive climate is not possible without ensuring diversity in the organization. Diversity and inclusion are overlapping concepts as inclusion is basically not “managing diversity” but “managing for diversity” (Chavez & Weisinger, 2008). So, these both concepts are not mutually exclusive but calls for voice and participation from every individual.

## **2.6 Theoretical Perspective of Inclusion Management**

This section defines the inclusion management theoretically and the dimensions this research will use to research about perception of inclusion management in the organizations.

This research has utilized on Shore et al. (2011) model of inclusion management and diversity in work groups. He defines inclusion and developed a framework based on “Brewer’s optimal distinctiveness theory”. Optimal distinctiveness theory by Brewer (1991) states that “human needs for validation and similarity to others (on the one hand) and the countervailing need for uniqueness and individuation (on the other)” (p.477). It means that individuals at the organization want to be unique and identical at the same time which results into the conclusion that all the employees at the organization want that they feel similar to the employees around them with their unique



characteristics to be accepted which means that individuals as employees want to maintain the balance of inclusion and distinctiveness (Leonardelli, Pickett, & Brewer, 2010).

Based on this ODT theory Shore et al. (2011) defines inclusion management as “the degree to which an employee perceives that he or she is an esteemed member of the work group through experiencing treatment that satisfy his or her needs for belongingness and uniqueness.” This study also intakes the definition of Michàlle E Mor Barak (2015), in which he says that every individual is encouraged to participate and his/her contribution is valued. Based on ODT theory belongingness and uniqueness are required for inclusion (Leonardelli et al., 2010) and so Shore et al. (2011), developed an inclusion framework which is as follows

	Low Belongingness	High Belongingness
Low Value in Uniqueness	<p><b>Exclusion</b></p> <p>Individual is not treated as an organizational insider with unique value in the work group but there are other employees or groups who are insiders.</p>	<p><b>Assimilation</b></p> <p>Individual is treated as an insider in the work group when they conform to organizational/dominant culture norms and downplay uniqueness.</p>
High Value in Uniqueness	<p><b>Differentiation</b></p> <p>Individual is not treated as an organizational insider in the work group but their unique characteristics are seen as valuable and required for group/ organization success.</p>	<p><b>Inclusion</b></p> <p>Individual is treated as an insider and also allowed/encouraged to retain uniqueness within the work group.</p>

*Source: (Shore et al., 2011)*

*Figure 1: Inclusion Framework*

In this 2×2 framework of inclusion, Shore et al. (2011) has presented 4 categories. The first one is Exclusion in which belongingness and uniqueness both are low, and individuals are felt excluded because neither their unique values are considered, nor they are included in the group. Second one, is Assimilation in which belongingness is high but uniqueness is low. in this type, individuals who

are unique, included in the work group when they adopt to the dominant culture of the organization. Third one, is differentiation in which belongingness is low but uniqueness is high. In this type of inclusion, unique individuals are felt unique so that they can be creative, but they are not included in the dominant group of organization. Fourth and the last one is Inclusion in which both belongingness and uniqueness are valued. In this type individuals are encouraged to have their unique characteristics while remaining in the dominant group of the organization.

So, to conclude there are basically four types of inclusion that can be practiced by the organizations depending upon the level of uniqueness and belongingness they value.

## 2.7 Inclusion Constructs

The concept of inclusion is not very old but from past recent years this field is growing rapidly because of its importance and advantages in the organization. Different inclusion constructs have been defined in the literature (Shore et al., 2018) which are defined as follows in the table

<b>Sr. No.</b>	<b>Inclusion Constructs</b>	<b>Definitions</b>
1.	Workgroup Inclusion	Work group inclusion relates to the individuals seeking balance between their belongingness and uniqueness in the groups in which they are working (Shore et al., 2011) according to the employee’s perception (Shore et al., 2018).
2.	Leader Inclusion	Leader inclusion mostly relates to the “openness, accessibility and availability” of immediate supervisor or manager (Carmeli,

		Reiter-Palmon, & Ziv, 2010) as perceived by individual employees (Shore et al., 2018).
3.	Perceived Organizational Inclusion	Perceived organizational inclusion refers to the perception of employees about their inclusion in the organization (Shore et al., 2018) which is demonstrated by “involvement in work groups, participation in decision making process, access to information and resources and diversity and organizational culture” (Mor-Barak & Cherin, 1998; Michàl E Mor Barak, 2000).
4.	Organizational Inclusion Practices	Organizational inclusion practices include the practices that enhance the inclusion (Shore et al., 2018).
5.	Inclusive Climate	Inclusive climate is a “collective perception” by the employees of the organization that they feel their identities are respected by including them in decision making processes (Nishii, 2013).

*Table 1: Important Inclusion Constructs*

These all constructs mentioned above are related to inclusion. These constructs show the extent of inclusion in the organizations. Now describing the literature related to these constructs in detail.

### **2.7.1 Workgroup Inclusion**

Workgroup inclusion is related to the perception of individual that their uniqueness and belongingness is valued at the workplace (Shore et al., 2011) so this relates to the third objective of the study as to find out the perception of differently abled persons about their inclusion in the

organizations. Their perception will be studied and compared with the 4 typologies of inclusion defined by Shore et al. (2011) i.e. Assimilation, Exclusion, differentiation and inclusion.

### **2.7.2 Leader Inclusion**

Cottrill, Lopez, and Hoffman (2014b), defined leader inclusion as “leaders of diverse and inclusive organizations must model comfort with diversity, alter rules for acceptable behaviors to ensure wide application, create opportunities for dialogue about and across differences, demonstrate an interest in learning and be authentic about their own challenges and triumphs to encourage authenticity in others” (P. 276). Mostly, studies have undertaken leader inclusion as developing the sense of inclusion by the immediate supervisor or leader of the subordinate (Shore et al., 2018). This relates to the second objective of this research in which it is to investigate the organizational support systems in order to increase the employee’s perception of inclusion and as stated by Barak (2016), manager who is a true leader helps in creating inclusive climate. Inclusive leader helps in enhancing unit performance (Hirak, Peng, Carmeli, & Schaubroeck, 2012), increase the creativity of employees (Carmeli et al., 2010), enhance the sense of psychological safety in employees (Nembhard & Edmondson, 2006) and increase the engagement of employees at work (Choi, Tran, & Park, 2015).

### **2.7.3 Perceived Organizational Inclusion**

Perceived organizational inclusion is related to the perception about inclusion at the individual level (Avery, McKay, Wilson, & Volpone, 2008; Shore et al., 2018) which is the focus of the third objective of this study i.e. to explore the perception of inclusion of differently abled persons.

Employee’s perception of their inclusion depends about the inclusion-exclusion elements. The elements that increase the perception of employees about inclusion are “involvement in work-

groups, participation in decision making process, access to information and resources, diversity and organizational culture” (Mor-Barak & Cherin, 1998; Michàl E Mor Barak, 2000).

#### **2.7.4 Organizational Inclusion Practices**

Organizational inclusion practices are the processes and practices used by organizations to increase the inclusion of minorities at workplace (Shore et al., 2018). This is related to the second objective of this research in which it is to find out the HR practices that help to foster the inclusion climate at the organization.

L. Offerman and T. Basford (2014), stated that there are several best practices that should be carried out by HR to enhance the inclusive climate in the organization. First one is to develop the diverse talent by recruitment from diverse workgroups. Second is they should minimize discriminative actions like treatment of employees in such a way that they feel devalue. Third is to leverage diversity through employee resource groups and different communities. Fourth is to develop an accountability system for inclusion. Fifth is to train and develop individuals to carry out inclusive climate practices and sixth is that leaders should develop a culture which is inclusive in its essence.

Similarly, enhancing knowledge sharing through team-based activities, encouraging the voice of all employees within the group, collaborative work arrangements participation in decision making, fairness system, supportive leadership style, tolerating the differences, conflict resolution procedures and employee adaptation to the organizations are also some of the practices that foster inclusion (Roberson, 2006; Tang et al., 2015).

### **2.7.5 Inclusive Climate**

As, diversity brings problems like turnover and conflict among various groups (Guillaume et al., 2014) so inclusive climate which refers to the overall organizational climate that foster inclusion is necessary to overcome the problems (Shore et al., 2018). This refers to the second and third objective of this study as inclusive climate is developed through HR practices and organizational support system and it helps to foster the individuals' perception of inclusivity (Shore et al., 2018).

As, demonstrated by Shore et al. (2018) in his paper Nishii (2013) states inclusive climate as “a collective perception that there are expectations and norms that allow employees to behave in a manner that is consistent with aspects of their self-concept together with the various identities that they hold, and they are included in decision making and supported in sharing views that are not part of the status quo.” These norms can include integration strategy, establishing a level playing field, facilitating the inclusive decision making, confronting discrimination processes (Ashburn-Nardo, Morris, & Goodwin, 2008; Nishii & Rich, 2014). Furthermore, Li, Lin, Tien, and Chen (2017), found out that when inclusion climate is high than it enhances the team information sharing as well as employee information elaboration and when inclusion climate is low than it reduces the effect of both.

### **2.8 Differently abled Persons and Inclusion in Organizations**

This section specifically discusses about the inclusion of the differently abled persons in the organization. It relates to the third objective of this research which is to know about the perception of disabled persons in organizations about their inclusion and about the value which is given to for their contribution. Moreover, it is also related to the second objective of this research which is to dig about the programs that support the inclusivity of the differently abled persons at organizations.

Differently abled persons are the part of minorities social identity group and they face challenges of inclusion within the organization. Differently abled persons experience exclusion as well as violence at the workplace (Wiseman & Society, 2020). The term disability is a subjective concept which varies throughout the world. It is not because of the capabilities of an individual who is differently abled but it is because of the environmental and cultural barriers (Halder, Assaf, & Keeffe, 2017). One more challenge related to it is the denial of discrimination from the differently abled persons. Rather than raising voice of theirs about their rights, differently abled persons in China deny from the existence of the discrimination and they believe it is not a societal matter but it is attributed to them (Lin et al., 2018).

Being employed is one of the issues for differently abled persons but when employed than being ignored in the activities of the abled workforce is another vital issue related to them. Therefore, the point to ponder upon is that job is not enough but merging socially with the abled workforce is important so that differently abled persons do not feel excluded otherwise they cannot give their best at the workplace (Vashishth et al., 2019).

In the developed countries like UK, many unions are in cooperating the differently abled workforce so that they can stand up for the rights of overall differently abled community over there. Union membership provide the differently abled persons an overall thrill which additionally support the differently abled persons in the organizations. Moreover, anti-discrimination legislation has also been approved to secure the rights of the marginalized people like differently abled workforce (Hall et al., 2011).

In the light of the above discussion of inclusion management, inclusion of differently abled persons is more than diversity management as diversity is just a visual representation of the differently abled employees at the workplace but inclusion is that, differently abled employees are given their

due respect as well as acknowledgement (Daya, 2014). The dilemma of the time is that many organizations are just focusing towards completing their quotas meaning hiring individuals from diverse workforce due to more legislations and affirmative action programs due to equality and diversity maintenance but are failed towards actually including differently able bodied in overall decision making (Booyesen, 2007; Michàlle E Mor Barak, 2015). Differently able bodied being a low group status are discriminated and are not considered trustworthy at the organizations (Tsutsui & Zizzo, 2014). So, Shore et al. (2011) mentioned that there is a need of integration of diverse workforce in organization via inclusion to make the diverse hiring effective for organization (Daya, 2014).

Different laws related to affirmative action and equal employment opportunity has helped a lot in bringing the differently abled persons at the workplace (Shore et al., 2018) but without practicing inclusion, organizations will continue to lose the valuable differently abled person who can provide competitive advantage with the diverse thinking of them (Hom, Roberson, & Ellis, 2008) and high quality decision making with more creativity (Harrison & Klein, 2007).

United Nation has launched an inclusive strategy in June 2019 with the name, UN Disability inclusion strategy to promote “sustainable and transformative progress on disability inclusion through all pillars of the work of the United Nations.” In addition to it, world health organization has welcomed the UN disability inclusion strategy and is currently getting into the phase of developing the action plan to include the differently abled persons and WHO to be the best employer of people with differently abled persons (WHO, 2020).

Within the organizations, employer tend to see the disabled persons as less competent than the people without disabilities because of the level of productivity a business has to achieve. Employers think that they cannot meet the expectations of the high-performance standards with



disable persons, so this reduce the hiring of disable persons within the organizations (Henkens, Remery, & Schippers, 2008; Shinkle, 2012). Disabled persons are more positively acceptable socially than for work performance. It is therefore to accept that if employer induce the differently abled persons within the organization to create diversity and fulfil law requirements but their inclusivity in real essence, that their belongingness and uniqueness has a high degree, still remains a question (Nota et al., 2014).

To have the inclusive environment, the leadership style of the top management is most important. They should have a co-operative leadership style with open and frank communication with all the employees (Ferdman et al., 2010), there should also be cross-departmental integration as it increases the belongingness of the employees (Gasorek, 2000). Moreover, employers should encourage the work group involvement and all the employees should have access to the information that is required to complete their jobs (Mor-Barak & Cherin, 1998). In addition to it, a fair consideration should be given to the contribution from the differently able bodied employees (Ferdman et al., 2010).

## **2.9 Link of Human Resource Management with Inclusion Management**

This section discusses about the role of human resource management (HRM) in implementing diversity and inclusion initiatives. This links to the second objective of this study which is to explore the HR initiatives for inclusion of differently abled persons in the organizations of Pakistan.

With increasing interest of people towards migration to stable their lifestyle and with increasing globalization, diversity is increasing in the organizations (Stahl, Björkman, & Morris, 2012). Moreover, to enhance the innovation, productivity, creativity and to gain competitive advantage companies hire and manage individuals from diverse backgrounds (Bassett-Jones, 2005; Kundu,

2003; Wangombe, Wambui, Muthura, Kamau, & Jackson, 2013). Organizations hire minorities and global diverse workforce so that diverse people bring diverse perspective and ideas in the organization and as a result competitive edge can be maintained. Same is the case organizations hire differently abled persons from the minorities group to give them employment opportunities in regard of their competencies (Collings, Mellahi, & Cascio, 2019; Pfeffer, 1994). As, people management is the responsibility of HR in organization (Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart, & Wright, 2017) and with the increasing trend of diversity at workplace attracting, hiring, managing and retaining diverse workforce is the responsibility of HR (Podsiadlowski et al., 2013; Shen, Chanda, D'netto, & Monga, 2009) so it's a new and main emerging challenge for HR (Martín Alcázar, Miguel Romero Fernández, & Sánchez Gardey, 2013).

From the historical background the prior concepts of inclusion were managed by the HR managers in the organizations. HR practitioners were the ones who were managing equal employment opportunity, affirmative action and diversity management (Kelly & Dobbin, 1998). Moreover, Shen et al. (2009) have stated that diversity management and HRM has same agenda of enhancing the employee's involvement and commitment towards organization in order to increase the efficiency of business processes. Furthermore, as inclusion is to include the every individual in decision making processes and to increase their involvement by providing them all the resources and advancement opportunities (Shore et al., 2018) and HRM is the one that deals with increasing employee involvement and providing all the resources and advancement opportunities to employees (Shen et al., 2009) so, we can say that HRM is the one who is responsible for inclusion management in the organization by introducing and managing inclusionary practices.

In addition to it, soft HRM take the employee as a critical resource of the organization whereas, hard HRM takes employee as a cost (Jenkins & Delbridge, 2013) so keeping in view the soft HRM

perspective, HRM is responsible for skill development of the employees. So in order to foster an inclusive climate HR policies and practices should focus on employee development in order to make employees feel as a valuable resource in the organization which is the essence of inclusion management (Martín-Alcázar, Romero-Fernández, & Sánchez-Gardey, 2012; Shen et al., 2009). So, from this discussion it can be concluded that HRM should enhance the inclusion management through human resource planning, recruitment and selection, training and development, performance and rewards because HRM plays a critical role in leading inclusion in the organization.

### **3 Chapter Three: Methodology**

This chapter has two objectives. First, it gives an overview of the research design used for conducting this research. Second, it explains the philosophy of research, participants of research, data collection techniques and methods, sampling techniques and ethical considerations.

#### **3.1 Research Philosophy**

This study follows the interpretivism approach of research philosophy. This philosophy allows the researcher to get closer to the subjects by being an integral part of the study. It is especially relevant to understating and generating knowledge about the issues that are under explored and demand in-depth investigation. Thus, the present study employs interpretivism to explore the inclusion of differently abled persons in the organizations in order to understand their experiences in this subjective world which is socially constructed.

#### **3.2 Ontological Stance**

Ontology relates to the existence of something, that either it is reality, or it is illusionary. Researcher can follow either objectivist ontology or subjectivist ontology (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Since this study follows an interpretivist research philosophy, where the researcher has a belief that actors themselves interpret and perceive the reality, therefore, this study followed subjectivist ontological stance. Subjectivist ontological stance states that reality is not present out there but it is established by the social actors who are associated with that reality or social phenomena (Zikmund, Carr, & Griffin, 2013).

#### **3.3 Epistemological Stance**

Epistemological stance relates to the notion of acquiring valid knowledge. That is, the source from which authentic knowledge can be gained (Duberley, Johnson, & Cassell, 2012). This study

follows the interpretivist epistemological stance as it says that reality depends upon the differently abled persons that how they understand and perceives their inclusion in the organizations. The organizations in Pakistan which are claiming to have inclusive practices as their culture, are they following the practice of inclusive culture or not? and how they are practicing it? This can be known by in-depth investigation from the differently abled persons. This is the reason that this study followed the interpretivist epistemological stance.

### **3.4 Research Strategy and Design**

According to Creswell and Creswell (2017), qualitative research is the “means for exploring and understanding the meaning, individuals or groups ascribed to a social or human problem” (p. 4). In qualitative research, the researcher explains the phenomena in the light of contextual settings. Because of the contextual factor the research is limited in the generalization concept, but it provides rich data about the phenomena in the certain setting (Milena, Dainora, & Alin, 2008). Thus, in this study, the qualitative research strategy is used with the aim to explore the inclusion of differently abled persons in the context of Pakistani organizations. In addition, phenomenological approach is used since as a method of inquiry does not limit the researcher to knowing what is happening in real world but it also allows how the study participants interpret and making sense of the world, they are living in. Phenomenology is relevant to this study since it allows the researcher to dig out the lived experiences of the individuals (Qutoshi, S. B., 2018). This research has investigated about the perception of differently abled persons about their inclusion within the working environment. After knowing about their perception, the researcher has analyzed and explained their lived experiences in terms of their perception, challenges and HR initiatives to include them in organizations. Since this study is conducted to know about the lived experiences of the differently abled persons within the Pakistani organizations, therefore, based

upon the above discussion this study has followed the phenomenology design of qualitative research and is inductive in nature.

### **3.5.1 Sample Size**

The research participants for this study include differently abled persons working in the organization of Pakistan specifically in Lahore, Islamabad and Rawalpindi cities. Organization chosen was formal according to the concept of having clearly defined roles and responsibilities of an individual. Data was collected from the organizations of Pakistan without specifying the industry. This is because not many organizations are having inclusive practices in their work culture. So, it is the main reason that industry is not specified in order to collect maximum of data from the overall Pakistani context.

For this research, differently abled persons who were physically affected in some ways, either natural/by birth or accidental (developed at later stage of life because of any accident), were chosen and interviewed. The participant selection criteria involved those individuals as potential participants who were physically differently abled and were employed in formal organization irrespective of their age, profession, organizational grade level, gender, type of physical disability and location.

### **3.5.2 Sampling Technique**

Differently abled persons experience more unemployment as compared to majority group of people. As, they fall in the minority group so they often experience low compensation package as compared to the majority group. Although by law every organization has to fix 3% of their employees to be differently abled but it merely encourages the employers to employ differently abled persons (Mullot et al., 2021). Even after the employment of differently abled persons at

workplace, their participation and inclusion remain questionable so it becomes a little difficult to find out and then access differently abled persons.

Purposive and snowballing techniques were used for the data collection. Purposive sampling refers to the type of sampling in which participants are chosen with the already set criteria (Sharma, 2017), which in this case was differently abled persons (physically). Snowballing sampling technique refers to the type of sampling in which chain-referrals are developed through the references given by the participants. It appears to be like a rolling snowball (Alvi, 2016). This sampling technique was useful in this study to reach the often hidden and hard to access people, which in this case was differently abled persons, through referrals. I spread the word within my friends and family circle that if anyone knows about differently abled person and can give contact to me so one of my friends gave contact of her friend who was blind and that's how it started and then I also posted on my LinkedIn and most of the contacts I got from there. This is how, I completed my data collection. It became easier to develop a chain of references through snowballing technique to figure out the differently abled persons (physically) working in different organizations. The sample size was 18. Data was collected until the saturation point was reached.

### 3.5.3 Demographic Details

The demographic details of the participant are as follows:

<b>Sr. No.</b>	<b>Pseudonym</b>	<b>Type of disability</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Years of Experience</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Type of Organization</b>
1	A	Blind	Female	4	25	Local
2	B	Bones Deformity	Male	4	24	Local

3	C	Frederick Ataxia	Female	5	38	NGO
4	D	Pre- Mature Birth	Male	2	24	Local
5	E	One arm is missing	Male	7	32	Government
6	F	Blind	Male	15	40	Local
7	G	Missing thumbs and deformity in arms.	Male	9	36	Local
8	H	Deformity in arms	Female	5	34	Local
9	I	Partially Visual	Male	1.5	23	MNC
10	J	Deformity in feet	Male	6	33	Government
11	K	Polio - Wheel Chair Person	Male	10	31	MNC
12	L	One leg is missing	Male	7	35	MNC
13	M	3 fingers missing and arm short in length	Female	6	30	Local
14	N	One arm is missing	Female	4	29	Local
15	O	Polio - Wheel Chair Person	Male	8	32	MNC
16	P	Polio - Wheel Chair Person	Female	6	32	MNC
17	Q	One arm is missing	Male	15	38	Local



18	R	One leg is missing	Female	13	37	Local
----	---	--------------------	--------	----	----	-------

*Table 2: Demographic Details*

### **3.5 Semi- structured Interview Guide**

Semi-structured interview guide was prepared to collect the data. It was prepared as per (a) the research objectives and purpose (b) themes that emerged from the literature review.

The interview guide was divided into six parts. First part was related to the demographic details of the participants. Second part was related to the professional work experience and journey of the participant. Third was having questions related to the HR initiatives introduced by the organization. Fourth was related to the challenges that differently abled persons faced at the workplace. Fifth was related to the perceptions and feelings of the participants about their inclusion at the workplace and the sixth part asked questions relevant to COVID-19 in order to understand the additional challenges faced by differently abled persons due to the pandemic. There was only a slight touch of COVID-19 to set the ground for future research.

The interview guide was revised after the initial interviews by adding, deleting and modifying questions as per the need. For example, in initial interviews the concept of having special schools was disregarded by the participants. The participants mention that special education system actually restricts the differently abled children to get higher education and so organizations also do not get a qualified pool of differently abled persons to hire. So, it was added after 4 interviews. Interview guide is attached (see Appendix A).

### **3.6 Data Collection Process**

Data was collected through online interviews using online tools, such as, Zoom and MS-Teams. These tools were used because of the pandemic COVID-19. Most of the organizations did not give

permission to the researcher to visit in person because of the SOP's to be followed for the COVID-19 control. The benefit of collecting data online was that participants felt more convenient to give an interview from where they are working and were more comfortable. When researcher asked them of their consent to record the interview, they were not hesitant. One more advantage of using the online means was to easily reschedule interviews in case of emergencies and to also have follow-up interview sessions instead of having one long session. So, this increased the flexibility for the participants to participate without any stress and tension (Brown, 2018). As, industry was not specified to collect maximum of data from all over Pakistan so online interviews also increased the reach and let data to be collected from different cities in a cost and time effective manner.

All the interviews lasted from 40 to 80 mins. Individuals from different organizations of Pakistan majorly located in Lahore, Islamabad and Rawalpindi became part of this study. Data was collected from June 2021 to September 2021. The interviews were conducted in Urdu and English languages depending upon the preference of the study participant. All the interviews were transcribed and/or translated in English language during the time of data collection (Kowal & O'Connell, 2014; Wellard & McKenna, 2001).

Open-ended questions were asked from the participants which gave the opportunity for probing, follow-up questions. In the end, participants were asked a general question about anything else they want to share related to the research topic so that any new area related to the topic can be explored in next interviews or can be highlighted for future research (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

### **3.7 Data Analysis**

The analysis was guided by the overall research questions and objectives of this study. For analyzing the data three major areas were kept in mind i.e., challenges faced by differently-abled persons, perception of differently abled persons about their inclusion in the organization and HR

initiatives for their inclusion. Keeping in view, the qualitative approach of this study thematic analysis was used as it's the most widely used method. Thematic data analysis helps in identification of the major themes which ultimately supports in answering the research questions (Gelman, Carlin, Stern, & Rubin, 2014). Firstly, researcher followed the Verbatim transcription process by transcribing all the interviews in English. Exact replication of the Urdu and English interviews was produced in the written words in English. While transcribing, it was made sure that data remained in its actual essence. After transcription, researcher thoroughly read the data to get familiar with the data in depth. After reading all the interview transcripts, researcher applied open coding technique and firstly developed codes. After the generation of codes, sub-themes and themes were generated in excel file to build up the relations within the interviews (Table 2).

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Sub-Themes</b>	<b>Quotes</b>
Stigmatization at the Workplace	Risk Taking Factor	<i>“Because males and females have different salary brackets, then within females normal and differently abled females and within males normal and different abled males have different salary brackets.”</i>
		<i>“99.9% of the time, they have the threat that when we hire this person, or someone comes with us, or we hire them, then they don't become a bone in our throats; they don't become a liability for us.”</i>
	Authority and Decision- Making Power	<i>“No, No. My line manager gives me direction on which I operate and then empowers me to keep making those directives as per his instructions. And engagement with</i>

		<i>stakeholders on those regards, so I am empowered on the directors of my line manager.”</i>
		<i>“Exactly as I mentioned that00 in 3.5 years, many people, like my designation was changed but only in terms of label and not as in practice.”</i>

*Table 3: Example Coding*

After the coding of 4 interviews patterns started emerging and connection between different themes and sub-themes became clear. At the end, themes were reviewed to ensure that they are interlinked with each other and also answers the research questions and fulfills the research objectives. Coding was done manually. However, themes and sub-themes were managed through MS Excel and MS word. The themes with their sub-themes generated are reflected in the findings chapter.

**3.8 Measures of the Data**

For research to be strong, it is important to remove the biasness of researcher and participant. The strength and the base of qualitative data relies on four aspects which includes credibility, generalizability, transferability and conformability (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). To ensure the transferability and generalizability of the data strong connection of the aim of the research was build up with the results in terms of context (Hartley, 2004).

Credibility of the data was ensured by exchanging the initial transcriptions with the participants and by making changes as per their suggestions. Moreover, initial and final results were shared with the participants to ensure accurate interpretations of the data. This process reduced the researcher’s biasness (Patton, 1999). In addition, in-depth interviews were carried out with the participants, while noting their demographic details. This in turn increased the transferability of

the data in terms of contextual settings. Moreover, all the field notes, transcriptions, consent forms and audio recordings are saved in a password protected laptop for future references if needed.

### **3.9 Ethical Issues & Consideration**

Conducting this research was challenging since the differently abled persons are hard to access as they belong to the minority group at the workplace. They were concerned about their identity which they did not wish to reveal. This issue was addressed in the verbal consent form (see appendix A), which was designed and approved by the supervisor in order to deliver the purpose of the research to the participants and to ensure their confidentiality and anonymity. This created the trust and confidence of the participant on the researcher, and they gave interviews more comfortably.

Since the interviews were conducted online therefore the consent form was verbally explained to the participant before the interview. A 5 to 10 minutes call was made before each interview and the purpose of the research, use of the recordings, their choice to exit the interview at any time, and the identity to be hidden was explained briefly. After that, an interview appointment according to the feasibility of the participant was made. Finally, this was followed by an email sent to the participants to take their acknowledgement and willingness to become the part of the research.

The data was kept in the password secured laptop and password secured file so that no one other than the researcher could access the data. Apart from the researcher, only required data was shared with the supervisor and team who was involved in this research, and this was already being communicated to participants in the consent form. The data shared with supervisors and in the thesis was with maximum of, in a composite manner in which the information that can identify any participant's identification was presented in the form of codes (known to researcher only) (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

### **3.10 Summary of the Chapter**

This chapter has explained about the techniques and tools of the methodology used to conduct this study. It includes the philosophical approach along with the research approach to justify the methods used. It also highlights the participants and the criteria on which sample size was chosen among the population. It also includes the techniques of the analysis on which data was analyzed. Finally, it includes the ethical considerations which were taken into account for conducting this research.

## 4 Chapter Four: Findings and Analysis

### 4.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present the research findings from the data collected through online interviews. Findings reveal the issues and challenges faced by one of the groups of minorities – differently abled persons, working in the private, government and social sector organizations of Pakistan. This chapter also highlights about the existing organizational support systems present to facilitate and include the differently abled persons. In addition, the perception of differently abled persons related to their inclusion and factors that help in their inclusion were analyzed in different organizations of Pakistan. Below is the summarized table of the themes and sub-themes developed after the analysis:

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Sub Themes</b>
Stigmatization at the Workplace	Risk Taking Factor
	Hiring of Differently Abled Persons
	Lack of Recognition
	Lack of Acceptability
	Authority and Decision-Making Power
	Sympathetic element
Structural Issues	Building Infrastructure
	Misconception of Inclusion for differently abled persons
	Communication a Key to Inclusion
	Equal Employment Opportunity
	Reality of Quota System

Organizational support system for inclusive culture	Special Arrangements
	Open Door Policy
	Special Programs
	Inclusive Climate
Critical Success Factors	Self-Motivation is a Key
	Bridge between Parents, Education System & Employment System

## 4.2 Stigmatization at the Workplace

Stigma relates to the disapproval of a specific individual or group depending upon the perception of people that differentiates them from other members of the society. This stigmatization is commonly related to the person due to gender, cast, sex, age, health, socioeconomic class and intelligence. Individuals who are stigmatized usually feel demotivated due to being devalued in the society. Differently abled persons refer to a minority group of employees, who are often stigmatized.

Study participants highlight that people working in the organizations have their set perceptions about differently abled persons. Due to this reason, they face stigma at the workplace.

Below mentioned are some factors that differently abled persons have experienced as part of stigmatization at the workplace. According to them, this stigmatization is because of the pre-conceived notions the organizations have towards differently abled persons.

### 4.2.1 Risk Taking Factor

According to the study participants, organizations while inducting differently abled persons attach a symbol of more risk as compared to others present in the organizations. In view of management,



they are taking high risk while offering a job to differently abled persons, therefore, they should be compensated. Thus, majority of the participants highlighted that differently abled persons are compensated less as compared to others in the organization. The monetary compensation is further reduced for a differently abled female since she is doubly marginalized. Such a behavior is characteristic of local or small organizations where salary structures and grades are not well-defined. Participant M explains it like this:

*“Because males and females have different salary brackets, then within females normal and differently abled females and within males normal and different abled males have different salary brackets.”*

(Female, Software Quality Assurance Analyst)

In addition to the above he added:

*“Because they are hiring you, if they hire a normal person being a business man, they give a 10% risk on him. But being a business man if he knows about you being differently abled might have some limitations so they assume that you are on 25% risk. They consider you as 15% more risk for them. So, they pay you as low as they are putting you on risk as no one wants to bear loss.”*

(Female, Software Quality Assurance Analyst)

While having the risk factor in mind, the perception of organizations is that they feel threat while inducting differently abled persons and therefore consider them as a liability. Participant F explained it like this:

*“99.9% of the time, they have the threat that when we hire this person, or someone comes with us, or we hire them, then they don’t become a bone in our throats; they don’t become a liability for us.”*

(Male, professor and researcher in assistive technology)

*Participant E, added in the comment of participant F by saying:*

*“Even when hiring, they seem to have the opinion that he may not be able to work. If he ends up not working, we will have to start the hiring process again so it’s better to hire a person who we know would be able to work.”*

(Male, Officer Punjab Safe City)

A female participant explained this behavior as a consequence of having this risk factor in the mindset of organizations due to which they compensate them less as compared to other employees. Participant R stated that there was neither internal parity nor external parity in terms of compensation which I was getting. She explained it like this:

*“Even when I started at XYZ organization, it was low and I was not aware of it because I was not aware of salary brackets and the other reason was that I was not so concerned about the salary because I did not have any such need. But when I moved around in society, I came to know that I was getting too low in 3.5 years at my organization. Even in comparison with my peers at the same company”*

(Female, Designer)

#### 4.2.2 Hiring a Differently Abled Persons

As described in the above discussion, organizations feel taking more risk while inducting differently abled persons. Therefore, they feel reluctant to hire them. Organizations discourage such candidates to even apply for the job, as they already have a mindset about differently abled persons that they are not capable enough. Participant A shared her story of recruitment at private sector organization. She faced rejection of giving test even because of her disability.

*“So, at that point of time, when I want to apply for Management Trainee Program (MTO) program, I have to listen that you can’t do this as, test is difficult, so you better not give the test ... Before coming to this organization as well, here was also like this that I was opting for MTO but the management of that time did not let me appear in the test because they said no, there are many figures and all stuff so you cannot do it.”*

(Female, HR contact lead)

Participant E also mentioned his story when he applied for a job and was rejected for even interview for a job in a local organization.

*“One of the organizations shortlisted my CV because it was not mentioned on the CV that I am disabled. When I went inside, they asked me what had happened to my arm. I told them I am disabled. They said OK please wait outside. And they never even called me in for the interview and rejected without the interview.”*

(Male, Officer Punjab Safe City)

On the other hand, a participant who gave an interview and was hired in a multinational organization has a different view about this. She basically relates two circumstances. She said that she has an experience of giving interviews in both local and multinational organization and there is a hell of difference in between both type of organizations. She expressed her experience in following words:

*“We don’t believe in disability and I have no concern with it. And literally how I should feel when someone would call me disable, he had same expressions. He said it is none of my concern, you are hired at this stage this means you are capable of doing it. And I really liked it.”*

(Female, Software Quality Assurance Analyst)

However, the same participant had an experience of giving interviews at the local organization as well. It was all ok until the recruiter came to know about the disability of the participant and she faced this reaction:

*“As you are differently abled person so we really don’t know you can keep up the good work pace or not. Moreover, you won’t be able to work and our management will not like this so if there will be a chance, we will get back to you.”*

(Female, Software Quality Assurance Analyst)

Participant P also added her point of view by telling a story of her when she was rejected due to her disability, and she was asked to refer her any sister for the position. She said:

*“As a first experience, so, they like rejected me on the spot. They made the excuses like ‘There are stairs. How will you come up?’ and ‘If you have other sisters, refer them to us. Like we can’t hire you. How will you talk to someone? We have to impress our clients. You are not impressive.”*

(Female, Research Analyst)

### 4.2.3 Lack of Recognition

One of the major issues highlighted by majority of the participants was related to the lack of systems that encourages or that tells the individuals about their good performance. Participants highlighted that they were not encouraged or rewarded as the other people in organizations were encouraged at different levels. One of the participants – participant M explained that she gets to know about her good performance when she resigned:

*“In XYZ organization, when I decided to resign, I heard that you are among first 5 people in that are on high rated performance but I was told this, when I put my resignation and before that in 3.5 years, I did not get any acknowledgement which says that I was performing well.”*

(Female, Software Quality Assurance Analyst)

Another participant (R) added to the above point by mentioning that, there are mechanisms present in organizations to encourage employees at different levels for the contribution they are making in the achieving the goals of the organization, but that are majorly for the majority groups working in the organizations and organizations do favors in awarding those awards or certificates. She stated it like this:

*“I once was asked to my line manager that, like other employees get excellence awards or certificates, why did organization not give that to me? And this happens with all of the people around me who are differently abled.”*

(Female, Designer)

In addition to the above discussion, participant L said that he actually feels a valuable part of the organization when he decided to left the company because that was the time when company gave him a clear recognition and even offers a more salary than the other company offered to retain him, Participant E when asked about the situation when he feels valuable part of the company, he replied like this:

*“After resignation. Not in my employment period. When you resign, everyone gets queen or king you get to know your value. Then they are like okay we are giving you a counter offer. Okay we offer you equal to what other company is offering ... But where was this recognition when I was even working overtime and I used to sit late twice or thrice a week for like 3 to 4 hours ...”*

(Male, Officer Punjab Safe City)

In addition to the rewards participants have the perception that they were not financially growing as other employees in their organizations were. Point of view of Participant G about this is:

*“And then, like I don’t wanna say something wrong about XYZ organization or something but I felt that my growth, financial status and career was not going as I was hoping for it to. I kept waiting, and some issues come here and there which is why somethings that were meant to happen, did not.”*

(Male, Deputy Manager HR)

Participant H also added that she and her other differently abled colleagues were not getting the recognition as others. She added:

*“I have contradiction, a lot of contradiction with this and even if you talk to XYZ you will come to know that he spent like 13 to 14 years in ABC organization but he is not getting the designation as others. Every other employee is given recognition but it is differently abled employees who are not given recognition or showed career path”*

(Female, Assistant manager HR)

In contrast to the above-mentioned facts, one of the participants who was working in an MNC has a different point of view. He said that if he is performing well then there is no discrimination on the basis of their being differently abled. He (Participant L) stated that:

*“Whoever is performing, whoever is doing maybe an extra mile, regardless, of the disability, he’s being given tasks, and he’s being given promotions ... You can see it’s a marathon race, and everybody is starting from the starting point. There is no barrier in getting you promoted or you are not discriminated because of your disability.”*

(Male, Manager Marketing)

#### **4.2.4 Lack of Acceptability**

Another challenge stated by another participant was of the acceptability. Like when he joined the organization her team was not as welcoming, and he was given that job role which usually makes no difference on the team and organizational performance. He has to face this issue for a year until his job role was changed during the restructuring of the department. According to him:

*“And what my role was in OD (Organizational Development) that was the least. When I was in OD I was not being considered as part of that organization because they were used to give me such type of work which ultimately caused no impact on organization.”*

(Male, Customer Service Officer)

The type of work he was given was not contributing into the progress of company. Department used to give him data entry tasks which were not even required. In addition to this Participant R added by saying that people always show a weird reaction to differently abled persons as:

*“By the grace of God, the number of jobs I have done have always been up to merit I will once again talk about the behavior of people, they don’t accept. I will again say the phrase: ‘Where did she come from?’ This their reaction”*

(Female, Designer)

Same situation was described by Participant P and she said that foreigners are better than us because they value differently abled persons although their religion does not teach them this:

*“I live in Pakistan on Islamic basis,’ but the Islam that has been taught to us, we don’t implement it here. We don’t give people access. We don’t even accept differently abled persons. So, this acceptance is given to us by foreigners, whose religion does not have it. Which is also not in their mandate. But actually, they have a human right law which they follow.”*

(Female, Research Analyst)



People do not have such kind of go to acceptance for differently abled persons and even organizations do not have such training or awareness sessions in order to increase the acceptability factor of differently abled persons. Participant M said that:

*“Even though XYZ organization has a separate department of professional development and training but no such sessions are there. Okay we are categorizing differently abled person every time as a differently abled but we are not arranging sessions for their acceptance in society.”*

(Female, Software Quality Assurance Analyst)

Participant O added that even there are not any kind of simple counselling sessions:

*“Like ‘this guy has talent. He can do it. Okay, he takes time to learn these things and maybe somethings are not up to the mark at that level.’ So, these things are definitely felt and there is no such counseling of this in organizations.”*

(Male, Assistant Manager HR)

#### **4.2.5 Authority and Decision-Making Power**

Decision making power comes naturally with the job role and experience. But, in case of differently abled persons participants mentioned that they generally feel lack of trust level from the organizations when they hire a differently abled person specifically fresh graduate or with less experience. When the interviewer asked Participant I about his authority of decision making and risk taking he answered like this:

*“No, No. My line manager gives me direction on which I operate and then empowers me to keep making those directives as per his instructions. And engagement with stakeholders on those regards, so I am empowered on the directors of my line manager.”*

(Male, Open Mind Trainee-Digital)

Participant F added that even though his designation was changed in his tenure at an organization but it was just a label. He said that:

*“Exactly as I mentioned that in 3.5 years, many people, like my designation was changed but only in terms of label and not as in practice.”*

(Male, professor and researcher in assistive technology)

Participant N added that, no doubt the responsibilities, authority and decision-making power increase with the passage of time with experience but change of designation in true sense does not changes. As she explained:

*“One of my colleagues has 13 years of experience, and she got the designation of associate project manager at software quality assurance but she is not leading on official notes. Because she is a wheel chaired person. And they just gave her the responsibility on unofficial notes. Means it is nowhere with your name that you are leading certain thing. You are just managing 2 or 3 people.”*

(Female, Business Analyst)

According to one of the Participants – Participant L, this experience factor is necessary because it let you know about the company in detail as he explained

*“Now it is your strategic mindset; how you manage your team, how you get the work done within their described SOPs and you know, the policies of the companies, how effectively you can convince other people. Categorically, it is more to do with what your job experience is, if you have the experience of handling operations, you know how your company’s operations run;”*

(Male, Supply Chain Specialist)

And participant K added in the above point of view that as soon as experience of the person increases then organization start trusting you and your capabilities more and that is the time, they start giving you critical responsibilities. But there is no doubt that organizations take more time to start trusting differently abled as compare to other employees in the organizations. He explained:

*“I am looking after all our key customers. You do understand about key account customers. These customers are very important, high image, high financial commitment customers so just giving you example McDonald, Metro, Pakistan Railways, Daewoo, different big organizations, they are directly working with my department. I am the lead from my company side.”*

(Male, Supply Chain Specialist)

#### **4.2.6 Sympathetic element**

Another factor of stigmatization for differently abled persons highlighted by participant includes the sympathy element the organizations and employees have for them. Although this is weird and it is out of natural thing for differently abled persons but people do show that they are sympathetic which is irritating for the differently abled persons. As, Participant G said:

*“Look, the different disable person, whoever it is with either a major or a minor level of disability, the thing that happens to the poor person is that he never feels normal. If he wants to feel normal, then he has to mentally do a lot of effort. The attitude of coworkers, is very nice but at times, from their reactions, you see some type of sympathy from them ...”*

(Male, Deputy Manager HR)

Participant H also pointed out this factor which should be not according to her as she said:

*“The element that I felt which was a bit strange, maybe it was me, but people show sympathy towards you more, rather than trying to help you out. So, they become more sympathetic like you get a helpless feeling like this and that.”*

(Female, Assistant manager HR)

The same thing was explained by Participant A as she said that people show extra sympathy as they are feeling sorry to me, which is quite irritating for me. This somehow shows that differently abled persons are somehow less than them which should not be like this. As she said:

*“Like they said they try to do an extra mile from which the feeling of sympathy is felt more, rather than helping out, that this person is helping me but it feels more like they feel sorry for us.”*

(Female, HR contact lead)

However, this thing was less observed in an MNC as MNC is already working with the different people and their level of acceptability with their level of thinking is quite different from the employees working in the local organization. As participant I said that:

*“There is no element of sympathy at all because of the MNC and their international standards they are following for their labor law. And there is a strong code of conduct of the company that we cannot be disrespectful for any employee, rather he is our direct employee or any third-party employee or anybody at our premises ... Verbally, physically, there is zero tolerance in this.”*

(Male, Open Mind Trainee-Digital)

### **4.3 Structural Issues**

Many of the participants raised the concerns about the structural issues of the organizations in which there comes some building issues and some issues that are related to the functional issues of the organizations in which the organizations are operating, which actually affects the inclusion of the differently abled persons in the organizations.

#### **4.3.1 Building Infrastructure**

Building Infrastructure of any organizations matters a lot for the inclusion of differently abled persons as it helps the differently abled persons to move easily around and basically the building is accessible to them. And there are few organizations in Pakistan mainly the MNCs who have in cooperated this thing and have made the building accessible for the wheel chair users. Participant J explained that if building has no such infrastructure, then unfortunately differently able persons cannot even think to apply over there for a job. He said that:

*“The fundamental right of the person with disability is to have the accessible buildings, right? So, if any given building is accessible which wheelchair user can access so the first barrier is crossed. So, if that building gets accessible so let’s say if in that building there are 30 companies particularly working in that building so 30 companies are accessible....”*

(Male, Government Teacher)

Moreover, Participant P also added that organizations should take in account this thing and usually MNCs or big organizations are in cooperating this accessibility factor. As, not all Pakistani organizations ensure that so this also becomes a hurdle for differently abled persons because they can't switch for their better career or growth due to building inaccessibility. She said that:

*“In XYZ organization or large sector companies, for wheel chaired persons, there are good infrastructure related changes, like whenever they modify the building or have another department, they make a slab for them. Because they know they have differently abled people. Though they are 5 or 6 but they are there. This is a good thing but this is also a hurdle for those people as they can't switch companies frequently. Wheel chaired persons are really concerned when moving from one company to another because of company's infrastructure.”*

(Female, Research Analyst)

Participant K also insisted upon the necessity of the building accessible and explained that his organization done that in the past recent years. He stated:

*“As I had given you an example, three, four years back, XYZ organization ensured the accessibility. Ramps were installed, bathrooms were there, that people can easily access. That was the initiative because the infrastructure was changed and it is still there.”*

(Male, Supply Chain Specialist)

### 4.3.2 Misconception of Inclusion for differently abled persons

Another challenge stated by another participant was about the misconception of the word inclusion for differently abled person within the organization specifically in the local organization as she mentioned that here in our organization there are on-going discussions about diversity and inclusion. HR Professionals and Management use the word inclusion in different organizational events and on different platforms but unfortunately the definition of inclusion is different for themselves. She stated it like this:

*“There OD is like they have taken different initiatives from program. Cultural transformation is there, and they have vision of diversity and inclusion in which what I am looking is only women empowerment and there is nothing apart from it. What they think from inclusion is that male and female both should get the equal opportunity to get to the senior position.”*

(Female, HR contact lead)

Another participant – B, added his point of view by saying that our organization arranged employee engagement survey to have a look on the engagement ratio from the employee perspective, but the definition written for inclusion and diversity was totally different. It did not accommodate the overall diverse workforce. He stated it like this:

*“I was amazed to see the questions related to diversity and inclusion because in survey they asked: “Is the organization open to diverse and culture workforce?” and in bracket they have mentioned that: “Diversity and inclusion includes people from two genders male and female, from different religion, and race”. But they didn’t mention anything about differently abled persons.”*

(Male, Business Desk Officer)

### 4.3.3 Communication a Key to Inclusion

One of the functional challenges that was raised by the participants was about the communication issue. According to Participant I organizations hire the differently abled persons through special programs they launch but what happens is that the inclusion is only done who is proactive in nature and asks for work and is clearer about the communication. He said that:

*“Are they willing to ask for work and more because here what is happening is that unless you don’t ask for work, they don’t give which is generally to what is applicable all around. The idea of empowerment is only if individuals are responsive in that sense, if they ask for work, if they ask to be included. So, that is where that expectation needs to be highlighted from the get go.”*

(Male, Open Mind Trainee-Digital)

In addition to it, another participant added his point of view by saying that if this should be the expectation then that should be clear from first day. It should not be like a puzzle. Participant N said:

*“It is premised on the fact that the employers or the onboarding team needs to set this expectation that there can only be progress if one asks for it. There can only be work related integration when one asks for it so that expectations need to be set from the get go which is not, because of which there are some delays in inclusion. How fast the inclusion happens that is dependent upon the expectation but it needs to be communicated fairly ...”*

(Female, Business Analyst)



Another participant, participant E explained his experience of working in a Turkish company where there was a translator to communicate his talks with the boss because of the language barrier. And according to him it was a worst experience as he didn't feel to be the part of the organization at all and that translator actually differentiates him on base of his disability due to which eventually, he left the job.

*"I asked him once that 'boss speaks a few words, but you add 10 concerns of your own into the translation', to which he replied 'I just translated what he said.' For us the translators are the officers, because we are to deal with them. If we say something, and they convey it forward incorrectly, then we face the consequences ... Obviously, the boss spoke Turkish so we didn't understand a single word."*

(Male, Officer Punjab Safe City)

So, from this we can say the communication and expectations are important for the differently abled to feel included in the organization. Otherwise, they would feel as a left-over person.

#### **4.3.4 Equal Employment Opportunity**

Another challenge highlighted by the participants for the local and small organizations is that organizations do have slogans of equal employment employer but these are just labels and organizations do not put an extra effort to hire or include those people. Participant B said that:

*"Exactly, some accusations by society, some by company policies and some ... okay, so by giving labels like equal employment opportunities we conceal it that we are equal employment company like XYZ organization has a logo as well that we provide equal employment to females as well. These are just logos that XYZ company employees are XYZ family, we are an equal employer."*

(Male, Business Desk Officer)

But another participant clarifies this point by saying that he has experienced the situation for both local and MNC and MNC says that it is an equal employment opportunity so it means for them.

As participant K said:

*“Again, I would say it’s an equal opportunity organization. Anyone can apply and no one will be discouraged on part of it that he is disable.”*

(Male, Supply Chain Specialist)

#### **4.3.5 Reality of Quota System**

Talking about the policies of the organizations then there seems a little gap between policy and practice. As a part of labor law that organizations should have 3% of differently abled persons working. Organizations are not following it rigorously and in true manner. One of the participants (A) added that mostly what organization do is that they induct 3% of differently abled persons but try to induct people with minor disabilities. She explained it like this:

*“Yes, it is there but what organization do is if I tell you that for example, they take in cases with very minor disability for example there is a little crack in finger they will hire that person, so this is how they complete their 3 % quota.”*

(Female, HR contact lead)

Participant O also added in the above discussion by saying:

*“There is no acceptance of individuals so, people are reluctant to hire them in their companies. Even if they apply the 3% quota, then they would try to hire someone who does not has major disability. So, these are our policies because there is no monitoring.”*

(Male, Assistant Manager HR)

In addition to wrong interpretation of the quota as explained above, one participant added that organizations take wrong interpretation of induction as well as they just advertise and see if any differently abled person is coming on merit, they will hire that person otherwise they don't make an extra effort. Participant N explained:

*“That is for sure that MNCs are moving towards it but our local companies are not moving towards it that they are specifically launching a program and inducting differently abled persons. Also, the small companies or the other companies, they don't understand what a quota ...?”*

(Female, Business Analyst)

One more issue raised to the reality of quota system is that many of the people with no certification of differently abled person take seats of the quota designated for differently abled person within the organization. Participant J said:

*“Over here in our society, many misfit people are fit in everywhere. This is very universal. If you look into my quota, in government of private sector, many people are sitting without certification and such. Then, tell me where do we go? We have to fight a lot and we have to make people realize in interviews, or to tell the client in a normal routine that give work to us, we will give it back to you.”*

(Male, Government Teacher)

#### **4.4 Organizational support system for inclusive culture**

Organizational support systems are those support systems that are built for the differently abled persons to include in the organizations by providing them the support.

##### **4.4.1 Special Arrangements**

Local organizations of Pakistan have some restrictions regarding inducting differently abled persons but once they take in differently abled person then environment slowly gets inclusive for them. And then if differently abled require some special arrangement, they do that to include them. Like participant A added that although, organization A was reluctant to hire her but when she gets in, organization arrange special arrangements for her. According to her.

*“As soon as I get recruited, organization arranged a female attendant for me. She is the one who specifically accompany me and do all my chores. If I have to go to washroom or for lunch or anywhere else within the organization, she takes me there. Apart from it, there is a tape type thing on floors on which when you put your foot you get to know about the path you have to follow. So, you can say that the places which are like more to go places of mine they have placed the tapes over there so that I do not get detract from itself. In case if attendant is not there then mostly what I do is I follow that tape and my mostly mobility is like that. Third specific thing was that organization arrange special pick & drop facility for me when my home driver is not available so if I let them know that I have issue of travelling today they accommodate me from my home to office and from office to home.”*

(Female, HR contact lead)

In addition to it Participant C added that, she was specifically allowed to work from home as:

*“I am suffering from Frederick Ataxia, due to which organization has given me the facility of working from home. I work one day from office and work one day from home and this was before COVID-19 time as well.”*

(Female, Frederick Ataxia)

Similarly, participant P added that for wheel chair persons an extra care was provided by the organization:

*“Now a maid or a lady who is designated to help you out to take your wheelchair towards parking or washroom if you are facing difficulty. So, these are the things that are extra facilities given by XYZ organization which is the reason that a lot of wheel chaired employees are working there for many years like more than 10 plus. I know 4 to 5 people who are working there for like 10 to 15 years.”*

(Female, Research Analyst)

Another participant – participant J added that during the COVID-19 pandemic times differently abled persons were given extra leverage and they were supported in manner that they were given special leaves to stay home to stay safe. He said:

*“Disabled were supported a lot during corona, and I will praise them for it. The disabled used to get special leaves.”*

(Male, Government Teacher)

Participant D also added and said that in their organization it also happened that differently abled get extra facilities in terms of leaves in COVID-19 pandemic time.

*“Where we were to be given an off day after 5 working days, they would give 2 off days, or give five to ten days of leave directly. When the government announced the strength to be reduced, many disabled people got up to a month of paid leaves.”*

(Male, customer service officer)

In terms of extra facility for the laptop or extra software if someone needed then he is provided with that because organizations do take care of the employees. As, participant I added:

*“So, I wanted a screen because the laptop they gave me has a very small screen, so I needed a larger screen to perform my tasks easily so that was provided to me. Transport is provided from the home to office ... There were individuals who were from deaf community so they were aided with sign interpreters for them. All of these things are provided from organization.”*

(Male, Open Mind Trainee-Digital)

Another participant (H) added that organizations do provide extra facilities where they can but it really depends upon the demand of the differently abled person although this should be done automatically without any hesitation or delay, and for sure for local organizations these things are not small things to arrange. She said:

*“Differently abled person has to achieve it after a lot of struggles and fights, extra facilities are not like the ones that you should have to fight for when everyone can see.”*

(Female, Assistant manager HR)

#### 4.4.2 Open Door Policy

Open door policy refers to the communication tool which let the doors of the managers open in order to encourage the openness and transparency. One of the best things that organizations have it, is of open-door policy which let the differently abled persons to be open with their line managers. As participant B said:

*“If he’s passing by, he talks to me. If we are standing, we talk. There is no need for an appointment.”*

(Male, business desk officer)

Same case was defined by participant C as she explained that she doesn’t have to take any kind of appointment from anyone.

*“Well, my co-workers, whether they are junior or senior, are very supportive. All the time. Whenever I need help, they are there, that’s for sure. If I need any help from my HR side, yes, they are there. They provide if I need any, you know, out of the box sick leave, casual leave. In short, I don’t need to take any kind of appointment, I just jump in share whatever is in my mind.”*

(Female, Coordinator)

#### 4.4.3 Special Programs

Some organizations specially MNCs have set special programs for the induction of differently abled persons in the organizations. One of the organizations have a program named as “Karo Mumkin Program” which was specially designed to hire and to include differently abled persons.

As per Participant Q:

*“Then, if you come privately, there are some programs, for example, there was a program “Karo Mumkin” by XYZ Organization which was specifically for the special disable persons to hire them in the quota. Even I was hired back in 2011.*

(Male, District Sales Manager)

One more participant – participant L added that he was also hired by an MNC through their special program named as Open Mind Trainee Program. They run this program every year to induct differently abled persons from all across Pakistan. He said that:

*“I applied in XYZ organization specifically in this program as they are considering the idea of inclusion, and this was my first choice. So, it was a contractual job that has a probation period of 3 months and after that on performance basis, you are selected and you go with the same job title the whole year. So, it’s a contractual of a year engagement. And after that if it shall happen like if XYZ has a position and there is a requirement then you can apply for that position. Otherwise, you already have an experience of a year so you can push yourself further into the market with a good name.”*

(Male, Manager Marketing)

But, on the other hand these types of special programs are only arranged in MNCs. And not every organization in Pakistan is doing this. Some organizations have a slogan of equal employment opportunity and some just do the recruitment and if someone comes during that recruitment who is differently abled then he/ she is given a chance otherwise there are no such special arrangements.

*“So, I would say that in organizations like XYZ and even ABC, they don’t promote or advertise like ‘we need different disable persons in these positions. We’ll make a requirement’ or something*



*like that. But if they are hiring for a random position ... and if they find someone who has a little bit of issue, and he is still talented and feel they can work somewhere, then I don't think this thing comes but they still give a chance."*

(Male, Deputy Manager HR)

One participant also added in the comment of the above participant. As, he said that local organizations do not have such special programs for the inclusion of differently abled persons but yes, they give a chance if anyone comes, but on the other hand they also see the level of disability the person is having in terms of how much special arrangement does organization has to make for the induction of that person. Participant O said that:

*"Just like that, if I talk about Samad, like when we come back to your question, there is no special initiative and there is no inclination. But if they are hiring randomly and a resource like this comes, and they feel that this person should get a chance, then they do induct but obviously the level of disability is also overseen. If someone is at a major level, then the organizations feel reluctant."*

(Male, Assistant Manager HR)

One of the participants – participant Q explained the reason of organizations not paying attention towards such programs or inclusion of differently abled persons as much. He said that:

*"Both organizations where I worked, even XYZ has the same problem. Small operational glitches are so many that whichever manager is sitting, whether of admin or HR, they have to do it together. If you want to hire a disable person, the infrastructural, operational support you require is needed from the admin, which many times is not available."*

(Male, District Sales Manager)

#### 4.4.4 Inclusive Climate

Inclusive workplace is the one creating an inclusive climate where employees from all backgrounds can participate to their full potential. In this study, below are some factors which organizations ensure to create an inclusive climate for differently abled persons. Participant Q, when asked about any practice organization is practicing for the inclusion of differently abled person. He said that her organization is having buddy system, in which an existing employee is attached with the new inducted differently abled person. He said:

*“We make sure we make them buddies, as with the people with disabilities that we have hired. There is a rule in companies, like in MNC we were introduced to the buddy system. Like you are a newcomer and you don’t have any idea, there are emergency protocols for them like to get evacuation. You just have to make sure that person is quick and their buddy is with them”*

(Male, District Sales Manager)

One other participant also pointed out this buddy system. Participant K said that:

*“So, whenever there is an employee hired by the company, so there is a buddy. Buddy means there is already another employee and he/she is the buddy of a new employee. So, they are connected, so they can come and talk to each other. And you know, they can hang out within the company during their free time.”*

(Male, Supply Chain Specialist)

In addition to the buddy system almost every participant highlighted the support of their line managers as to be the biggest in terms of their inclusion in the organization. They said that line

managers if are good, they feel that they can achieve anything without any obstacle within the organization. Participant E said that:

*“But they are very supportive. If I tell them that I can’t do the task and they should give it to someone else, they don’t force the task on me and gladly cooperate. Like some departments require swift response and typing speed, where they are dealing with calls from 15 (police), I work there less. So, they give me more time in departments where I am more productive.”*

(Male, Officer Punjab Safe City)

Same kind of support level was defined by participant F as he stated:

*“If I am not feeling well health-wise, for example, I was suffering with the coronavirus, I simply tell my manager, talked to my HR and they told me to take rests, to take as many leaves as you want, get it settled and then join back to work.”*

(Male, professor and researcher in assistive technology)

Support is usually from line manager end rather than having it from organizational level. As, most of the organizations are not creating the specific opportunities for differently abled persons like it’s hard to get job but once you get in the organization it mostly depends on the line manager attitude that how is he/she reacting. One of the participants concluded it like this that even though I joined organization ABC in Organizational development department, but line manager and teammates were not as welcoming as they were to other members, and they let me do work which was not as critical as it should be. So, after a year on the CEO recommendation I was shifted to HR operations team in which now I am doing all the critical tasks along with the recruitment

process and this is all because of the support of my current line manager. She quoted an event about this which is as follows:

*“Once I came to know about a matter that some people are saying that participant A should not sit within the interview. So, I asked why it is, to which they replied that she cannot have good judgmental skills. How she can notice body language ... so, she is not good fit for the interview panel. After this event my boss supported me and now, I do the interview, select the candidate, fill the evaluation form and my boss just sign the interview evaluation form by trusting me.”*

(Female, HR contact lead)

Moreover, support system from colleagues with which everyone is working is also very important and majority of the participants indicated that their colleagues are really supportive and they can share whatever they want. Participant B said that:

*“So, a person needs someone to take it out on like ‘I am getting frustrated and my mind is being occupied so I should talk to someone.’ There are two very close friends to me at the workplace and I share with them whatever I want.”*

(Male, Business Desk Officer)

Participant C also added and said that:

*“The employee environment here is very friendly and everyone is very nice and helpful.”*

(Female, Frederick Ataxia)

Apart from it, one participant – participant G also added that he really felt inclusive when he was given a chance to host a town hall. He said that

*“One time when I went to UAE, we conducted a town hall. In that, I hosted that event. That definitely made me feel like I had been given a chance like ‘You should come and-’ like how HR people host in town halls, so that was definitely a point. Other than that, at the start of my career, the organization committee where you coordinate and perform the daily activities, they were giving us, then in that they called all of the team and gave appreciation. So, these types of events happened in organization XYZ where you feel ‘Yes, they gave me a chance’.”*

(Male, Deputy Manager HR)

## **4.5 Critical Success Factors**

Critical success factors are related to the motivational factors that drives differently abled persons to gain success and achieve the mission of the life. It basically helps the differently abled persons to achieve the required place of themselves within the organizations. Below mentioned success factors have been come in light after the discussion with differently abled persons.

### **4.5.1 Self-Motivation is a Key**

One of the major success factors highlighted by almost every participant is of self-motivation. According to the participants this is the factor which keeps the differently abled person motivated and helps in the inclusion of the person at the workplace. Because as a differently abled person sometimes they themselves feel somehow demotivated or lesser than anyone but this factor keeps them fresh and enthusiastic towards life ultimately breaking down all the hurdles. Participant Q said:

*“I got internship during studies and it was converted to a job. It is not all about my efforts, there is luck as well but it is about my belief. I generally have this habit that I never say no to anything before inquiring each and everything about that organization or anything ... How can I say that something is impossible without even doing it?”*

(Male, District Sales Manager)

Participant N also added in Participant Q point of view by saying:

*“If you work hard on your own, you’ll exceed. What can I say? I just believe that it is up to the person how he chooses to deal with things. Rest is all up to how much of a hard worker he is.”*

(Female, Business Analyst)

Participant H also said that courage, ambition for an individual is most important. She said:

*“Therefore, this comes to the fight of each individual that the person who is facing this, how much motivated he is? How much confidence they have? How much courageous he is”*

(Female, Assistant manager HR)

Participant R added that her biggest motivation is herself because I have seen much in my life and this is the reason what I can do for myself, no one else can do or think. She said:

*“The biggest motivation we are ourselves. My motivation is myself. My time and situations taught me a lot, told me a lot. So, it does not concern me that who thinks what of me, who does what for me or does not. What I can do for myself and will do is what matters to me. What I can do to help others by being productive, that is also important right now.”*

(Female, Designer)

Participant O said by adding that no doubt there are negative people who try to spread negativity but this should be us who should take this negativity as a challenge and convert it into positivity.

He said:

*“So, if because of negative people, you take it as a challenge then it is good or if you feel depressed then it ruins your life. If you are negative yourself, you can't be happy. It is on you whether to be positive or negative.”*

(Male, Assistant Manager HR)

#### **4.5.2 Bridge between Parents, Education System & Employment System**

According to the participants, there should be a bridge between parents, universities, and organizations. As, organizations if not hiring differently abled persons, then it is not only their fault. All over in Pakistan, there is a concept of special schools. People with differently abled bodies go there and have education which automatically shatter their confidence as they are not competing with the normal students. Special schools in Pakistan ask them to have simple studies or stitching courses which restrict them to think out of the box. So where special schools are increasing the inclusion of differently abled persons, they are decreasing the inclusion at the same time in other manner. Limited students who are differently abled get to colleges and universities and at the end there are no such programs specifically in the local organizations of Pakistan to accommodate or welcome differently abled persons open heartedly. One of the interviewees explained it like this:

*“So basically, if students will come in universities, then employers will be able to trace them but if differently abled persons are not studying from universities, then how employers can move forward. And why such ratio not coming I would say that at starting point the issue is in special school. I have never been to special school my education is throughout through normal school. So, what special school does is they put in your mind from starting that you are not normal, and your confidence get shattered at very that point of time. They say that world out there is very brutal and cruel, and you cannot compete with them, so this thing needs to be eliminated.”*

(Male, customer services officer)

Participant C added into it and said:

*“More than half of our population remained in special school so what special school do is they move them towards stitching singing and wrap up with it ... So, if these things get controlled in starting, issues can be resolved. So, basically if inclusion starts from basic level school level, then that whole lot will go towards colleges and then universities and then towards employment.”*

(Female, Frederick Ataxia)

Participant A also shared her thoughts and said that special school system should be eradicated as it has students from minor to major disability so if a student with minor disability is sitting there it means he/she has to also keep up the same pace as with the one who is having major disability.

This thing squeezes the mind as she said:

*“If your parents put you through that path since beginning, you won't be able to groom. Why? Because schools for differently abled people have every kind of child. From minor fault in finger to mentally retarded with Down's syndrome everyone is there ...if we are putting every child who*



*is minor in disability in special schools, we are making him grow in a setup where limited skill set is taught ... It's just like you are restraining a child yourself. It's like you are fixing something in a box and it can't grow even if it wants to..."*

(Female, HR contact lead)

Participant L also added that special education system actually shatters the confidence of the child at the start. And if child don't learn how to survive in the society, then it becomes his/her fault because society will not move to include the person, it is the person who has to ultimately make the efforts. He said that:

*"My good luck was that I studied in an inclusive school like a normal school where everyone studied. So, I did not have much idea about this special education school. But now that I look at it, there's big difference. If I had gone to a special school, I wouldn't have gone to college because there are no colleges for special children. Not even universities. Then, I would have lost my confidence level at the start..."*

(Male, Manager Marketing)

#### **4.6 Summary of the Chapter**

This study was conducted to analyze the challenges differently abled persons are facing at the workplace, HR initiatives for the inclusion of differently baled persons and the perception of differently baled persons about their inclusion at the workplace. This resulted in a stance that differently abled persons face stigmatization at the workplace because of the fact of pre-conceived notions of the employers about the differently abled persons. Differently abled persons need to put extra efforts for their acceptability and developing trust within the organization however,

organizations are also taking steps towards their inclusion. The major concern which was highlighted was that being a third world country there is a much difference in terms of inclusion of differently abled persons in MNCs, local and government organizations. We found that although organizational support system including special arrangements, open door policy, supportive colleagues and line managers are there for the inclusion of differently abled persons but they also face structural and functional issues including building infrastructure, misconception of the inclusion word, reality of quota system at the workplace. The interesting factor of critical success factors was also highlighted as participants feel that self-motivation and a bridge between parents, education and employment system is important as a first step for the inclusion.

## **5 Chapter Five: Discussion**

### **5.1 Introduction**

The aim of this chapter is to present the analysis based on the findings chapter and make the important contribution in the growing literature of inclusion and professional lives of differently abled persons. The main objective of this study was to find out about the perception of inclusivity of differently abled persons in the organizations. However, study also highlights about the challenges and structural issues differently abled persons are facing in the organizations, organizational support system present in organizations and critical success factors as per the participants for increasing the inclusivity of differently abled persons in the organizations. Data for this research was collected through online interviews to answer the following research questions

- Which are the challenges that differently abled persons face in organizations and why?
- Which are the practices/ organizational support system that organizations implement to enhance the inclusion of differently abled persons and how are they implemented?
- How do managers and non-managers from differently abled persons perceive the HR practices and Organizational support systems to influence their inclusion in the organization?

The subsequent sections of this chapter analyzed all the key findings and discussed them in light of existing studies.

### **5.2 Overlapping concept of Diversity Management & Inclusion Management**

Diversity Management and Inclusion Management are two different concepts but they are considered as “old wine in new bottle” (Nkomo, 2014), as just renaming of the diversity management as of inclusion management (Shore et al., 2018). But, in reality they both are different

and in fact is a chain of development where the research started from banning the discrimination and having Fair Employment Practices Committee (Delton, 2007) to Affirmative action and then to compliance as a result of Equal Employment opportunity commission. After this it moved to diversity management and then to inclusion management (L. Mor Barak, Erica Leeanne et al., 2016). As per the findings analyzed after this research, it has been concluded that Pakistani organizations have an overlapping concept of diversity management and inclusion management with some misconceptions as well. As per the government, there should be a defined quota of differently abled persons in the organizations. But as a part of third world countries there is a lack of implementation as per the law (Gul, 2020) and either organizations not induct or try to induct the people with least disability so that they don't have to make as much special arrangements for inducting them. Legislations and policies are just words and there is huge gap in implementation (Gul, 2020). This is purely in local organizations. MNCs have some special programs for the induction of differently abled persons and for their inclusion as well. Local organizations induct the differently abled persons but eventually they lack the inclusion of them in different activities and overall, in the organization. Differently abled persons have to struggle by proving them as a valuable asset of the organizations and after that organizations start realizing their importance.

One more misconception is about the meaning of inclusion as many organizations define and feel inclusion is related to just women empowerment and still stuck in between the equal employment of men and women. However, they don't realize the fact that inclusion management is for all the minorities present in the society and organizations (L. Mor Barak, Erica Leeanne et al., 2016). Also, many organizations don't know the difference between the diversity and inclusion. They have a concept that if they have hired a person who is differently abled it means their job is done and they have covered diversity and inclusion. But, they should know the fact that diversity is just related to increase the representation of differently abled persons (Nkomo, 2014) by hiring them

and it can be mandated and legislated (Winters, 2014) however, inclusion management comes from voluntary actions by giving value to their contribution (Nkomo, 2014; Winters, 2014). Hence, findings suggest that organizations need to understand the fine line between diversity management and inclusion management and in order to maintain the high-performance work system organizations need to include differently abled persons rather than just hiring them.

### **5.3 Struggles of differently abled persons in the organizations**

Differently abled persons are differentiated and are not treated as normal persons within the society and the organizations. Organizations are reluctant to have differently abled persons as they feel they have to make special arrangements for them (Maini & Heera, 2019). As per the findings of this research, the biggest struggle faced by differently abled persons within the organizations of Pakistan is about the pre-conceived notions and perceptions about them in the mind of employer. As per the research findings, organizations and employers judge them on the basis of their physical appearance and being an Asian society, they have a pre-conceived perception that differently abled persons can be a liability to the organization and they have to do special arrangements to include them in the organizations. Although organizations should not make discrimination on the basis of the disability and physical appearance but unfortunately this is the reality of the society (Saleh, 2020). This pre-conceived notions are because of the link of differently abled persons with the minority group of employees and are considered as stigmatized, oppressed and of low-status (Blanz et al., 1995). Differently abled persons are the part of the minorities group because they are less in number (Seyranian et al., 2008).

Although there is a difference between MNC and local organizations as MNC's have more acceptability factor towards the differently abled persons but local organizations still feel reluctant in hiring and accepting the differently abled persons. As per the participants, being a fresh

graduate, they have a burden on their mind to think about their career but being a differently abled fresh graduate there is an additional burden as, employers start looking towards the disability rather than looking upon the resume. This attitude of other persons towards differently abled persons needs to be changed (Tait & Purdie, 2000). Employers feel reluctant because they have a feeling that, differently abled persons can become the bone of their throats and there is a liability factor attached with it. People show their sympathy which at times become irritating to the differently abled persons because of the feeling that why can't they be treated as a normal person (Vashishth et al., 2019).

Similarly, being in an Asian society wheel chair is also not considerable and is considered a sin. Most of the organization's infrastructure is not designed in a way that differently abled persons have access to even reach the building. This is a very astonishing factor as organizations have restricted the accessibility of the building even for the differently abled persons. Such infrastructural accessibility is there in MNCs but in local organizations, it is not there. According to the participants some organizations who are having the ramps for wheel chair persons they also have a thing in their minds that differently abled persons now cannot switch to other organizations because of physical accessibility issues and so they exploit their rights in terms of promotions, work burden, lack of recognition and so on and so forth. so, in a nutshell differently abled persons who are facing discrimination is not because of the disability but because of the cultural and environmental barriers (Halder et al., 2017). And these cultural and environmental barriers are known as disability means not letting any individual to perform the tasks as per the optimal distinctiveness theory. Organizations not making the ramps or not providing the opportunities because of the physical appearance of differently abled persons results in the social exclusion and oppression (Shakespeare, 2006; Terzi, 2004).

According to the participants these pre-conceived notions in the mind of the employer is because of the fact that society discriminate the differently abled persons from the day start. A child who is differently abled is send to the special school where he/she do not interact with the normal life. Special school system does not build up the confidence rather they shatter the confidence and children mostly do not get the higher education after studying from special school system. Inclusive education is necessary for making the environment inclusive overall (Lindsay, 2003) and this will create a bridge between parents, schools and employment system.

#### **5.4 Inclusion Constructs**

Inclusion constructs are those measures which tell about the extent of inclusion within the organization and these constructs include workgroup inclusion, leader inclusion, perceived organizational inclusion, organizational inclusion practices and inclusive climate (Shore et al., 2018).

Workgroup inclusion is the perception of differently abled person about giving value to their uniqueness and belongingness within the organization (Shore et al., 2011). Brewer's optimal distinctiveness theory has defined the inclusion as the degree to which the minority individual which in this case is differently abled person perceives himself/herself unique and identical within the group (Leonardelli et al., 2010). Now as per the participants, organizations have not reached to the level of inclusion in which they are high on both uniqueness and belongingness but the pendulum fluctuates between assimilation and differentiation. Some organizations tend to be high on valuing uniqueness and some are high in valuing the belongingness. As, per the discussion with participants, organizations when hire a differently abled person then people around them treat as they have come from a different world and there comes a sympathy element as well but, their uniqueness is not questioned however, some organizations value them when the differently abled

persons adopt to their culture an environment which means when they try to induct people with least disability meaning suppressing their uniqueness (Shore et al., 2011).

Next comes the leader inclusion which means creating a comfortable environment from the immediate line manager (Cottrill, Lopez, & Hoffman, 2014a). As per the participants, once the differently abled person is hired, in most of the cases line managers within the organizations are supportive and they have the open-door policy because of which they can go to them any time for discussing the challenges, initiatives with them. Line managers give the opportunity to differently abled persons for different projects and develop and groom them professionally.

Next construct is about the perceived organizational inclusion which is defined as the perception of differently abled persons about their inclusion-exclusion factor within the organization (Avery et al., 2008). Overall, differently abled persons who are working in the organizations think their inclusion is at a very basic level. The elements on which their perception is based on, are “involvement in work-groups, participation in decision making process, access to information and resources, diversity and organizational culture” (Mor-Barak & Cherin, 1998; Michàl E Mor Barak, 2000). MNCs in Pakistan are working on all the above-mentioned elements. They are having different programs exclusively for the induction of differently abled persons such as “Karo-Mumkin Program”, “Open Mind Trainee Program”. They also give decision making power within the scope of work of differently abled persons and also consider special arrangements for them. But local organizations are firstly reluctant to hire differently abled persons and also if they hire, they give them the power slowly. But yes, if they hire a differently abled person then they make special arrangements in order to accommodate them such as special assistant for them, special screens, work from home and transportation facility.



Differently abled persons also think that these special arrangements and power comes from the self-motivation of individual. As, organizations specifically local are not as much welcoming but the critical thing which is important for the individual is the self-motivation. Differently abled persons who have self-confidence and stay firm on their goals are the ones who achieve the equal level as compare to majority groups in the organizations (Periasamy, 2019).

The next construct of inclusion is the organizational inclusion practices. This is related to the policies and practices that organizations and HR is following in order to increase the inclusion of differently abled persons (Shore et al., 2018). MNCs in Pakistan are developing the diverse talent and are hiring the differently abled persons (L. R. Offerman & T. E. Basford, 2014). Some of the organizations value and give rewards to the contribution differently abled persons make at the workplace but some organizations do not value the contribution and they actually exploit the differently abled persons as they know, most of the organizations in Pakistan are not welcoming towards differently abled persons and so they can't get job anywhere else. Moreover, due to the lack of disability-friendly working environment (Kalita, Koch, & Borah, 2020) differently abled persons stay long and serve more as compare to "able-bodied" employees at one workplace because they have a perception in their mind that it will take long for them to adjust in the other culture (Chajduga & Ingaldi, 2021). There also lack the accountability system within the organizations as the implementation part from government is weak. However, as described in the leader inclusion part leaders develop the inclusive climate for the differently abled persons. Some of the organizations also practice the knowledge sharing activities in order to enhance the communication between the majority and minority group of employees (Tang et al., 2015).

Last but not the least inclusion construct is inclusive climate which relates to the concept of overcoming challenges that are the hinderance of having inclusion of differently abled persons

within the organizations (Guillaume et al., 2014). Overall, as per the participants organizations having differently abled persons are moving towards the inclusive climate slowly but they are not having it in true manner. It is totally upon the discretion of the organizations that how they want to react and there is no check and balance because inclusion is basically a voluntary action of the organization (Nkomo, 2014).

## **5.5 Summary of the Chapter**

In a nutshell, this chapter described the findings analyzed from the data collected and presented by comparing it with the existing literature. The major focus point it created is a discrimination between diversity and inclusion management of differently abled persons in the organizations of Pakistan. Organizations are moving towards the inclusion management strategies but within Pakistan MNCs are usually working on it. Local organizations are still stuck in having diverse workforce as a part of diversity program. Unfortunately, Pakistani organizations are stuck in such operational activities that majority of them do not focus towards the inclusion of differently abled persons. Even currently, organizations even lack organizational infrastructure such as ramps to include or hire differently abled persons. Moreover, this chapter also discussed about the five inclusion constructs, role of HR for enhancing the inclusion of differently abled persons in the light of the literature review and data collected.

## **6 Chapter Six: Conclusion**

### **6.1 Key Findings**

This research was conducted to explore about the challenges differently abled persons face at the workplace, organizational support system available for them and their perception about inclusion at the workplace. Moreover, this study also explored about the stigmatization associated with the differently abled persons physical appearance. Organizations are reluctant to hire them as they think that they have to take double risk in hiring differently abled person as compare to the normal person if they hire. In addition to it, study highlights that self-motivation and eradication of special school systems as critical success factors in improving the acceptability of differently abled persons within the organizations. This study was conducted through qualitative research technique and collected the online interviews with the differently abled persons working in the organizations of Pakistan. Overall, the objective of this research was to study about the employment of differently abled persons in the organizations of Pakistan so practitioners can mold their current practices accordingly.

Findings of this research revealed that differently abled persons are stigmatized at the workplace due to which they get demotivated. Organizations consider differently abled persons a liability and are reluctant to hire them because of the pre-conceived perceptions. Organizations already have a perception that differently abled persons cannot perform the tasks efficiently and rather looking upon their abilities and resume they look towards their disability and feel sympathy on them. This factor of stigmatizing an individual on the basis of their physical appearance is most common in local organizations of Pakistan while MNCs have more acceptability factor for differently abled persons. Organizations also have less recognition for differently abled person and the individuals have to prove them for a long time and then they start getting the required recognition.

In addition to the above discussion, organizations have some structural and functional issues and barriers in the inclusion of differently abled persons. The most important factor of accessibility of the building is missing in many of the organizations by not having ramps for wheel chair persons. Organizational structure is not designed in a manner that there are ramps and so it creates a barrier for wheel chair persons. Moreover, there is a misconception of inclusion for differently abled persons as organizations consider the diversity and inclusion for just the empowerment of females. Organizations do have the slogans of equal employment opportunity but these are just labels and implementation part is weak, specifically in local organizations. However, organizations when hire differently abled persons they try to hire the person with minimum disability to fill the defined quota as per the government legislation. Moreover, sometimes also wrongly use the quota and take the seats of differently abled persons.

This study also highlighted the organizational support system present at organization to include differently abled persons. Organizations when hire the differently abled persons they make the special arrangements for them as work from home, special assistant, special screens but these are most common in MNCs rather than local organizations. In addition to it, line managers also support them as they have an open-door policy and MNCs even have some special programs for the induction of differently abled persons such as “Karo-Mumkin”, “Open Mind Trainee Program”. In addition to it, local organizations usually are reluctant to wards hiring of differently abled persons but once they hire them, they try to make them feel comfortable in terms of support, friendly environment and buddy system, this buddy system is assigning of an employee with the differently abled person for the smooth movement of him/her within the organization while making the understanding of the systems, policies, practices easy.

Last but not the least, this research has also identified the critical success factors which include self-motivation and eradication of special school system for increasing the inclusion of differently abled persons within the organization. As per the study findings, the self-motivation and self-confidence is the key factor as if individuals lose the confidence, then society will discriminate them more thus creating more barriers for them. Organizations do say Oh! If this person can do the job or not but this should be the individual who should take this a challenge and consider it a positive point rather than considering it a negative point. In addition to it, another critical success factor is to create a bridge between parents, universities and job market. As, special school system shatters the confidence of individuals hence it does not groom them in a manner they should be. They don't take higher education and so organizations do not have much ration of differently abled persons as a talent pool. There should be an inclusive education system which should allow the individuals to progress in a progressive environment.

Inclusion and diversity within the organization has a key importance and as discussed inclusion always creates a competitive environment and it creates an edge on the rivals of the organization. Currently in Pakistan, organizations lack the inclusion of differently baled persons minority groups. And mostly local organizations are not considering it as important because being in a developing country, systems of organizations are not well-developed due to which they are stuck in operational glitches of every day and can't get time and resources for such initiatives. As per the study, organizations can become inclusive by eradication of special school system, providing equal employment opportunity in true manner, equal recognition system and more acceptability factor and by supporting through different awareness sessions and so on. Organizations should hire differently abled persons and should not be reluctant towards their hiring.

## **6.2 Theoretical and Practical Implications**

Results of this research has both theoretical and practical implications which will help the organizations to rethink about the strategies of the inclusion for differently abled persons. And also help the literature to have useful additions. Theoretically, this research has listed almost all the challenges differently abled persons are facing at the workplace and most importantly their perception about their inclusion at the workplace. This thesis will initiate the debate related to the individual perception about their inclusion and hence towards the solutions to the challenges they are facing at the workplace. Moreover, it has also contributed in the debate of having special schools or inclusive education as this is the initial level from where a differently abled child starts education, grooms him/herself and move towards the practical environment. Additionally, it contributed in the literature of inclusion of differently abled persons as it is the less researched specifically in the developing country context.

Current study has equal practical implications as well. Practically role of government, HR and organizations have identified. As, their role can create inclusion of differently abled persons at the workplace. This study has highlighted that government has made policies but their implementation is weak so it is important that government should have such systems that can oversee the implementation part and HR and organizations should have more acceptability towards the differently abled persons. This study has highlighted the issues in depth so it can help HR personnel at the workplace to think about the solutions hence making the environment more inclusive and as a result more competitive. This research will majorly help the organizations to think that differently abled persons are not liability but are rather valuable asset for any organization.

### **6.3 Limitations and Future Directions**

Although this research has added value both theoretically and practically but there are some limitations as well. Existing research has only considered the view point from the differently abled persons and have not catered the view point of HR practitioners that what kind of issues they are facing while inducting differently abled persons. Although, some of the participants this research has chosen are HR professionals and differently abled person both at the same time who have given the real side point of view from both perspective but it lacks the in-depth detail from HR professionals side. Moreover, as data was collected online due to the COVID-19 pandemic so differently abled persons who were having access or having know-how of online system were interviewed. There were two individuals of whom interview cannot be conducted because they were not having accessibility to any online system. In addition to these, this study has geographical limitations as well as it was conducted only from 4 to 5 cities of Pakistan and could not cover the other cities or other parts of the world. Due to time and budget constraints limited number of participants were analyzed. From researcher point of view online accessibility to participants and trust issues between interviewer and interviewee were there.

This research has also set the grounds for the future research. the importance of either having inclusive education or special education system can be researched. Moreover, in this research only the perception of differently abled person was studied. However, from future perspective perception of HR professionals, colleagues and management board can also be studied. Similarity and differences of inclusion between differently abled persons and other minority groups such as transgenders, women, race, ethnicity, religion based etc. can be studied. Similarly, a comparison between Pakistani organizations and international organizations can be researched upon. In

nutshell, this research provides different areas of study to explore by academic scholars and policy makers that can put valuable insights in existing information.



## 7 References

- Allison, M. T. J. J. o. L. R. (1999). Organizational barriers to diversity in the workplace. *31*(1), 78-101.
- Alvi, M. (2016). A manual for selecting sampling techniques in research.
- Amaram, D. I. J. J. o. D. M. (2007). Cultural diversity: Implications for workplace management. *2*(4), 1-6.
- Anwar, F. N. D. H. N., & Ullah, T. I. (2020). Difficulties Faced by the Persons with Disabilities for Getting Employment.
- Ashburn-Nardo, L., Morris, K. A., & Goodwin, S. A. (2008). The confronting prejudiced responses (CPR) model: Applying CPR in organizations. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*.
- Avery, D. R., McKay, P. F., Wilson, D. C., & Volpone, S. (2008). *Attenuating the effect of seniority on intent to remain: The role of perceived inclusiveness*. Paper presented at the meeting of the Academy of Management, Anaheim, CA.
- Bana, M., Guyo, W., & Odhiambo, R. (2016). Effect of Hiring Practices on Workplace Diversity in Public Universities in Kenya.
- Bana, W. M. J. I. J. o. E., & Research. (2019). Employee compensation and workplace diversity. *7*(1), 235-250.
- Bank, T. W. (2021). Disability Inclusion. Retrieved from <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/disability#1>.  
<https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/disability#1>

- Barak, M. E. M. (2016). *Managing diversity: Toward a globally inclusive workplace*: Sage Publications.
- Bassett-Jones, N. (2005). The paradox of diversity management, creativity and innovation. *Creativity and innovation management*, 14(2), 169-175.
- Beatty, J. E., Baldrige, D. C., Boehm, S. A., Kulkarni, M., & Colella, A. J. J. H. R. M. (2019). On the treatment of persons with disabilities in organizations: A review and research agenda. 58(2), 119-137.
- Bell, B. S., & Klein, K. J. J. R. P. (2001). Effects of disability, gender, and job level on ratings of job applicants. 46(3), 229.
- Bento, J. P. C., & Kuznetsova, Y. J. S. I. (2018). Workplace adaptations promoting the inclusion of persons with disabilities in mainstream employment: a case-study on employers' responses in Norway. 6(2), 34-45.
- Berbrier, M. (2002). Disempowering Minorities: A Critique of Wilkinson's Task for Social Scientists and Practitioners'. *J. Soc. & Soc. Welfare*, 29, 3.
- Berend, N. (2019). Real and perceived minority influences in medieval society: introduction. *Journal of Medieval History*, 45(3), 277-284. doi:10.1080/03044181.2019.1612181
- Bilić, I. (2017). Communication with Persons with Disabilities vs. Communication with Differently Abled Persons. In *Inclusion, Disability and Culture* (pp. 135-151): Springer.
- Blanz, M., Mummendey, A., & Otten, S. (1995). Positive–negative asymmetry in social discrimination: The impact of stimulus valence and size and status differentials on intergroup evaluations. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 34(4), 409-419.

- Boehm, S. A., & Dwertmann, D. J. (2015). Forging a single-edged sword: Facilitating positive age and disability diversity effects in the workplace through leadership, positive climates, and HR practices. *Work, Aging and Retirement, 1*(1), 41-63.
- Booyesen, L. (2007). Managing cultural diversity: a South African perspective. In *Diversity in Africa* (pp. 51-92): Springer.
- Brewer, M. B. (1991). The social self: On being the same and different at the same time. *Personality and social psychology bulletin, 17*(5), 475-482.
- Brown, N. (2018). Video-conference interviews: Ethical and methodological concerns in the context of health research. *SAGE Research Methods*.
- Bryman, A., & Bell, E. (2015). Business research methods (Vol. 4th). *Glasgow: Bell & Bain Ltd.*
- Carmeli, A., Reiter-Palmon, R., & Ziv, E. (2010). Inclusive leadership and employee involvement in creative tasks in the workplace: The mediating role of psychological safety. *Creativity Research Journal, 22*(3), 250-260.
- Chajduga, T., & Ingaldi, M. (2021). Hiring Disable People to Avoid Staff Turnover and Enhance Sustainability of Production. *Sustainability, 13*(19), 10577.
- Chavez, C. I., & Weisinger, J. Y. (2008). Beyond diversity training: A social infusion for cultural inclusion. *Human Resource Management: Published in Cooperation with the School of Business Administration, The University of Michigan and in alliance with the Society of Human Resources Management, 47*(2), 331-350.

- Choi, S. B., Tran, T. B. H., & Park, B. I. (2015). Inclusive leadership and work engagement: Mediating roles of affective organizational commitment and creativity. *Social Behavior and Personality: an international journal*, 43(6), 931-943.
- Collings, D. G., Mellahi, K., & Cascio, W. F. (2019). Global talent management and performance in multinational enterprises: A multilevel perspective. *Journal of management*, 45(2), 540-566.
- Cottrill, K., Lopez, P. D., & Hoffman, C. C. (2014a). How authentic leadership and inclusion benefit organizations. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*.
- Cottrill, K., Lopez, P. D., & Hoffman, C. C. (2014b). How authentic leadership and inclusion benefit organizations. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*, 33(3), 275-292.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*: Sage publications.
- Daya, P. (2014). Diversity and inclusion in an emerging market context. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*, 33(3), 293-308.
- Delton, J. (2007). Before the EEOC: How management integrated the workplace. *Business History Review*, 81(2), 269-295.
- Duberley, J., Johnson, P., & Cassell, C. (2012). Philosophies underpinning qualitative research. *Qualitative organizational research: Core methods and current challenges*, 15.
- Farndale, E., Biron, M., Briscoe, D. R., & Raghuram, S. (2015). A global perspective on diversity and inclusion in work organisations. In: Taylor & Francis.

- Ferdman, B. M., Avigdor, A., Braun, D., Konkin, J., & Kuzmycz, D. (2010). Collective experience of inclusion, diversity, and performance in work groups. *RAM. Revista de Administração Mackenzie*, 11(3), 6-26.
- Ferdman, B. M., & Deane, B. (2014). Diversity at work: The practice of inclusion.
- Fredericksen, E. D., Witt, S. L., Patton, W. D., & Lovrich, N. P. (2015). *Human resource management: The public service perspective*: Routledge.
- Gasorek, D. (2000). Inclusion at Dun & Bradstreet building a high-performance company. *Diversity Factor*, 8(4), 25-25.
- Gelman, A., Carlin, J. B., Stern, H. S., & Rubin, D. B. (2014). Bayesian data analysis (Vol. 2). In: Taylor & Francis Boca Raton.
- Gertler, P., & Gruber, J. (2002). Insuring consumption against illness. *American economic review*, 92(1), 51-70.
- Goggin, G., & Ellis, K. J. H. S. R. (2020). Disability, communication, and life itself in the COVID-19 pandemic. 29(2), 168-176.
- Green, K. A., López, M., Wysocki, A., & Kepner, K. J. E. (2002). Diversity in the workplace: Benefits, challenges, and the required managerial tools. 2002(2).
- Groeneveld, S., & Verbeek, S. (2012). Diversity policies in public and private sector organizations: An empirical comparison of incidence and effectiveness. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 32(4), 353-381.
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. *Handbook of qualitative research*, 2(163-194), 105.

- Guillaume, Y. R., Dawson, J. F., Priola, V., Sacramento, C. A., Woods, S. A., Higson, H. E., . . . West, M. A. (2014). Managing diversity in organizations: An integrative model and agenda for future research. *European journal of work and organizational psychology*, 23(5), 783-802.
- Gul, R. J. P. J. o. A. S. S. (2020). Disability Policies In Pakistan: The Way Forward. 11(1).
- Halder, S., Assaf, L. C., & Keeffe, M. (2017). Disability and inclusion: Current challenges. In *Inclusion, Disability and Culture* (pp. 1-11): Springer.
- Hall, E., Wilton, R. J. D., & Society. (2011). Alternative spaces of 'work' and inclusion for disabled people. 26(7), 867-880.
- Harrison, D. A., & Klein, K. J. (2007). What's the difference? Diversity constructs as separation, variety, or disparity in organizations. *Academy of management review*, 32(4), 1199-1228.
- Hartley, J. (2004). Case study research.
- Hasler, F. J. D. b., enabling environments. London: Sage. (1993). Developments in the disabled people's movement. 278-284.
- Hays-Thomas, R., & Bendick, M. (2013). Professionalizing diversity and inclusion practice: Should voluntary standards be the chicken or the egg? *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, 6(3), 193-205.
- Henkens, K., Remery, C., & Schippers, J. J. T. I. J. o. H. R. M. (2008). Shortages in an ageing labour market: an analysis of employers' behaviour. 19(7), 1314-1329.
- Heymann, J., Stein, M. A. & Moreno, G. eds. (2014). Moving from the Margins, Mainstreaming Persons with Disabilities in Pakistan. *A Custom Research Report Produced for the British Council. Eds, Disability and Equality at Work. Oxford University Press.*

- Hirak, R., Peng, A. C., Carmeli, A., & Schaubroeck, J. M. (2012). Linking leader inclusiveness to work unit performance: The importance of psychological safety and learning from failures. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 23(1), 107-117.
- Hom, P. W., Roberson, L., & Ellis, A. D. (2008). Challenging conventional wisdom about who quits: Revelations from corporate America. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 93(1), 1.
- Iezzoni, L. I. (2006). Make no assumptions: Communication between persons with disabilities and clinicians. *Assistive Technology*, 18(2), 212-219.
- Jackson, S. E., & Joshi, A. (2011). Work team diversity.
- Jayne, M. E., & Dipboye, R. L. (2004). Leveraging diversity to improve business performance: Research findings and recommendations for organizations. *Human Resource Management: Published in Cooperation with the School of Business Administration, The University of Michigan and in alliance with the Society of Human Resources Management*, 43(4), 409-424.
- Jenkins, S., & Delbridge, R. (2013). Context matters: Examining 'soft' and 'hard' approaches to employee engagement in two workplaces. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 24(14), 2670-2691.
- Kalita, M., Koch, M., & Borah, G. (2020). Persons with Disability and Work Participation: An Analysis in Indian Context. *PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology*, 17(9), 8852-8862.
- Kellough, J. E., & Naff, K. C. (2004). Responding to a wake-up call: An examination of federal agency diversity management programs. *Administration & society*, 36(1), 62-90.

- Kelly, E., & Dobbin, F. (1998). How affirmative action became diversity management: Employer response to antidiscrimination law, 1961 to 1996. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 41(7), 960-984.
- Kowal, S., & O'Connell, D. C. (2014). Transcription as a crucial step of data analysis. *The SAGE handbook of qualitative data analysis*, 64-79.
- Kundu, S. C. (2003). Workforce diversity status: a study of employees' reactions. *Industrial Management & Data Systems*, 103(4), 215-226.
- Leonardelli, G. J., Pickett, C. L., & Brewer, M. B. (2010). Optimal distinctiveness theory: A framework for social identity, social cognition, and intergroup relations. In *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 43, pp. 63-113): Elsevier.
- Levine, J. M. J. G. P., & Relations, I. (2017). Factional conflict in groups: How majorities and minorities relate to one another. *20(5)*, 644-657.
- Li, C. R., Lin, C. J., Tien, Y. H., & Chen, C. M. (2017). A multilevel model of team cultural diversity and creativity: The role of climate for inclusion. *The Journal of Creative Behavior*, 51(2), 163-179.
- Lim, W. M. J. J. o. R., & Services, C. (2020). An equity theory perspective of online group buying. *54*.
- Lin, Z., & Yang, L. (2018). Denial of disability discrimination by disabled people in China. *Disability & Society*, 33(5), 804-809.
- Lin, Z., Yang, L. J. D., & Society. (2018). Denial of disability discrimination by disabled people in China. *33(5)*, 804-809.



- Lindsay, G. (2003). Inclusive education: a critical perspective. *British journal of special education*, 30(1), 3-12.
- Maini, A., & Heera, S. J. V. (2019). Exploring disability inclusion in organizations through managerial lens. 23(2), 144-151.
- Martín-Alcázar, F., Romero-Fernández, P. M., & Sánchez-Gardey, G. (2012). Transforming human resource management systems to cope with diversity. *Journal of business ethics*, 107(4), 511-531.
- Martín Alcázar, F., Miguel Romero Fernández, P., & Sánchez Gardey, G. (2013). Workforce diversity in strategic human resource management models: A critical review of the literature and implications for future research. *Cross Cultural Management: An International Journal*, 20(1), 39-49.
- Milena, Z. R., Dainora, G., & Alin, S. (2008). Qualitative research methods: A comparison between focus-group and in-depth interview. *Annals of the University of Oradea, Economic Science Series*, 17(4), 1279-1283.
- Mitra, S., Posarac, A., & Vick, B. (2013). Disability and poverty in developing countries: a multidimensional study. *World Development*, 41, 1-18.
- Mor-Barak, M. E., & Cherin, D. A. (1998). A tool to expand organizational understanding of workforce diversity: Exploring a measure of inclusion-exclusion. *Administration in Social Work*, 22(1), 47-64.
- Mor Barak, L., Erica Leeanne, Kim, A., Duan, L., Rhee, M.-K., Hsiao, H.-Y., & Brimhall, K. C. (2016). The promise of diversity management for climate of inclusion: A state-of-the-art

review and meta-analysis. *Human Service Organizations: Management, Leadership & Governance*, 40(4), 305-333.

- Mor Barak, M. E. (2000). The inclusive workplace: An ecosystems approach to diversity management. *Social work*, 45(4), 339-353.
- Mor Barak, M. E. (2011). *Managing diversity: Toward a globally inclusive workplace*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Mor Barak, M. E. (2015). Inclusion is the key to diversity management, but what is inclusion? *Human Service Organizations: Management, Leadership & Governance*, 39(2), 83-88.
- Mullet, M. V. D. B., Lumangyao, W., Magbanua, B. M., Amoroso, M., Allones, H., Golosinda, K., & Dagohoy, R. (2021). Work Life of Differently Abled Public Servants in Carmen, Davao del Norte: A Case Study. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science (IJRISS)*, 5.
- Nembhard, I. M., & Edmondson, A. C. (2006). Making it safe: The effects of leader inclusiveness and professional status on psychological safety and improvement efforts in health care teams. *Journal of Organizational Behavior: The International Journal of Industrial, Occupational and Organizational Psychology and Behavior*, 27(7), 941-966.
- Nishii, L. H. (2013). The benefits of climate for inclusion for gender-diverse groups. *Academy of Management Journal*, 56(6), 1754-1774.
- Nishii, L. H., & Rich, R. E. (2014). Creating inclusive climates in diverse organizations. *Diversity at work: The practice of inclusion*, 330-363.
- Nkomo, S. M. (1992). The emperor has no clothes: Rewriting “race in organizations”. *Academy of management review*, 17(3), 487-513.

- Nkomo, S. M. (2014). Inclusion: Old wine in new bottles. *Diversity at work: The practice of inclusion*, 33, 580-592.
- Noe, R. A., Hollenbeck, J. R., Gerhart, B., & Wright, P. M. (2017). *Human resource management: Gaining a competitive advantage*: McGraw-Hill Education New York, NY.
- Nota, L., Santilli, S., Ginevra, M. C., & Soresi, S. J. J. o. A. R. i. I. D. (2014). Employer attitudes towards the work inclusion of people with disability. 27(6), 511-520.
- Offerman, L., & Basford, T. (2014). Best practices and the changing role of human resources. *Diversity at work: The practice of inclusion*, 229-259.
- Offerman, L. R., & Basford, T. E. (2014). Best practices and the changing role of human resources. *Diversity at work: The practice of inclusion*, 229-259.
- Oliver, M. J. D., & society. (2013). The social model of disability: Thirty years on. 28(7), 1024-1026.
- Patton, M. Q. (1999). Enhancing the quality and credibility of qualitative analysis. *Health services research*, 34(5 Pt 2), 1189.
- Periasamy, R. G. A. (2019). A comparative study on motivation between differently-abled and abled athletes.
- Pfeffer, J. (1994). Competitive advantage through people. *California management review*, 36(2), 9.
- Pitts, D. W., Hicklin, A. K., Hawes, D. P., & Melton, E. (2010). What drives the implementation of diversity management programs? Evidence from public organizations. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 20(4), 867-886.

- Podsiadlowski, A., Gröschke, D., Kogler, M., Springer, C., & Van Der Zee, K. (2013). Managing a culturally diverse workforce: Diversity perspectives in organizations. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 37(2), 159-175.
- Rajati, F., Ashtarian, H., Salari, N., Ghanbari, M., Naghibifar, Z., & Hosseini, S. Y. (2018). Quality of life predictors in physically disabled people. *Journal of education and health promotion*, 7.
- Rights, M. o. H. (2020). Brief Review of Implementation of Action Plan for Human Rights. Retrieved from <http://www.mohr.gov.pk/Detail/ZjllYWQ5ZWEtODU3MS00NzgwLWFIYjEtMWE3Zjc0NmNiMTIw>
- Roberson, Q. M. (2006). Disentangling the meanings of diversity and inclusion in organizations. *Group & Organization Management*, 31(2), 212-236.
- Roediger, D. R. (1999). *The wages of whiteness: Race and the making of the American working class*: Verso.
- Sadri, G., & Tran, H. (2002). Managing your diverse workforce through improved communication. *Journal of Management Development*, 21(3), 227-237.
- Saleh, N. S. S. N. (2020). PROTECTION AGAINST PRE-EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION IN MALAYSIA. *Malaysian Journal of Syariah and Law*, 8(1), 1-8.
- Schloemer-Jarvis, A., Bader, B., & Böhm, S. A. (2021). The role of human resource practices for including persons with disabilities in the workforce: a systematic literature review. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 1-54.

- Schriempf, A. (2001). (Re) fusing the amputated body: An interactionist bridge for feminism and disability. *Hypatia*, 16(4), 53-79.
- Sefotho, M. M. (2014). Career Construction for Hephapreneurship1: Alternative Framework for Persons with Disabilities2. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(15), 303.
- Seyranian, V., Atuel, H., & Crano, W. D. (2008). Dimensions of majority and minority groups. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 11(1), 21-37.
- Shakespeare, T. J. T. d. s. r. (2006). The social model of disability. 2, 197-204.
- Shen, J., Chanda, A., D'netto, B., & Monga, M. (2009). Managing diversity through human resource management: An international perspective and conceptual framework. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 20(2), 235-251.
- Shinkle, G. A. J. J. o. m. (2012). Organizational aspirations, reference points, and goals: Building on the past and aiming for the future. 38(1), 415-455.
- Shore, L. M., Cleveland, J. N., & Sanchez, D. (2018). Inclusive workplaces: A review and model. *Human Resource Management Review*, 28(2), 176-189.
- Shore, L. M., Randel, A. E., Chung, B. G., Dean, M. A., Holcombe Ehrhart, K., & Singh, G. (2011). Inclusion and diversity in work groups: A review and model for future research. *Journal of management*, 37(4), 1262-1289.
- Stahl, G. K., Björkman, I., & Morris, S. (2012). *Handbook of research in international human resource management*: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Suresh, V., & Dyaram, L. (2021). Diversity in disability: leaders' accounts on inclusive employment in the Indian context. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*.

- Suresh, V., & Dyaram, L. J. M. R. R. (2020). Workplace disability inclusion in India: review and directions.
- Tait, K., & Purdie, N. (2000). Attitudes toward disability: Teacher education for inclusive environments in an Australian university. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*, 47(1), 25-38.
- Tajfel, H. (1981). *Human groups and social categories: Studies in social psychology*: Cup Archive.
- Tang, N., Jiang, Y., Chen, C., Zhou, Z., Chen, C. C., & Yu, Z. (2015). Inclusion and inclusion management in the Chinese context: An exploratory study. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 26(6), 856-874.
- Terzi, L. J. J. o. a. p. (2004). The social model of disability: A philosophical critique. 21(2), 141-157.
- Tsutsui, K., & Zizzo, D. J. (2014). Group status, minorities and trust. *Experimental Economics*, 17(2), 215-244.
- Vashishth, A., Verma, V., Saini, A., Jhamb, D. J. I. J. o. P. H. R., & Development. (2019). Workforce Diversity—Challenges in Inclusion of People with Disabilities in the Hospitality Industr. 10(8).
- Wangombe, J. G., Wambui, T. W., Muthura, M. W., Kamau, A. W., & Jackson, S. M. (2013). Managing Workplace Diversity: A Kenyan Perspective.
- Wellard, S., & McKenna, L. (2001). Turning tapes into text: Issues surrounding the transcription of interviews. *Contemporary Nurse*, 11(2-3), 180-186.

- WHO. (2020). Disability and Health Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/disability-and-health>
- Wilkinson, D. (2000). Rethinking the Concept of Minority: A Task for Social Scientists Practitioners. *J. Soc. & Soc. Welfare*, 27, 115.
- Winters, M.-F. (2014). From diversity to inclusion: An inclusion equation. *Diversity at work: The practice of inclusion*, 205-228.
- Wiseman, P. J. D., & Society. (2020). Disability, gender and violence over the life course: global perspectives and human rights approaches. 35(1), 168-169.
- Yan, M., Go, S., Tamura, H., & Tanno, K. (2014). Communication system using EOG for persons with disabilities and its judgment by EEG. *Artificial Life and Robotics*, 19(1), 89-94.
- Zikmund, W. G., Carr, J. C., & Griffin, M. (2013). *Business Research Methods (Book Only)*: Cengage Learning.

## 8 APPENDICES

### 8.1 Appendix A: Verbal Informed Consent

Hi! My name is Labeeqa Saeed. I am a student of MS Human Resource Management in the NUST Business School, NUST University, Islamabad Campus. As part of my degree program, I am researching the everyday work experiences of differently abled people working in the organizations in Islamabad, Rawalpindi and Lahore cities. I am conducting online, in-depth interviews and would appreciate your participation. The interviews would take about 40 – 50 minutes (approx) to complete. The interview has four parts. First one is related to your professional work experience. Second one is related to the HR initiatives introduced by the organization for differently abled persons. Third one is related to the challenges you face at the workplace and fourth and the last one is related to your perception and feeling about the organizational support for you.

Whatever information you provide will be kept strictly confidential and will not be shared with anyone other than my research supervisor and the panel members responsible to oversee my research work. Personal information that identifies you or your family, will be blackened out once the interviews are transcribed. The data obtained from the interviews will be disseminated on academic platforms, while maintaining the confidentiality of the study participants.

Participation in this research is voluntary and you can choose not to answer any individual questions or all questions. You may terminate the interview at any time. However, I hope that you will participate in this research since your views are important.

Will you participate in this research by giving an online, in-depth interview?	Yes	No
--	-----	----



At this time, do you want to ask me anything about the research?	Yes	No
Do you give your permission to record the interview?	Yes	No
Verbal consent obtained by the interviewer	Yes	No

Interviewee Pseudonym

Date:

## 8.2 Appendix B: Interview Guide

### 8.2.1 Demographic Profile of Participant

<b>Demographic Characteristics</b>	<b>Participant's Answer</b>
Name – pseudonym	
Age	
Gender	
Ethnicity / Race	
Marital Status	
Family Type (Nuclear or Joint)	
Number of Dependents	
Current Employment Status	
Education	
Type of disability	
Income level	
Place of Birth – Current city	
Nationality	

Social Class	
Religious Affiliation	
Current Organization	
Current Designation	

**8.2.2 Basic/ Ice-breaking discussion with participants.**

1. Please introduce yourself?
  - i. So, what was your very first job?
  - ii. Can you recall and share how that experience was?
  - iii. How long have you been working in this organization?
  - iv. What is your current designation?
  - v. What motivated you to join this organization in particular?
  - vi. Did you do any kind of background search before joining this organization?
  - vii. What is your total work experience?
  - viii. Can you share your career journey with me? How long did it take you and what all did you have to experience to reach the current designation and career level?
  
2. Can you share some reasons that make you want to come to work every day?
  - i. What do you like the most about your organization?
  - ii. What makes you feel happy at the workplace?
  - iii. What is the one thing you would like the company to change?

**Objective 2: To understand the HR initiatives introduced by the organization for differently abled persons**

**Exploring Diversity**

1. In your perception, which HR practices has the organization implemented that encourage differently abled persons to apply?
  - i. Does the organization follow equal employment opportunity?
  - ii. Does the organization follow the 3% quota policy of hiring differently abled persons? Why? Why not?
  - iii. Does the organization have any training / awareness sessions or programs to educate employees on how to work with differently abled people?
2. In your perception, why do organizations want to hire differently abled individuals?
  - i. Which opportunities does this provide to you as an individual?
  - ii. Which opportunities does it offer to other employees in the organization?
3. Do you think that management has some pre-conceived notions about differently abled employees in the workforce? If so, what are these notions and why do you think they exist? Give examples to elaborate your response.

**Exploring Inclusion**

4. Which are the specific HR practices followed by the management to promote the inclusion of differently abled persons?
  - i. Does the organization have representation of differently abled bodied persons at all levels of the organization? Why or why not? If so, please share a few examples.
  - ii. Does the organization give leverage to differently – abled persons for taking work related risks. If so, explain through a detailed example. If not, why?

- iii. Has the organization given you the power of decision making at your level? If so, then, please share at least three examples/scenarios of how you were able to exercise this power.
        - iv. Does the management encourage the involvement of differently abled persons in key decision making work activities? If so, then, please share a few examples of such involvement experienced by you, or any other differently abled colleague?
        - v. Does the management help differently – abled persons to understand its objectives and strategies so they can align their goals with the organizational goals? If yes, then, share a few such examples of how the management extended/extends this help?
5. Which are the specific HR policies followed by the management to promote the inclusion of differently abled persons within the organization?
6. Which suggestions would you give to the organization to help it increase inclusion of differently abled people in the workforce?
7. Which organizational factors and working conditions make you feel comfortable at the workplace?
  - i. Do your co-workers support you when you get stuck at work?
  - ii. Do the HR managers have an open-door policy like, can people drop in with their questions or do you have to take special appointments?
8. Which organizational events made you part of the organization?
  - i. Can you take me through two detailed events that made you feel part of the organization?
  - ii. Which factors have supported your absorption in the organization and how? Please share some examples.

- iii. Does the organization have any HR policies that support absorption of differently abled people in the workforce? If yes, which policies and how do they support inclusion.
9. How does the organizational management support you in carrying out your daily work-related activities? Please share some examples
- i. Are there any special arrangements line managers make to support you in carrying out your activities at the workplace?
  - ii. Are you given access to the relevant information and tools to carry out your daily work-related activities?
10. In your perception, how is your inclusion in the workforce beneficial for the organization? Please given specific details.
- i. How does the work you perform support the organization in achieving its overall objectives?

**Objective 1: To explore the challenges that differently abled persons face at the workplace.**

11. Which challenges do you or other differently abled colleagues face at the workplace?
12. Any other experiences from previous jobs you make like to share in terms of the challenges of inclusion you face at the workplace?
13. How are you overcoming the challenges you are facing with regards to your inclusion?
- i. What kind of support, if any from colleagues?
  - ii. What type of support, if any from supervisor?
  - iii. What type of support, if any from management?
14. How are HR policies and / or processes supportive in overcoming the challenges you are facing?

**Objective 3: To explore the perception of differently abled persons about their inclusion in organizations.**

In your opinion how important is a diverse workforce for an organization and why?

15. How will you describe your relationship with your colleagues in the organization?

- i. Do you have open communication with your colleagues?
- ii. Do you consider your colleagues as your-back bone?
- iii. Do your colleagues respect you?
- iv. Can you discuss matters with your colleagues that you are facing because of being different? Please share a few examples`

16. How will you describe your relationship with the management of the organization?

- i. In your perception, do you think that your line manager is more concerned about how you will perform relative to other colleagues? If yes, why do you think so?
- ii. Do you feel your line manager encourages you to take risks? Please share a few examples of such risks taken, and for which you received due encouragement as well.
- iii. Do you feel your line manager respects your suggestions and opinions? Please share a few examples of such suggestions and opinions in which you felt being respected by your line manager?

17. How will you describe your relationship with your team members in the organization?

- i. Do your team members support you? If so, how? If not, why?
- ii. Do your team members respect your opinions and suggestions? Why or why not?
- iii. Does your team member welcome your insights and perspectives in work? Why or why not?

18. In your opinion, what if anything else should organizations do beyond just enhancing diversity in workforce? Any additional organization support needed to ensure inclusiveness? (Diversity vs Inclusiveness)
19. In your opinion what makes you feel that you are the valuable part of this organization?
20. To what extent do you feel a part of the organization and specifically in which areas / activities?
- i. Conversely, which areas do you feel your participation is ignored in and why?
  - ii. Which individual level (at your level) factors do you perceive may also be contributing to lesser participation from your end or your less integration in organizational activities?

**Slight touch to COVID-19 condition in relation to Inclusion for adding in the future implications part.**

21. Have your perceptions changed in the last one year, due to the pandemic situation? Why or why not?
- i. Have you faced any additional challenges due to COVID-19 in terms of employment?
  - ii. Have you faced any additional challenges in proving yourself as a valuable employee within the organization?
  - iii. Are you personally or through any organizational support systems, trying to overcome those challenges? If yes, how? If no, why?

**Do you have anything else you would like to add which could help this research?**

**Thank you for your time!**



