

Exploring the Benefits of Hiring Individuals with Disabilities in the Workplace

Authors : Rosilyn Sanders

Abstract : This qualitative study examined the impact of hiring people with intellectual disabilities (ID). The research questions were: What defines a disability? What accommodations are needed to ensure the success of a person with a disability? As a leader, what benefits do people with intellectual disabilities bring to the organization? What are the benefits of hiring people with intellectual disabilities in retail organizations? Moreover, how might people with intellectual disabilities contribute to the organizational culture of retail organizations? A narrative strength approach was used as a theoretical framework to guide the discussion and uncover the benefits of hiring individuals with intellectual disabilities in various retail organizations. Using qualitative interviews, the following themes emerged: diversity and inclusion, accommodations, organizational culture, motivation, and customer service. These findings put to rest some negative stereotypes and perceptions of persons with ID as being unemployable or unable to perform tasks when employed, showing instead that persons with ID can work efficiently when given necessary work accommodations and support in an enabling organizational culture. All participants were recruited and selected through various forms of electronic communication via social media, email invitations, and phone; this was conducted through the methodology of snowball sampling with the following demographics: age, ethnicity, gender, number of years in retail, number of years in management, and number of direct reports. The sample population was employed in several retail organizations throughout Arkansas and Texas. The small sample size for qualitative research in this study helped the researcher develop, build, and maintain close relationships that encouraged participants to be forthcoming and honest with information (Clow & James, 2014). Participants were screened to ensure they met the researcher's study; and screened to ensure that they were over 18 years of age. Participants were asked if they recruit, interview, hire, and supervise individuals with intellectual disabilities. Individuals were given consent forms via email to indicate their interest in participating in this study. Due to COVID-19, all interviews were conducted via teleconferencing (Zoom or Microsoft Teams) that lasted approximately 1 hour, which were transcribed, coded for themes, and grouped based on similar responses. Further, the participants were not privy to the interview questions beforehand, and demographic questions were asked at the end, including questions concerning age, education level, and job status. Each participant was assigned random numbers using an app called 'The Random Number Generator 'to ensure that all personal or identifying information of participants were removed. Regarding data storage, all documentation was stored on a password-protected external drive, inclusive of consent forms, recordings, transcripts, and researcher notes.

Keywords : diversity, positive psychology, organizational development, leadership

Conference Title : ICPBS 2024 : International Conference on Psychology and Behavioral Sciences

Conference Location : Miami, United States

Conference Dates : March 11-12, 2024