

Vocational Rehabilitation for People with Disabilities: Employment Rates, Job Persistence and Wages

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Abstract : Research indicates gaps in education, employment rates and wages between people with disabilities and those without disabilities. One of the main tools available to reduce these gaps is vocational rehabilitation. In order to examine the effects of vocational rehabilitation, a follow-up study, based on comprehensive administrative data, was conducted. The study included 88,286 people with disabilities who participated in vocational rehabilitation of the National Insurance Institute of Israel (NII), and completed the process between 1999 and 2012. Research variables included: employment rates, job persistence and wage levels. This research, the first of its kind in Israel, has several unique aspects: a) a long-range follow-up study on people who completed vocational rehabilitation; b) examination of a broad population spectrum, including also people that are not eligible to disability pensions ; c) a comparison among those with work-related injuries, those injured in hostile acts and those injured in other circumstances; and finally d) the identification of the characteristics of those who are entitled to vocational rehabilitation but who do not participate in any vocational rehabilitation plan. The most notable results include: 1. Vocational rehabilitation contributed to employment, job persistence and wage levels. Participation in vocational rehabilitation resulted in an employment rate of 65% within two years after completing the program, and 73% eventually. Participation in a vocational rehabilitation plan also contributed to job persistence and wage levels. 2. Vocational rehabilitation plans aimed at integration in universal frameworks increased the chances of being employed, persisting at the job and receiving a higher wage than did the vocational rehabilitation aimed at selective frameworks (such as sheltered workshops). 3. The type of disability affected the chances of integration in a vocational rehabilitation plan and in the labor market. People with a disability from birth had greater chances of integration in a vocational rehabilitation plan, while the type of disability and its severity affected the chances of the person with disabilities to find employment.

Keywords : vocational rehabilitation, employment, job persistence, wages

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