

## Attitudes of Young Adults with Physical Disabilities towards Occupational Preferences

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**Abstract :** Integration of young adults with disabilities (YAWD) into workplaces provides an opportunity for social and occupational mobility, enabling them to financial independence. To enhance integration, it is important to understand their occupational preferences as well as the factors that influencing it such as demographic variables, self-assessed health, beliefs about work, subjective norms, and self-efficacy. Planned behavior theory was chosen as a basis for this study. A cross-sectional study, based on preliminary sample of 37 YAWD who have been recognized by the National Insurance Institute and are engaged in a year of national service. The finding shows that most of the participants were single (97%) women (60%); average age was 22(+ 2) years, approximately half were secular. Most of the participants had disabilities resulting from CP (96%). Self-assessed health was correlated positively and significantly with behavioral intentions to work in the free market ( $r = .33$ ,  $p = .05$ ), and significant negative correlation with behavioral intentions to work in supported settings ( $r = -.40$ ,  $p = .01$ ), and sheltered settings ( $r = -.36$ ,  $p = .03$ ): individuals who perceived themselves as having more severe disabilities showed a greater tendency to choose a workplace with more rehabilitative inputs. Furthermore, women showed a greater tendency than men to perceive their disability as impairing their future intention to work:  $t(36) = 2.23$ ,  $p < .05$ . Beliefs about work were positively associated with normative beliefs ( $r = .308$ ,  $p = .06$ ). The findings indicate that, especially with women, perceptions of health are related to occupational preferences. Moreover, the findings indicate that the relationship between subjective norms about work and normative beliefs about integrating in a workplace that prevail in the individual's environment affects occupational preferences. The contribution of the study lies in the development of new responses and interventions to encourage adults with disabilities to work.

**Keywords :** young adults, disabilities, work preferences, occupational preferences

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