THE INCLUSION JOURNEY

Integrating Persons with Disabilities in the Hospitality and Quick Service Restaurant Sector in India

Indrajit Shaw
Meera Shenoy

Youth4Jobs
Inclusive Workforce - Motivate - Train - Place

J.P.Morgan

Youth4Jobs Foundation (Y4J), Hyderabad

Youth4Jobs focusses on skilling of youth with disability to the needs of the industry. Its rich experience of working with governments, multilateral agencies and companies has been leveraged for skilling PwD. Youth4Jobs works at various levels:

- Setting up placement-linked skilling centres for less educated youth with disability across the country.
- Working with educated youth with disability in colleges.
- Offering comprehensive solutions to mainstream hiring of Persons with Disabilities in the corporate workforce.
- Providing a holistic learning experience in schools for the disabled to prevent dropouts and increase education levels.
- Supporting artists with disabilities through its start-up, 'Not Just Art' (www.notjustartglobal.org).
- Supporting work on policy which includes studies, industry research and country strategy for multilateral agencies.

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Foreword

According to the Census 2011, Persons with Disability (PwD) constitute a population of 26.8 million in India. This is a significant percentage of the population which is deprived of opportunities including access to facilities, services and opportunities, skill development and employment. Of the above, more than 13.4 million PwD are in the working age group of 15–59 years, who require improved skills and employment opportunities.

It is against this backdrop that Youth4Jobs has done a study and brought out this report on the hospitality sector. The focus is on showcasing champions from within the industry, making work places accessible and promoting inclusion of PwD.

"Inclusion of PwD in the Hospitality and QSR segment" is based on live case studies and shows the reader how to enable inclusion of PwD in the hospitality sector. This report is not intended to provide comprehensive solutions for all disability employment issues but attempts to encourage companies to take initial steps in becoming inclusive and disabled friendly. It confirms the premise that often minor and inexpensive changes can go a long way in making the workplace safer and more comfortable for PwD.

We hope that this booklet will assist the leadership in the hospitality sector, and other service sectors like retail, banking and financial services, IT services, etc. to follow similar steps and make their company more accessible.

Patanjali Keswani
Chairman
Skill Council For Persons With Disability
Chairman & Managing Director
Lemon Tree Hotels Ltd.

Acronyms

ADA	American with Disabilities Act
ASL	American Sign Language
BOH	Back-of-House
CAGR	Compounded Annual Growth Rate
CII	Confederation of Indian Industries
CMD	Chairman & Managing Director
COO	Chief Operating Officer
CSP	Cross-Sectorial Partnership
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CV	Curriculum Vitae
D&I	Diversity and Inclusion
EBITDA	Earnings Before Interest, Tax, Depreciation & Amortization
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunities
ESOP	Employee Stock Option
e.g.	exempli gratia (for example)
esp.	especially
EwD	Employee(s) with Disability
EwoD	Employee(s) without Disability
FAQ	Frequently Asked Question
FICCI	Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry
FOH	Front-of-House
F&B	Food & Beverage
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GM	General Manager
HoD	Head of the Department
HR	Human Resources
ICF	International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health
ID	Intellectual Disability
IDD	Intellectual & Developmental Disability
ILO	International Labour Organisation
INR	Indian Rupee
IQ	Intelligence Quotient
ISL	Indian Sign Language
JAWS	Job Access With Speech
JD	Job Description

KRA	Key Responsibility Area
LD	Locomotor Disability
L&D	Learning & Development
MoH	Mid-of-House
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
NASCIO	National Association of State Chief Information Officers
NASSCOM	National Association of Software and Services Companies
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIOS	The National Institute of Open Schooling
PMKVY	Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojna
PMS	Performance Management System
PoC	Proof of Concept
PoS	Point of Sale
PR	Public Relations
PwD	Person(s) with Disability
QSR	Quick Service Restaurant
RPwD	Rights of Persons with Disabilities
R&R	Reward & Recognition
SHI	Speech and Hearing Impaired
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SPoC	Single Point of Contact
VI	Visual Impairment
v/s	versus
UK	United Kingdom
UKI	United Kingdom & Ireland
UNWTO	World Tourism Organisation
USP	Unique Selling Proposition
VP	Vice President
VRC	Vocational Rehabilitation Centre
WHO	World Health Organisation

Manish Kumar, CEO, National Skills Development Corporation (NSDC)

"Indian Census 2011 presented a stark statistic. Of the 13.4 million people with disabilities of employable age, 9.9 million were non-workers or marginal workers. It makes one think of the psychosocial implication for millions of persons with disability, pushed to depend on social security of family and State, as well as the economic loss for an emerging country like India. Alongside sensitization and raising awareness in workplaces, a key step in empowering persons with disability is to provide technical and vocational training in market-relevant skills. We are seeing a societal shift towards conscious capitalism, a propagation for inclusiveness in the very foundation of business. Against this backdrop, I am delighted to see the Youth4Jobs' initiative to research inclusion of differently abled persons in the hospitality sector, a sector that holds tremendous potential for employment and livelihood generation. I extend my heartiest congratulations on the publication of this report and wish them the best for continued success."

Meera Shenoy, Founder, Youth4Jobs & Not Just Art

The face of the hospitality industry in including PwD in their workforce is slowly changing.

The youth we skill work across job roles in restaurants, kitchens, bars, front office, and housekeeping. And the shift is happening as hotels and quick food services are realizing that these youth actually help their business in a myriad ways – reduce attrition, are more focussed and productive and customers feel happy that while spending their money they are also supporting a vulnerable segment of society. Integrating persons with disabilities in the workforce by highlighting this untapped talent pool is indeed win-win for all stakeholders, be it government or civil society, companies or the youth and their families.

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Executive Summary

This report has been created as part of a Youth4Jobs knowledge series to develop a detailed understanding of the status of PwD employment in the hospitality and QSR sector. It summarises the findings from discussions with around 30 sector players pan-India, identifying the key features, opportunities, challenges and trends in PwD hiring.

The hospitality and QSR sector – one of the largest contributors to India's GDP – provides a huge opportunity to absorb part of the 26.8 million PwD talent pool in India (as of 2011). On the one hand, this addresses issues of PwD unemployment hovering around 64%, and on the other, it allows sector players access to an untapped quality talent pool to address issues like high attrition as well as poor quality of service from current workforce.

Companies like Lemon Tree, Mirchi and Mime and Café Coffee Day, champions in PwD hiring in India, clearly highlight the benefits of engaging PwD in the workforce by (a) establishing a clear business case for PwD employment and (b) creating and embedding best practices related to employees with disabilities (EwD) within their businesses. Benefits range from bottom-line improvements through higher productivity and lower employee lifecycle costs to top-line enhancements through higher customer engagement and a growing loyal customer base attracted by the inclusion quotient of these organisations. Sodexo provides an international perspective on how more and more companies are choosing them as a preferred service provider due to their ability to foster PwD inclusivity led by several inclusion champions at senior management levels.

However, inclusion of PwD is not without its challenges as revealed by several QSRs such as Café Echoes, Chai pe Charcha and SodaBottleOpenerWala while trying to build a PwD-oriented workforce and PwD-friendly culture. Challenges range from inability of EwD to manage high pressure situations during peak times to issues around punctuality and ability to pay salaries at par with larger hospitality chains especially given the special requirements of EwD. QSRs are using the close-knit culture of small cafés, simultaneous exposure to multiple on-the-job skills and fast growth opportunities as key offerings to retain EwD due to their greater diligence and higher satisfaction levels in standard roles which have little or no aspirational value for employees without disabilities.

Larger hospitality groups in India take a variety of approaches to EwD inclusion. While some like IHCL, Accor and Marriott focus on a qualitative approach, others like The Leela tends to prefer a combination using qualitative parameters and metrics-driven approach to successful EwD engagement. However, all of these organisations, despite being at varying stages of their inclusion journey, are taking a long-term approach to PwD employment which is seen as imperative for creating a PwD inclusive culture as part of core business strategy.

Interviews of individuals EwD in the sector, mostly with speech, hearing or learning disabilities, brought out some interesting insights from their professional journey. Whether disabled by birth or acquired during their lifetime, all of them face similar challenges at work in terms of communication except where they have multiple PwD colleagues such as at Café Echoes. A positive common feature appeared to be their keenness to learn more about existing roles or new areas and modest dreams for professional growth resulting in higher overall levels of satisfaction in their current roles.

Based on these experiences a PwD engagement road-map is suggested involving the private sector, social sector NGOs and consultants, the government and the PwD themselves as stakeholders. Private hospitality and QSR companies, forming a chunk of the PwD employer base in the sector, must take an integrated approach to include PwD workforce. This can be done in multiple ways. Companies should clearly define their purpose for PwD inclusion and ensure reasonable accommodation to help EwD deal with their disability. Small pilots can be used in non-critical areas such as mid- or back-of-house as proof of concept (PoC) to identify the key challenges and develop a business case. PoCs can be powerful tools to engage senior management who can then act as internal PwD champions to drive PwD inclusion within the organisation. Companies should have a common performance management system for all employees irrespective of disability status to avoid discrimination while simultaneously enabling career growth opportunities within and across functions for PwD similar to their non-disabled counterparts. Finally, organizations should clearly articulate and communicate their commitment to PwD inclusion to internal and external stakeholders while simultaneously fostering educational opportunities for EwD to help them rise to senior roles including C-suite roles.

NGOs and start-ups, in addition to providing direct PwD employment, can create deep engagement with the larger hospitality and QSR employers by providing sector specific services required for enabling PwD employment. They can provide training on all key roles for hospitality companies as well as QSR-specific roles, social skills training including customer interaction and personal presentation skills and supporting hospitality training institutions with PwD-specific training modules. They can also provide on-demand, on- and off-premise services for facilitating seamless communication between people with and without disabilities in these organisations, job mapping of EwD based on skill-sets and crises management related to EwD.

The government plays an instrumental role in enabling PwD employment in the sector. Since career growth to higher levels in the sector often requires minimum qualifications which PwD may lack, government can create PwD-friendly educational policies as well as provide financial incentives to companies for PwD education and training specific to the sector. To encour-

age hiring of PwD in larger numbers, tax breaks can be provided to companies starting their PwD inclusion journey. Modifying the vocational education system to feature more hospitality-specific roles for PwD can increase the number of qualified PwD candidates applying for hospitality and QSR jobs. Finally, it can create a level playing field by creating financial and policy mechanisms to encourage companies to conduct skill-set assessments for PwD in order to focus on placing them in hospitality/QSR roles based on their ability rather than disability.

PwD themselves play a key role in ensuring that they are seen as valued resources by sector players. Some roles, such as in bakery and housekeeping, lend themselves naturally to people with specific disabilities. PwD can use this to their advantage and improve their expertise in these areas through specialised training on and off the job. They can take specific courses on finance and people management which are essential for transitioning to senior management roles in the sector. Being trained on personal development and managing emotions can help them move to roles with higher visibility and improve their chances of career growth.

While each stakeholder plays a significant role in enabling PwD hiring for the sector, a sustainable PwD inclusion and employment model for the sector can be created by developing cross-stakeholder partnerships and adapting an ecosystem approach to PwD inclusion coupled with tailored solutions across the EwD life-cycle specifically for the sector. Done right, this can truly address the needs of the largest minority group in the world – persons with disabilities, and lead to them being genuinely considered as ***persons with abilities***.

Problem Statement

In 2007, the World Bank estimated India's PwD population between 4 and 8% (The World Bank, 2007). At 2019 population levels, this could range from 55–110 million PwD. More conservative Census 2011 estimates have pegged the PwD population at 2.21% (26.8 million) of the total population. Of these, only 36.5% (9.8 million) were employed, indicating a massive employment opportunity for at least 17 million people, substantially more when accounting for the growth in PwD population over the last 8 years.

The travel and tourism sector in India, which includes the hospitality and QSR sector, contributed to 8.82% of national GDP (INR 16.4 trillion) accounting for about 8% of total employment in India (India Brand Equity Foundation, 2019b) in 2017. The sector provided jobs to 41.6 million people in 2017, set to increase to 52.3 million by 2028 (Vice President's Secretariat, 2018). With a staggeringly high attrition rate between 30 and 50% rising to 100% in some cases, coupled with the high demand for hotels and QSRs, this poses a real challenge for recruiting quality manpower. Around 40 international brands are expected to establish their India presence over the next 5 years (Equitymaster, 2019).

This study aims to explore whether the huge untapped PwD talent can fulfil the growing needs of the hospitality and QSR sector.

1. The World of People with Disabilities – An Overview

Today, disability is as much a human rights issue as an issue of perception. While wearing glasses due to optical defects such as myopia (near-sightedness) or hypermetropia (far-sightedness) is considered *normal*, a person with a greater degree of optical defect (typically >40%) is termed *visually impaired*. This chapter attempts to understand the various perspectives on disability.

1.1. Definition and types of disabilities

While there is no universal definition of disability, some broadly accepted classifications are given below:

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), "*Disability is an umbrella term covering impairments (problem in body function/structure), activity limitations (difficulty in executing a task/action) and participation restrictions (problem in involvement in life situations). Therefore, disability is not just a health problem. It is a complex phenomenon, reflecting the interaction between the features of a person's body and features of the society in which he or she lives. Overcoming the difficulties faced by people with disabilities requires interventions to remove environmental and social barriers.*" (World Health Organisation, 2019)

The (International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF)) framework (Figure 1) studies functioning and disability across four dimensions:

- *Body functions and structures of people*, and impairments thereof (functioning at the level of the body), e.g., eye movement, hand movement, a deformed limb.
- *Activities of people* (functioning at the level of the individual) and the activity limitations they experience, e.g., conducting everyday activities like eating, dressing, inability to walk due to a locomotor disability.
- *Participation or involvement of people* in all areas of life, and the participation restrictions they experience (functioning of a person as a member of society), e.g., engaging in paid employment, ability to do limited housework due to cerebral palsy.

```
                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │    Health condition     │
                    │   (disorder or disease) │
                    │  ┌───────────────────┐  │
                    │  │ Spinal Cord injury│  │
                    └──┴───────────────────┴──┘
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Body functions and structures	Activities	Participation
Issues with muscle function, spinal cord structure	Difficulty in moving and walking, restricted physical movement	Restricted participation in employment and public transport use

Environmental Factors	Personal Factors
Public transport, Building design, Barriers	Male, 30 years, married with one daughter

Figure 1: Interactions between different components of ICF Framework with example of individual with spinal cord injury (Source: "Working Paper, ICF: An Overview, World Health Organisation")

- *Environmental factors* that affect these experiences (and whether these factors are facilitators or barriers), e.g., toilets for PwD, ordinary stairs at home/work that inhibit movement of people with locomotor disability.

"*The ICF conceptualises a person's level of functioning as a dynamic interaction between her or his health conditions, environmental factors, and personal factors. It is a biopsychosocial model of disability, based on an integration of the social and medical models of disability.*" (World Health Organisation).

This framework can be used by hotels and QSRs as a starting point when conducting assessments for identifying reasonable adjustments required for employing PwD in their organisation.

1.2. Global perspective of PwD population

Globally, 1 billion people, or about 15% of world population, suffer from some form of disability (The World Bank). PwD across the world are disadvantaged in the job market compared to people without disabilities (Figure 2). An estimated 386 million of the world's working-age population have some kind of disability. PwD unemployment rates are as high as 80% in some countries (United Nations - Department of Economic and Social Affairs), despite companies reporting that employees with disabilities have better retention rates that reduce high attrition cost.

In terms of education, the global literacy rate for adult men and women with disabilities is as low as 3% and
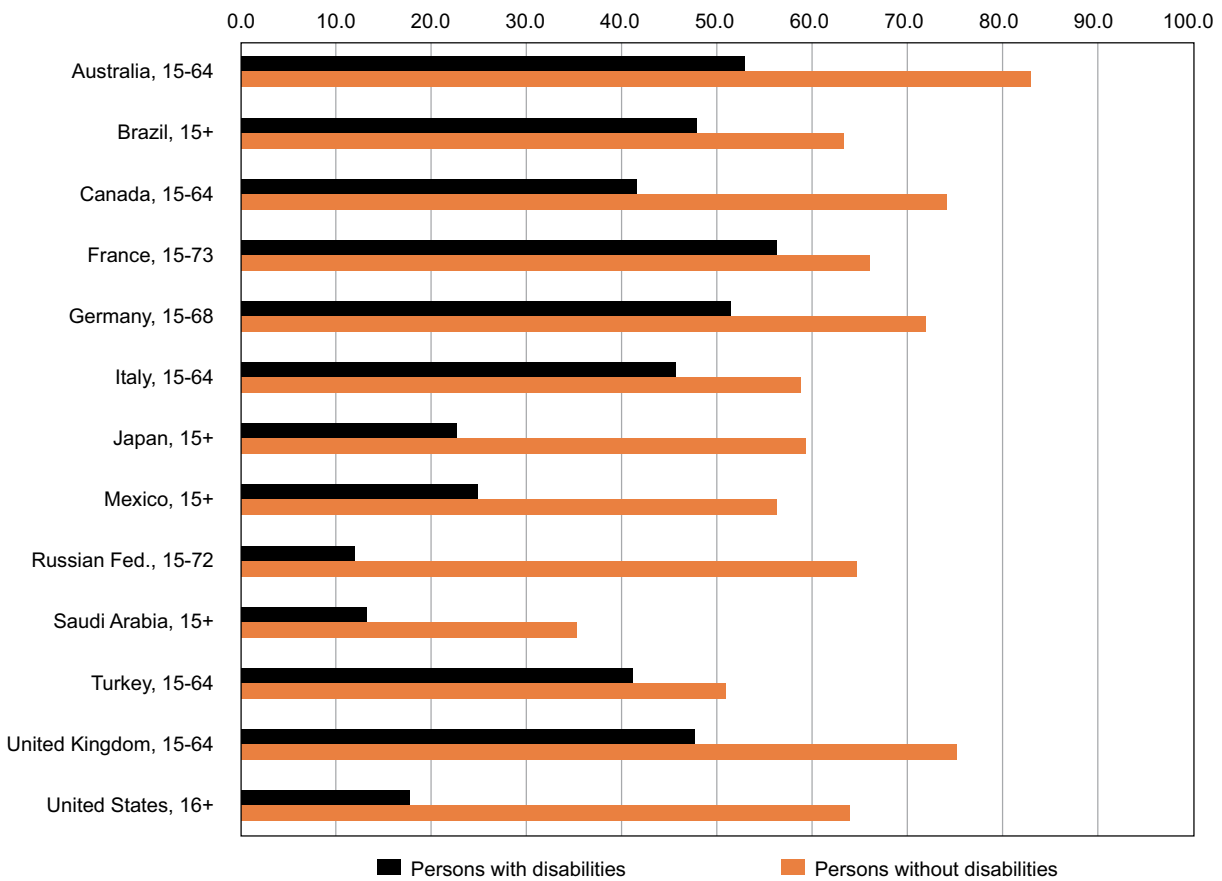
Figure 2: Global employment to population ratio for people with and without disabilities. Source: (ILO & OECD, 2018)
• Most recent data close to 2010
• Working age population indicated next to country name

Distribution of percentage of PwD population globally
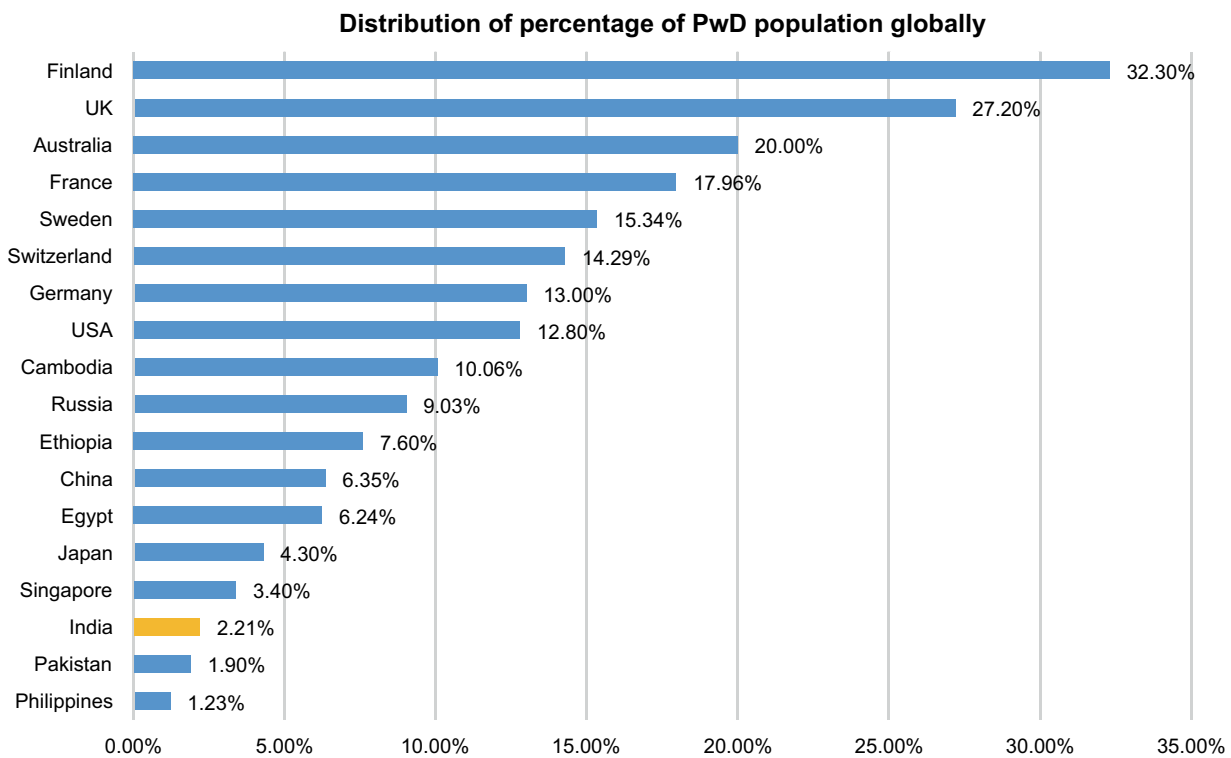
Figure 3: Percentage of PwD population distribution in nations across the globe
[Year of assessment varies from 1983 – 2018]

1% respectively (86.25% and 82.66% respectively for non-disabled adult men and women) (World Bank). Nation-wise data differ widely due to variations in the definition of disability and the methods of assessment.

Several countries in the world have a very high PwD population (Figure 3). For global luxury hospitality chains present in these countries and with ambitions of setting up/expanding their businesses in India, this is a great opportunity for two reasons:

- Use their global presence to transfer their PwD employment learnings [(in countries with Employees with Disability (EwD)] to India,which is at a nascent stage in this field. Simultaneously, India is also one of the fastest growing tourism markets globally.

- The high PwD population offers global players a wider talent base to recruit quality PwD talent to fuel the organisation's India growth plans by increasing productivity, lowering attrition levels and creating a more loyal workforce, simultaneously lowering HR costs in the long run.

Box 1 indicates some interesting facts about employment of PwD across the world (*United Nations – Department of Economic and Social Affairs*).

Box 1: Global statistics on disability

Global: In industrialised nations, 50-70% of the PwD in working age population are unemployed, with proportions increasing to 80-90% in developing economies.

Asia: As of 2002, 238 million of 370 million (63%) working age PwD were unemployed with almost double the rate of unemployment compared to the general population.

Europe: More than 45 million EU citizens (15.7%) have a long-standing health problem or a disability across 25 European countries among the working age population (aged 16 to 64).

Latin America and the Caribbean: About 80-90% of all PwD are unemployed or outside the work force. Most of those who have jobs receive little or no monetary remuneration.

Africa: As per WHO, about 40% of Africa's population, or 300 million people suffer from disabilities, including 10-15 percent of school-age children (Universiteit Leiden, 2018).

Australia: Over 4 million people or 20% of the population has some form of disability including 2.1 million Australians of working age (15–64 years).

North America: While comprehensive statistics were not available at a continent level, 12.8% of US population suffered from disability as of 2016 (about 41.3 million people). Of these over half (51%) were people in the working age of 18–64, while 41.4% were 65 and older.

2. Hospitality & QSR Sector Champions – Case Studies

This chapter discusses how barriers around PwD engagement are being successfully overcome by companies within the Hospitality and QSR sector. It includes industry case studies from different categories including QSRs, fine dining restaurants, hotels and service organisations.

2.1 Mirchi & Mime

2.1.1 Genesis

Founded by Raja Sekhar Reddy and Shishir Gorle, and inspired by a Speech and Hearing Impaired (SHI)-only Canadian QSR called *Signs*, they encouraged entrepreneurs (mentees) Prashant Issar and Anuj Shah to start something similar in India.

The objectives are to combine profitable business with disability, hire for integrity and commitment, train for capability and skill, and harness innovation by hiring PwD as freshers and groom them.

2.1.2 Organisational aspects

- PwD are employed in guest relations (good memory), managing inventory (cutlery, crockery, glasses), and excluded from kitchen.
- Inverted the traditional concept of hiring PwD for back-end roles by hiring SHI for FOH while BOH comprised EwoD.
- Partnered with facilitating NGOs and focused only on SHI.
- Ensured same customer experience irrespective of staff type.

Potential changes required to enable PwD

- Assurance to family of PwD about security
- Making PwD the norm, ensure disability doesn't affect work
- Choosing one disability, two to three job descriptions (JD) and hiring in bulk.
- Training on saving habits to prevent frivolous spending
- Steady cash flow through salary, service fee and tips.
- Drop facility for PwD girls (to their homes), boys (to train station or bus stand).

2.1.3 Professional development

Out of five SHI hired initially, three were promoted to supervisory level with changed JDs the next year. The remaining two were promoted the following year with one moving further up to Assistant Restaurant Manager level. Overall, six EwD graduated to supervisor level, managing up to four SHI under them. One SHI was promoted to the role of a cashier. Remunerations, perks and benefits were improved to create aspirations in them to be restaurant managers.

Training and Development

- Training programme was conducted, partnering with corporate foundation.
- NGO team was brought in later, with trainer.
- Training process was documented and videotaped.
- Continuous on-the-job training sessions were conducted.
- Availability of training manuals for trainers with Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for EwD.
- Standardised systems, processes for all including EwD.

2.1.4 Cultural aspects

Key components for PwD-friendly culture

- Sensitisation of both EwD and EwoD.
  - Showcasing to EwoD the SHI PwD journey from birth to 21 years of life.
  - Sharing similar challenges to EwD (SHI) such as competition, lack of employment that non-PwD face.
- Promote PwD to be restaurant managers.

- Loyalty – long term incentives (Employee Stock Options, ESOPs).
- Culture of nurturing and appreciation.
- Inspired by Infosys model – hire any graduate, train them for 3 months and ensure job-readiness.
- Waiters are called Guest Service Executives.

As sensitisation becomes part of company culture, it induces social inclusion through sustained behaviour change. This is especially important with new managers having limited PwD exposure and hence requiring early sensitisation.

Enablers

- PwD with supporting spouse
- High-energy ambience – cheerful EwD
- EwD help maintain high standards of service
- High cross-learning (share easily)
- High sense of personal responsibility

Disablers

- Non-sensitised managers and staff
- Non-supportive organisational culture
- Lack of minority (EwD) interests
- Negative perceptions of PwD and tagging them as disabled

2.1.5 Communication

- PwD are very tech savvy and often communicate through video chats.
- All staff should be trained in basic sign language and EwoD should be trained to work with EwD.
- Visual training resources for SHI.
- EwoD should learn Indian Sign Language (ISL) from hearing-impaired employees
- Manager should explain the concept of a restaurant run by EwD to first-time customers.
- Guests can interact with EwD through ISL or by pointing to the menu to order the desired items.
- Customers derive an intrinsic satisfaction at the effort of communicating with EwD.
- Showcase that PwD are employed because of their abilities, not their disabilities.
- The word *mime* in Mirchi & Mime is derived from theatre meaning 'action and expression without

Box 2: Passion for PwD – A manager's perspective

"*Basic thing in human life is vocal communication and there was none here!!!*" – Arun Acharya, Restaurant Manager, Mirchi & Mime, Powai.

Arun joined Mirchi & Mime as Restaurant Manager after 8 years in hospitality, piqued by curiosity, interest in PwD and wanting to get out of his comfort zone. He was shocked initially to see an entire restaurant being run primarily by EwD, which even to a veteran like him was astounding.

With no prior exposure to sign language, he decided to learn it by himself, a little each day, continuously egged on by his staff (whom he fondly calls his '*kids*'). He used an interesting technique where he framed a word he had just learnt, into every sentence he spoke to them, even if it was gibberish. He realised that even within the SHI world, there were substantial differences in communication such as ISL and American Sign Language (ASL) with further differences at regional levels, which often made it difficult every time someone came in from a different region. For visual communication, he found it important to understand the whole expression before responding, because the question could change any time based on the hand gestures and body language.

Another important realisation for him was that SHIs have small goals and want a simple life comprising a 9-6 job, monthly salary, normal wife and kids who take care of them. So, if they are offered the position of a manager, they are happy for life. Usually EwD are pampered within their family, and prefer their home environment. But over time, Mirchi & Mime became their extended family, providing them with a sense of belonging, making it a place they did not want to leave. Their genuine nature added to the lively and jubilant ambience that defined the Mirchi & Mime culture.

There were several initial glitches. For one, there was no organised facility to train Arun to work with EwD. When they constantly questioned him, he was forced to go back to the basics, so he could answer the questions *why* and *how?* He encouraged them to ask questions. The EwD soon realised the necessity to constantly upgrade their skills, noticing their non-disabled colleagues growing faster, despite their performances being relatively at or below par, which impacted them personally. But once inspired, they started learning new skills and taking responsibility which brought purpose and direction to their lives. Their biggest asset was their willingness to work and openness to learning.

Arun had an interesting way of managing EwD. After the initial sensitisation to set their expectations, he put them on specific roles. If they got good at something, he pushed them to learn something else and didn't allow them to go back. This led to tremendous cross-functional learning. Starting with a **Why not**, he trained them to **Do it in the best way possible** and end with **You can do it**! He constantly gave examples to help them understand the tasks that included role play and visual cues. As a result, he was able to deploy 25% of his entire staff from the PwD talent pool.

At a personal level, he noticed several changes. Where previously he was quick to judge people, he began to ask, *why not?* He became more tolerant, observant, started to listen more and stopped interrupting people. Arun has now started to believe in this cause and wants to make it better by focusing on the abilities of EwD, and providing greater opportunities for them as future trainers, supervisors and floor managers.

words' and is aimed at providing customers an '*aha!*' moment when they realise the connection between the name and the type of staff (SHI) employed.

- Branding is centred around promoting good food and quality service, not the employment of PwD.

- External communication – Case studies on Mirchi & Mime published in Kotler & Kella (15th edition) and by the company SIEMSA.

2.1.6 Key takeaways

Benefits of hiring EwD

- Low attrition, better service quality – standard roles such as in housekeeping and back office, often seen as monotonous by EwoD, have aspiration value for EwD.

- Low training costs over employee lifecycle due to higher retention periods for EwD.

- Top-line, bottom-line improvements.

- Novelty; first-of-its-kind differentiated service offering.

- Appropriate training at the right time ensures no mistakes from EwD thereafter.

- EwD perceive implicit customer needs, have eye for detail and good memory.

- They exceed customer expectations and have better relations because of their warm nature.

- The presence of EwD delays customer fatigue, engenders multiple visits, and builds up loyal customer base.

Challenges of hiring EwD

- Mindset of EwoD – unwillingness to work alongside EwD peers or with EwD managers

- Convincing EwD parents on safety.

- Adequate and safe facilities for pickup and drop need to be organised.

- Community acceptance.

- EwD get distracted, which results in miscommunication.

- No treatment by family in early years, which proves to be a big challenge.

Box 3: The Mirchi & Mime journey

Recruitment and Training

Hiring was done from six to seven SHI-focused schools. Multiple family members suspicious of wrong motives, accompanied the PwD, often interviewing panelists during recruitment. Initial scepticism was addressed by showing the physical place of work – the restaurant. Family members often stayed for hours in the first few weeks. EwD themselves had to be handled with sensitivity due to lack of previous experience. Thus, hiring SHI became a core business strategy as opposed to hiring one to two SHI as a CSR exercise. Gradually, since their child began to earn well, families acquiesced, and were in fact eventually very thankful to the founders.

Structure

Mirchi & Mime was designed to be a regular organisation engaging PwD with an employee ownership model. The founders, who owned a majority stake, decided to share 4-5% as Employee Stock Option (ESOP) every year starting from the first day aimed at creating a company with employee ownership. All company policies were created as per industry standards but aimed at becoming an industry benchmark. At a 10% lower Earnings Before Interest, Tax, Depreciation and Amortization (EBITDA) compared to industry standards, they were already over-staffed, and not wanting PwD to do two shifts. However, they decided to have minimum wages with tips retained by EwD. The company bought back ESOP from interested employees on its 3rd anniversary at a premium, creating immediate financial value for those who sold their stake.

Benchmark of Employing PwD

Since their entire staff comprised PwD, they did not have to worry about sensitisation. Changes required to accommodate SHI employees were identified, and close communication with families of EwD maintained to gain their trust. EwD , not used to working in professional environments, were taught the importance of maintaining professionalism.

Operations

- The organisation faced major issues in the first few days till PwD started picking up the work within a fortnight.
- Initial questions like "Why do it this way?" were understood, learnt to perfection and executed flawlessly. This was a sharp contrast to non-disabled staff who often slacked when not supervised.
- Shadow training costs for Indore staff in Mumbai were booked under training cost head.
- Continuous high productivity of SHI was ensured using their heightened visual sense.
- Appraisal system was driven by customer feedback and level of customer engagement by EwD.
- Rewards were often non-monetary including a monthly "Employee of the Month" event.

Financials

Below industry productivity norms were accepted. It became profitable from the fourth month onwards by including a slightly higher cost structure when calculating profitability. Equity was raised in multiple rounds aiming for a 100X+ valuation. In an interesting development, the founders are considering foundations for raising capital to support their expansion plan, leveraging their PwD focus.

Future

- Over next 20 years, 20 outlets are planned, with around 25 PwD per outlet.
- An open academy, focusing on SHI (one disability) and Hospitality training (one sector) is planned.

Trends

- Similar restaurants and cafes were opened. People connect through word of mouth.
- At times, EwD is the only earning member in a full-abled family, resulting in financial independence and increased confidence levels.
- Parents begin seeing them as an asset.
- Attrition levels: Overall industry average – 70%, PwD – 4%.

Source: Based on inputs from Raja Sekhar Reddy (primary investor), Prashant Issar (ex-CEO), Priya Jadhav (HR) and Arun Acharya (Restaurant Manager, Powai)

2.2 Lemon Tree

2.2.1 Genesis

Lemon Tree came into existence in 2003. Currently there are 5500+ rooms in 56 properties. Each property is mandated to have PwD, their numbers varying by location.

The basic principles for inclusive growth espoused by the Chairman and Managing Director (CMD):

• Focus on the person's ability, and not on their disability.

• Whatever we do, should be a business call.

• As we grow, we must grow together.

Employee Value Proposition comprises 5 key elements:

• Lifetime value through skilling and knowledge enhancement.

• Inclusive and diversified work place environment (a unique differentiator).

• Robust career progression and development.

• Employee delights and welfare measures.

• Flexi- and progressive employee policies.

About 10-11% of employee base are PwD, comprising 80% SHI, 12% LD, 2% VI (low vision), and 8% comprising of employees with dwarfism, autism, Down's Syndrome, slow learners, acid attack victims and other disability types.

• PwD is hired through on-campus hiring, word of mouth, employee recommendations and local advertisements (walk-ins).

• Housekeeping and F&B account for majority (73%) of EwD (Figure 4).

• Having started with two SHI in 2007 rising to 20-25 by 2008, HR noticed higher motivation levels in PwD. While attrition remains high at around 45-50%, Lemon Tree focuses on best-in-class training practices to ensure retention. Staff are generally not retrenched except for ethical issues.

2.2.2 Organisational aspects – Job mapping and recruitment

• A baseline has been created for people in existing job roles with detailed job mapping across 10 departments.

Figure 4: PwD distribution across functions at Lemon Tree

- Specific tests were conducted for PwD including visual tests for SHI/deaf employees. The exercise was structured such that the person's disability was rendered irrelevant for the tasks concerned; e.g., for an SHI, sitting at the table is easy, but s/he cannot answer a call. So it is ineffective to place them as telephone operators.

- All disability types were mapped to all roles to understand disparity. For example, billing may be too complex for a PwD with Down's Syndrome. In general, such roles were considered if about 80-90% of the tasks could be done by the PwD. In all cases, manpower planning was done assuming the PwD as a full contributor.

- At an organisational level, job mapping was done by disability type than on an individual basis. However, the hiring manager was allowed to assess suitability on a case-by-case basis, using their own ingenuity to understand the PwD personality and allocate roles accordingly.

- It was the Team Manager and not the senior management who made the final hiring decision.

Box 4: PwD engagement pilot with NGO/ Down's Syndrome/IDD

- Lemon Tree engaged an NGO in 2013-14 to employ PwD in a strategic manner. They stationed two senior executives from the NGO at the hotel for 15 days, observing in detail, all major activities there.
- The hotel realised that 93% of the tasks could be done by these PwD, specifically IDD.
- Key difficulty areas such as billing and explanation of food menu (comprising a few hundred items) were identified as tasks where disability would come in the way.
- These tasks were therefore removed from their JDs, but retained on the JDs of other EwD.
- Another key issue was related to night shift for IDD, especially those with Down's Syndrome, and it was advisable to assign morning/ afternoon shifts for them.
- Afternoon shift timings were adjusted from the usual 3 pm–12 am to a revised 1 pm–10 pm for those with Down's Syndrome.
- Counting was done within the existing teams to avoid any discrimination.

Even after hiring, consistent support was provided by the facilitators.

- When team members changed, NGO partners were brought in within 24 hours to ensure a smooth transition, and adequate sensitisation and communication with the PwD.

2.2.3 Professional development

Performance training and coaching

- An 80-hour workshop for all PwD (details in *Training Content* within *Training Process* section).
- *Performance coaching* (Figure 5) – PwD showcase learnings on the shop floor for assessment.

On-the-job adjustments and career planning

- Workplace adjustments made in terms of
  - Timings
  - Tasks that PwD can/cannot do
  - Accessibility of training modules for various kinds of PwD
- As managers grew in hierarchy (beyond 5 years), their familiarity with ISL was expected to improve over time and formed a part of Performance Management System (PMS), improving their dexterity at using ISL with PwD.
- In 2017, Lemon Tree invested in MindLeaders India that had expertise in engaging with PwD as customers. Now Lemon Tree is moving towards experience management for customers who are PwD; e.g., they are working on a "Quiet Hour for Autism" in hospitality.

Table 1 indicates the special arrangements made at Lemon Tree for each type of disability.

PwD hired at Lemon Tree go through different levels of assessment. Till date, PwD have grown till the level of Assistant Manager (Figure 6). Moving to senior levels requires integrated management skills and this is being explored by Lemon Tree in the interest of PwD career growth.

| Departmental Managers (Daily) | Operations Head (Monthly) | L&D Trainer (Quarterly) |

Figure 5: Performance coaching

Table 1: Placing PwD and special arrangements

Condition	Special Arrangements	Departments where employed
Speech and hearing impairment	Sign language	Restaurant, kitchen
Limited mobility / limb impairment	Accessibility of areas; workstation modified	Front office
Low vision	Extra light or brighter lighting	Kitchen
Low height (dwarfism)	Foldable ladders	Housekeeping
Intellectual disability	Condensed JD. Individual contribution roles	F&B, Housekeeping
Acid Victims	Special leave for continual treatment	Back-end operations
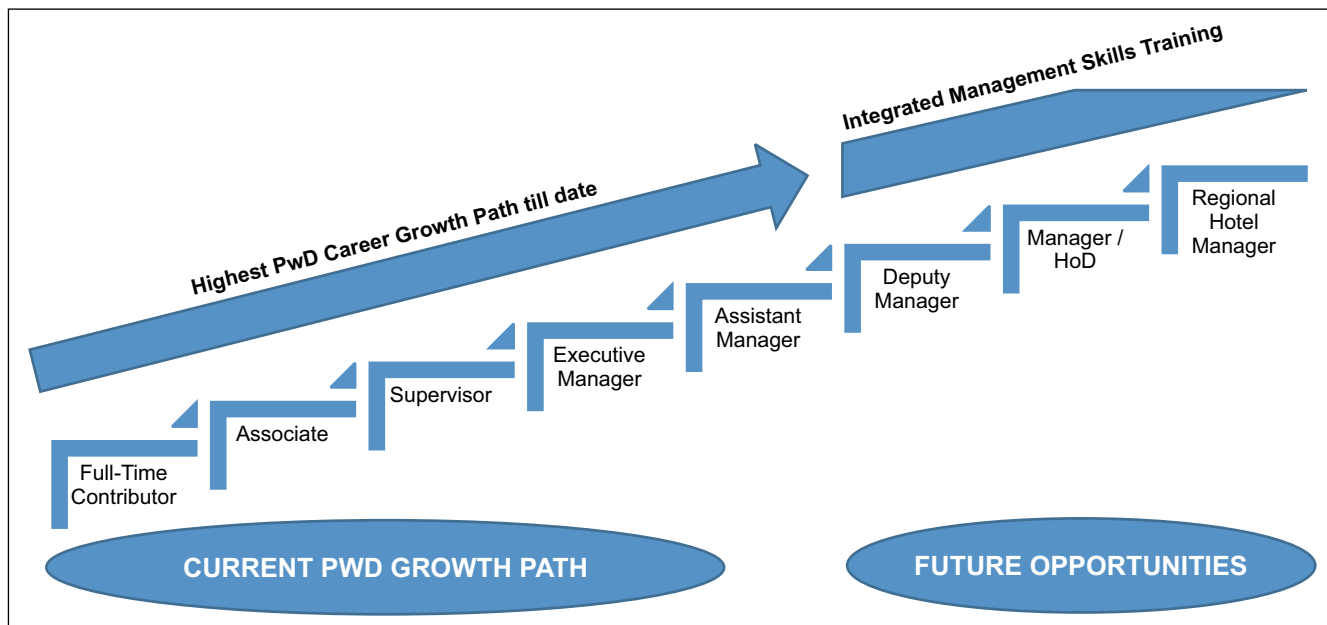
Figure 6: PwD Career Progression Chart (operations role) with future opportunities

Training Process

Shift Schedule for People with Down's Syndrome/ IDD

- First two months: 9 am-5 pm shift;

- Third month: Two shifts, 8 am-5 pm or 11 am–8 pm.

- Fourth month onwards: Normal shifts; 7 am–4 pm or 1 pm–10 pm.

Modes of training

- Hearing and deaf people are put in the same class to foster a sense of equality and co-learning.

- For ID employees requiring social learning and communication to ensure a threshold level of readiness, training is done in the work area and not in classrooms. To ensure a focussed learning process, a task list is drawn out in detail to help understand the Learning and Development (L&D) content.

- Braille is usually not used for those with VI/Low Vision. Instead, soft copies of the course content was created and made available for reading on JAWS software.

- For EwoD, Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) was taught a one-on-one basis, followed by a separate ISL module.

- Regular training was provided to HR by the L&D team on creating relevant content for PwD.

Training Content

- The training module comprises an 80-hr workshop covering two aspects: Behavioural (40%) and functional (60%), with only 20% classroom training and rest 80% on the shop floor.

- Training is provided on all hospitality-related functions including Front Office, House Keeping, Food & Beverage as well as Sales. Since last year, Lemon Tree has introduced content related to Kitchen, Security, Maintenance, HR and Accounts & Finance, with emphasis on sense-based learning and experiential learning.

2.2.4 Communication

Aradhana Lal, Vice President – Brand, Communications and Sustainability Initiatives, is from a sales and marketing background, having worked with Hindustan Unilever and Taj brands before she joined Lemon Tree in 2003. Her journey with inclusion started around 7 years back in 2012.

Aradhana believes that there are two basic needs for PwD hiring: *Openness (of the mind and processes) and Training*. Hiring of PwD is a pure HR strategy, and part of the Business Model at Lemon Tree. She reminisces her journey in Lemon Tree back to 2007 when they first started experimenting with PwD. Within 2 years after they started piloting, the Chairman along with HR felt so strongly about the initiative that they decided to make it an integral part of the company's business model and strategy.

In order to do this, they started by ensuring all staff (especially people in operations) knew Hindi, English and ISL, assessed through an exam with an 80% pass mark. They tied up with a specialised ISL interpreter who was called in at various times to ensure a seamless communication experience between the PwD and remaining staff. There were regular meetings between the interpreter and HR to address any EwD issues.

2.2.5 Cultural Aspects and HR Perspective

Lemon Tree has a very elaborate process to make sure PwD are included across the employee value chain within the organisation as indicated in Figure 7.

Box 5 provides an example of how the right fitment can lead to substantial productivity increase of the EwD.

- Every new employee is taken through a 2-3 hour classroom-based induction programme. This includes a detailed understanding of what the terms mean, about various disabilities, understanding of types and the nature of each disability including the kind of PwD hired. Photographs are used for better understanding.

- The significance of behavioural skills is stressed strongly, some of which is re-integrated during the training workshop. Feedback is sought on daily basis during the induction.

- A key aspect to note is that every employee of Lemon Tree is imbued with a sense of inclusion in a way that it is part of the culture and a necessity in order to be part of the team.

- The induction programme content is built by L&D but run by HR.

Box 5: Effective job mapping

A productivity study by Lemon Tree some years back suggested that a non-PwD houseman, in a day, can do 12-15 rooms in a luxury property and 19-20 rooms at a mid-market segment property such as Lemon Tree. However, a SHI PwD can do an astounding 22 rooms in the same 9-hour span, indicating 15% more productivity. Over a period of time, it was noticed that reducing the scope of work for PwD, while increasing the expected volume for limited tasks led to greater efficiencies for such roles. Lemon Tree believes that often EwD can do this due to their higher level of discipline including timely lunch breaks, lower breaks between tasks and ability to focus more on the work at hand due to fewer distractions. Overall, sometimes they can have higher levels of intrinsic motivation for the same job role as compared to a non-disabled staff member.

Understand the disablity	Sensitization	Job Mapping	Basic special arrangements	Work & Productivity Study	Business Process Re-engineering	Career Progression	Engagement Survey
• Sustainability/ HR works with facilitating NGO and specialists • Gain deep undertanding	• Pre-hiring • Post-hiring • Of staff • Of C-suite • Of customers	• Identify the key tasks • Link the role to tasks such that they render the disability irrelevant	• For each disability type to be hired • Across all major access areas	• Understand effectivenes, difficulties in job role • Improve PwD role fitment based on data	• Signage • Modified processes • Customer expectation setting	• Multiple skill training • Managerial training • Competency assessment	• General staff • PwD staff • Channel partners • Ongoing improvement

Figure 7: The Lemon Tree PwD engagement process

Figure 8: An EwD helping a PwD customer

- Training for associates occurs at different levels that are labelled 101, 201 and 301 for first, second and third levels respectively. For PwD, the corresponding labels are V101, V201 and V301 to help HR track their training progress.

- Down's Syndrome employees are affectionately termed as "*Happy People*" because of their ever-cheerful attitude.

2.2.6 Key takeaways and best practices

Lemon Tree views the investment in experiences including failed experiments, as the cost of learning. This exposes employees, including EwD to moments of truth where they experience things hands-on, in real time in a live environment. Now they are planning to work across disabilities and across departments in a deeper manner to make PwD hiring a part of business as usual. Figure 9 shows the process of using an experiential learning process for SHI.

Figure 10 indicates some of the best practices and strategic initiatives practised at Lemon Tree for PwD engagement.

TELLING	SHOWING	DOING	ASSESSMENT
• In sign language • About actual process	• Presentation and/or video (picture-in-picture) • About various steps	• The task by a trainer • As a demonstration	• Of the PwD on their ability to perform at a certain level
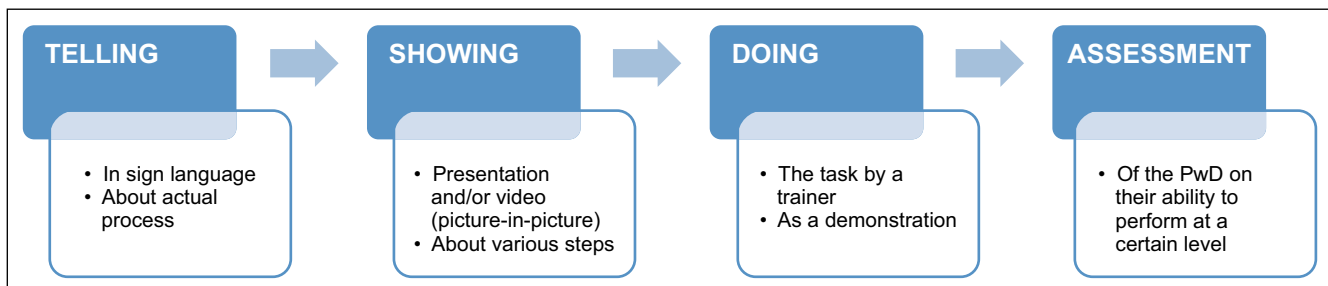
Figure 9: Tell-Show-Do-Assess process for SHI PwD

Hiring in pairs	• Especially for SHI - a buddy for each hire - greater engagement • Ensures SHI can communicate with someone at all times
Mandatory ISL training	• For every employee joining the system • Since 80% of EwD is SHI
ISL Dictionary	• Comprising a picture (in ISL) • Accompanying text to explain a task
Sensitizing partner NGOs and VRCs	• About industry happenings (sharing anecdotes) • Set sexpectations of PwD while hiring
Video (Picture in Picture)	• Training content video on primary screen & video in ISL on top right • Similar to News for SHI on Doordarshan
Training Assessment	• Different nomenclature used fo EwD to help HR ensure their progression is not hindered once they go through multiple trainings
Badges	• Explaining condition of EwD • Avoid miscommunication with guests
Seedless whistles	• For SHI staff to call out/alert other employees • Especially useful in case of emergencies
Numbered Menus	• Making it easy for customers to communicate orders to EwD
Me Book (Down's Syndrome trainee)	• Flipbook containing time, image of activity and description in words • Covering each task that EwD is expected to do during the whole day
Silent Saturday (Bangalore, Hyderabad)	• For morning breakfast, whole outlet is handled by SHI. • Table mat displays most probable phrases used by customers
Hiring Guidelines	• For each type of disability • Includes Do's/Don'ts
Engagement Chat with GM	• 1-1 monthly chat with EwD based on an engagement calendar • EwD can write and voice their concerns with top management
Electronic notice board	• For vacancy for PwD within the organisation
Exit Interview	• Of EwD with Interpreter • Allows exiting EwD to voice their concerns

Figure 10: Strategic initiatives and best practices

Source: Inputs from Aradhana Lal (VP - Brand, Communications & Sustainability initiatives), Kuntal Vegad (Associate General Manager, L&D) and R. Hari (General Manager, HR)

2.3 Café Coffee Day (CCD)

OVERALL SUMMARY

About

A vertically integrated Indian café chain owned by Coffee Day Global Limited, a subsidiary of Coffee Day Enterprises Limited.

India presence

1530 outlets, 28 states

No. of Employees; No. of EwD

5,000+; 179

Disabilities Supported

SHI

Functional Roles for PwD

Coffee-making, Customer-facing

Reasons for Inclusion

Create a company with an inclusive culture

Key modifications for EwD

Visual training videos, written appraisals.

Key initiatives

Special induction programme for SHI, focussing on smell, taste and vision.

Challenges

* Convincing parents of PwD
* Manager perceptions about PwD
* Getting quality PwD

Results

* A pioneer in PwD inclusion in hospitality and QSR sector
* Winner of Helen Keller Award in 2013 for work on disability.

2.3.1 Genesis

PwD hiring first started at Café Coffee Day when the CEO was approached by a blind engineer's family for a job. Shyamala Deshpande, Ex-HR Head, Café Coffee Day, handling training at that time and in transition to a role in HR, decided to take this up systematically. Initially one to two PwD were hired in the corporate office. The focus was on 10th and 12th pass-outs and aligned to the strategy of hiring and training freshers.

* Realisations about uniqueness of QSRs and action plan.
    - Unlike a hotel with a non-visible back area, the whole café is visible to customers.

- Workforce and clients (students) were a young lot.
- The intention was to treat PwD with sensitivity, but to ensure that did not stand out because of their disability.
- Hospitality industry wanting certain physicality of staff, and hence, focused on SHI (invisible disability).
- Basic filters such as basic English and ability to read and write in place for selecting PwD talent.

* Shyamala's first job was to get them to make coffee.
* Though monotonous, SHI worked intently, like artists, due to their heightened sensitivity of touch, sight and smell as a result of their disability of speech and hearing.
* Interpreters and trainers were present in a training room comprising café counters.
* After initial drills they were brought to the front.
* They were given the option to drop out at the end of 2 weeks.

2.3.2 Organisational Aspects

* CCD built a business case for hiring PwD.
* They templatised disability by creating a training module and reasonable accommodation measures.
* Some EwD managed outlets which included managing EwoD.
* PwD with high IQ levels picked up really well and had a higher command over their job. Some PwD who made it to manager level were actually recommended by their leads.
* PwD were placed in corporate cafés with high level of repeats to induce familiarity – this led to more repeat customers.
* Low IQ PwD were given office jobs.
* In general, PwD prefer interaction and crave to be part of a team.
* Focus was only on SHI to make it sustainable and scalable

- By Apr 2017, CCD had about 160 (2%) employees as PwD. The number rose to 179 by 2018.

2.3.3 Professional development

- Assessment metrics were used, including types of items, ability to follow recipe, preparation quality and attitude.
- Since most PwD had low levels of education, CCD was non-committal about creating a formal growth process. They wanted the process to be an organic one.
- Extra accommodation measures are viable only if there are sufficient number of EwD.
- 2-3% of the PwD employees took up this opportunity, showed initiative and grew with the organisation, even participating in coffee making competitions and subsequently becoming trainers.

2.3.4 Cultural aspects

- Difficult to engage PwD in India, and extra effort is needed owing to lack of enablers.
- It was found that the best way is to find one person, one evangelist willing to own the process.
- It is essential to bring this up in several smaller forums rather than do it at once.
- On World Disability Day, CCD organised a visit for the parents, and gave the day off to EwD.

2.3.5 Communication

- Customers have fewer expectations from PwD.
- Customer has to directly interface with the waiter. So miscommunication is reduced.
- Managers step in when there are communication issues.
- EwD gives bill book to customers with some basic sign language.

2.3.6 Key takeaways

Benefits

- Potential untapped talent pool. Quality talent available at reasonable cost.

- Desirable for more people to open restaurants – tried, tested and showcased.
- Attrition is 100% at unit level, hence PwD make a good talent pool.
- Nullifying initial hiring and training costs, there were a substantial number of EwD who worked at CCD for 6-7 years.

Challenges

- Parents and PwD employees come as one unit, and must be handled sensitively.
- PwD need counselling for at least 3 months initially. They then sync with the professional environment, else may leave for nominal pay increments.
- Adequate safety precautions must be ensured such as sending messages once EwD reach home.
- Local HR must take responsibility of safety and security for the first few months.
- HR must be willing to deal with issues sensitively when EwD's career aspirations do not match capabilities.
- They must make some special allowances for high-performing EwD.
- Managers must work with PwD to improve their own perception about their abilities.
- PwD have more options now – with jobs available in the government, retail sector, and hotels.

Opportunities

- Job mapping: Roles vs skill sets vs disabilities vs reasonable accommodation measures.
- Ready reckoner list of NGOs to serve as facilitators.
- Get into mission mode and work like a nodal agency, making it part of the organisational agenda.
- NGOs can engage in project management to implement this in a turnkey manner for clients.

Source: Inputs from Shyamala Deshpande (Ex-HR Head, Café Coffee Day)

2.4 Sodexo On-Site Services Global – International Perspective

OVERALL SUMMARY

About

Sodexo On-site Services is a food and facilities management company which, combined with three other business lines, is the 18th largest employer globally.

Presence

- 34,000 sites, 80 countries (Global)
- 1,300 sites, 600 clients (India)

No. of Employees; No. of EwD

- Global: 460,000
- India: 45,000; 86

Disabilities Supported

Almost all types of disabilities

Functional Roles for PwD

Restaurants, cleaning services, procurement, HR; senior management roles

Reasons for Inclusion

Part of company mission

Key modifications for EwD

Disabled-friendly client sites

Key initiatives

Executive committees dedicated to PwD facilitation, global campaigns (*Open Up*) for PwD to speak up.

Challenges

No universal definition, differing legislative contexts, biased mind-sets, PwD placement, low availability of PwD for managerial roles

Results

- Global disability taskforce
- PwD inclusion culture for both stages – by birth/acquired

2.4.1 Genesis

Sodexo's PwD journey started in the US in 2002 with several senior level positions created over the years to support the PwD inclusion agenda. In India it started around 2009-10 and has since evolved to include about 86 PwD across locations.

- Sodexo's mission is to improve *Quality of Life of its employees, clients, consumers and partners.*
- Inclusion is core to the values of team spirit, service spirit and spirit of progress. Inclusion of PwD is one of the Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) priorities.

Figure 11: Megan Horsburgh, Head of Diversity & Inclusion UKI, & Global Disability Leader

- Sodexo successfully created PwD champions and sponsors globally, using a top down, middle out and bottom up approach.
- They engage people at all levels within the company by setting up a global disability taskforce and disability voice programme.

2.4.2 Organisational aspects

- In India, Sodexo uses RPwD Act 2016 as its defining guide.
- Functions with highest opportunity are given to PwD, and include housekeeping and steward roles as well as maintenance personnel, confectioners and regular managerial roles.
- Currently trying to hire acid attack victims.
- PwD are sourced primarily through NGOs.
- Key reasons for hiring EwD:
  - There is potential to hire both blue collar and white-collar professionals.
  - PwD with the right mindset can be trained for various roles – this allows sourcing across a wider variety and multiple disability types.
  - There is a ripple effect on the family and community around the PwD employed as well as the Sodexo teams they work with. (*refer anecdote in Box* 6: Anecdotes from the field)

Maddy, a woman with multiple disabilities -- intellectual and physical -- finished her education and was struggling to find employment. She was introduced to Sodexo through an internship and subsequently taken in as an employee.

Her mother, in an email to the company management, shared that the job not only provided Maddy with a source of income and purpose, but also helped her build a community of people who could support her in various stages of life. It provided Maddy with the independence she did not have previously, improved her quality of life, and gave her happiness, because of a sense of purpose and engagement that the job provided.

Box 6: Anecdotes from the field

Potential changes required to enable a PwD-friendly culture

- Training in basic sign language.

- Processes should be made available to ensure that the HR team and NGO partners discuss the nature of the disability, Sodexo's hiring, intention, policies, and liability if discriminated against, with the internal team, including client teams involved in working with the PwD and Sodexo teams.

- Some workplace solutions should be implemented when required. For example, get SHI to work in pairs (also enhances security), badges for intellectual disability with supervisor name and number, job mapping for each disability and roles they can perform.

- Appropriate training to enable EwD with different kinds of disabilities do their jobs well.

2.4.3 Professional development

- Megan Horsburgh, Head of Diversity and Inclusion, UKI has dyslexia (ID) and explains that she can be situationally disabled. While she can work without any problems on a normal day, facilitating a training programme with multiple inputs from a group of colleagues and writing on a flip chart can be challenging for her. But she has been able to manage this effectively, and has been leading the UK inclusion initiatives for the last 7 years. She recently became the Global Disability Leader.

- Sodexo intends to make a substantial impact on specific types of disability, especially where there have been success stories that can be used to get buy-in from client top management.

- Career growth based on competency for all employees is ensured irrespective of disability status.

- Currently Sodexo is talking to clients and getting their concurrence for the inclusion of PwD.

- Humanising disability by getting people to talk about it, and encouraging role models to share information as part of their human experience is important.

- Use of multiple media such as webinars and communication campaigns to share stories.

- Engaging all managerial levels to ensure their contribution helps people open their minds to disability and embrace it as part of their daily life, thus enhancing performance.

Sodexo Disability Inclusion Strategy

Table 2 shows a 5-stage process focussing on providing a complete employee lifecycle solution approach to all PwD employees.

2.4.4 Cultural aspects

Key components to initiate and sustain a PwD-inclusive culture

- Equal opportunity policy.

- Awareness creation: Recruiters aligned to the agenda; specific recruiter and operators in every region to find PwD talent.

- Spirit of Inclusion workshop.

- Town-hall /roadshows /live chats – Talk about recruitment of PwD.

- Support PwD from birth or those with acquired disability (83% of disabilities are acquired during their lifetime). Provide a sense of job security to employees; make Sodexo a preferred employer with no fear of retrenchment just due to acquired disability during work-life.

Enablers

- PwD often know what is best for them and how to overcome barriers.

- Culture of openness to disabilities.

- Giving people confidence by providing a key understanding about their disabilities even in the absence of detailed medical knowledge.

- Right leadership commitment to D&I.

- Continually reviewing and upgrading policies; provisions for punitive action measures.

- Discouraging tags targeting PwD.

Table 2: Sodexo 5-stage disability inclusion strategy

Lever	Key initiatives (India-specific, global programs also added)
Recruiting	• Work with external organisations, NGOs to source candidates • Tie up with clients, Sodexo site team/office management team on shortlisting roles for candidates with disabilities • Targeted job boards (UK and USA)
Welcoming	• Sensitisation of site employees • Induction of persons with disability at site • Nominate buddy at site to support inclusion • Voices – Provide a (worldwide) platform for PwDs to speak openly about their disabilities • Employee Business Resource Groups (EBRG) including Sodexo's Organization for disAbility Resources, SOAR (USA)
Living	• Work place additions and solutions to ensure there are no challenges for new hire. • Includes safety requirements, additional training for new employees (especially in the case of intellectual disability), etc. • American with Disabilities Act (ADA) Accommodations Process (USA) • LifeWorks and Flexibility Inclusion Team – Internal PwD support resources (USA) • Leveraging Inclusion for Frontline Talent (LIFT) – PwD mentorship programme (USA) • EBRG Newsletter (UK & USA) • National Disability Employment Awareness Month/ International Disability day (worldwide) • Training and Skill Building - seven courses on disability (USA) • Resources, Referrals and Tools (Worldwide)
Growing	• Front line staff to be certified on skills under Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojna (PMKVY) • Mentoring programme (worldwide) Example: IMPACT, Peer-to-Peer, Buddy programme • Diversity summits/conferences (worldwide) • Virtual Learning Platform (USA)
Rewarding	• Recognition for mentors • Diversity champions • SOAR Scholarships (USA)

(Sources: Sodexo literature on "Inclusive Individuals with Disabilities" and HR inputs)

Disablers

- Lack of policy implementation, infrastructure, awareness and necessary tools to enable PwD (India specific).
- Attitude of the non-disabled towards PwD.

2.4.5 Communication

- Disability roundtable workshops to create awareness about PwD engagement.
- Engaging with clients to help them understand inclusivity; and making inclusivity a part of business development presentations.
- Globally Sodexo creates campaigns such as *Open Up*, designed to create awareness about invisible disability, urging PwD to talk about their disability and non-disabled people to be open to learn more about the experiences of PwD.

- Global Disability Task Force representing D&I across the globe; periodic meetings; action items that are then deployed across the company. These are then used by the communications team to create specific campaigns for PwD inclusion.

2.4.6 Key takeaways

Benefits

- It helps become a preferred service provider for clients with strong D&I policy. Engage with clients who are driving inclusion to create recruitment opportunities in Sodexo teams supporting their offices.
- It binds the organisation together where different departments such as HR and Operations work together to turn inclusion into a culture at an organisational level.

- Makes a huge impact on the families of PwD. It fulfils their parents' hopes of being able to see their children gainfully employed.
- Access to a different talent pool as recruitment solutions.
- Overall employee engagement and positive attitude towards the employer.
- Lower absenteeism, lower attrition levels and high engagement, not just for PwD employees but for the whole team.
- Good client feedback and support often helping the organisation become a preferred service provider.

Challenges

- Definition of disability as well as the legislative context varies substantially across geographies and within regions in the same location. For example, it is broad-based in UK whereas in Poland, people need to get certificates for specific types of disability.
- Overcoming stigma. Encouraging PwD to open up to their conditions and creating an organisational environment where this is accepted without judgement or discrimination.
- Some clients are hesitant to hire PwD due to limited understanding of ways to manage them (e.g., fears of safety or hazardous incidents, accessibility issues).

- Supply demand gap – in India, despite Sodexo's best intentions to fill in management positions with PwD, availability of such candidates in the market is limited.

Opportunities

- PwD have skills and talent that are unique and provide a great talent pool for the business. With more awareness and some initial investments, business stands to gain much more in the long run.
- For global organisations like Sodexo, there is an opportunity to universalise definitions around PwD to help create streamlined processes at organisational levels.
- Facilitators working with PwD are often community based or tend to be focussed within cities. So there are opportunities to create larger organisations or collectives that can offer partnerships at national and international levels. For example, entrepreneurs can partner with other organisations as a collective to provide PwD employment-linked value chain services.
- Corporates should work with PwD facilitators on areas other than recruitment to create a support ecosystem for its PwD employees.
- Work with facilitators to get access to best practices within a location.

"PwD inclusion in our teams have not only impacted the lives of those we have employed, but also impacted other employees and clients/consumers very positively. Our employees have reported performance improvement and higher motivation in the teams. Clients have been particularly involved in many cases, where their support has strengthened this effort. This inclusion has assisted us to meet our recruitment needs from this untapped talent pool."

Rishi Gour, Country President – Corporate Services, Sodexo India

Source: Inputs from Megan Horsburgh (Diversity and Inclusion Head, UK & Ireland) and Sreya Oberoi (HR-India); Literature on Inclusion of EwD at Sodexo.

3. Rising Stars of the Hospitality and QSR Sector – Case Studies

This chapter describes some of the rising stars in the QSR and hospitality sector, companies who are at various stages of their inclusion journey and making an effort to incorporate inclusivity as part of their business processes in various ways.

OVERALL SUMMARY

About

SodaBottleOpenerWala (SBOW) started in November 2013 in Gurgaon.

India presence

Nine cafés across four cities

No. of Employees; No. of EwD

- Pan-India: 400+; 22–25
- Delhi: 25; 5

Disabilities Supported

SHI

Functional Roles for PwD

Customer-facing roles

Reasons for Inclusion

Senior management belief in SHI as a core resource

Key modifications for EwD

Early departure, morning shifts

Key initiatives

- Quarterly sensitisation programme
- 15-day Internship stipend prior to hiring

Challenges

- High attrition
- Poor discipline
- Sense of entitlement of EwD
- Casual attitude of EwoD towards EwD

Results

- 22-25 EwD across nine outlets
- EwD Training program

3.1 SodaBottleOpenerWala

3.1.1 Genesis

SodaBottleOpenerWala (SBOW) was started by Olive Group. The idea was to reimagine and continue the legacy of Irani cafés. Mohit Balachandran, the then

Figure 12: Shatarupa Das – HR Head, SodaBottleOpenerWala

Country Director for SBOW, was the key driver behind hiring PwD. His desire to mainstream the SHI through restaurant business found an able general in Shatarupa Das, who joined him on this journey to create a more inclusive organisation.

- SBOW believes that it is essential not to introduce too many process changes during the inclusion process to ensure that mainstreaming of PwD is sustainable in the long run.

- This was driven by a *social motive* to create a more inclusive environment and generate goodwill by hiring PwD.

- Underlying *business motive* was based on the assumption that the goodwill would lead to improved brand image.

- Hiring PwD could also potentially create a more robust and sustainable people process by reducing the possibility of poaching by other organisations, and contributing to a higher retention rate of EwD.

3.1.2 Organisational aspects

- SBOW use Deaf and Hard of Hearing instead of 'Speech and Hearing Impaired (SHI)' since they believe *impaired* means damaged/weakened, which is interpreted as broken by SHI.

- SHI must know all aspects of operations.

- Work only with SHI. Since QSRs often work in a high pressure environment, working with a large volume of customers coming in bursts, interactions between people with different disabilities like deaf-blind or deaf-autistic could lead to various complications.

- EwD are allowed to leave early by 11 pm, though the outlet is open till 1 am.

- Flexibility is essential to accommodate holidays like Holi, where PwD ask for leave irrespective of work schedule.

Experiment with mandatory rules to enable PwD engagement

- SBOW tried to introduce tests with strict pass marks for EwoD – to test ISL competence and linked it to pay cuts if they failed.

- This often led to discriminatory behaviour by EwoD towards EwD due to a feeling of deprivation on their account, leading to EwD attrition.

- This was later modified making tests mandatory but de-linked from pay.

Process of hiring PwD – Entry to exit

- One-on-one interview with 20-30 people initially.

- SBOW visits SHI institutes, introduce themselves and list out job details and expectations.

- SHI institutes' personnel visit SBOW to help existing staff understand in detail about working with EwD.

- Interested candidates are invited to work at SBOW for 15 days on a stipend, including working full 10-hr shifts with breaks.

- A sensitisation programme is carried out every 3 months for all employees.

- Typical reasons for exit – standing for long, scared to interact with the guests, too much work, poor work-life balance due to long working hours.

3.1.3 Professional development

- PwD are put on the floor after a month of training vis-à-vis 15 days for EwoD.

- Staff start with minimum wage and then increments happen based on performance.

- Pre on-boarding communication is done to ensure PwD understand the demanding requirements of a QSR.

- Assessments –
  - Quantitative aspects such as ability to translate staff interactions to sale.
  - Qualitative aspects such as ability to understand and communicate with guests, deliver food to the customers and get feedback.

Training and development

- While training is the same for all staff, PwD are given more time to learn various activities such as cleaning tables, picking up the order and delivering to guest.

- Five EwD staff members out of a total of 25 have been promoted over the last 2 years since the first EwD batch was inducted.

3.1.4 Cultural aspects

- Constant negotiations are part of the QSR journey. On the one hand, EwoD often feel learning ISL is not necessary due to the limited number of EwD. On the other hand, PwD often make commitments about punctuality to get the job, which they fail to keep after joining.

Figure 13a-c: (Top) Menu Card (Reverse), (Bottom Left) Menu Images, (Bottom Right) Order Slip

- EwD are particularly sensitive to physical touch and hence managers and peers must be sensitive on how they are approached, especially during peak hours when there is high pressure for timely service.

- EwD often leave because they either want a secure government job or get a higher salary elsewhere.

- Constant reinforcement through regular sensitisation over an extended period of time leads to level of acceptance that can then slowly translate into company culture.

3.1.5 Communication

Food Ordering Process

The photos in Figure 14 show the food ordering process.

3.1.6 Key takeaways

Benefits

- EwD are more focussed and hence more productive at work. No time is wasted gossiping.

- This helps improve goodwill and brand image.

Challenges

- Lack of sensitisation between EwD and EwoD about one anothers' challenges.

- QSR pay standards lower than hotels. Hence it is often difficult to retain EwD.

- SHI go to regular schools and hence do not receive adequate grooming for professional jobs.

- Training has to start from scratch owing to lack of adequate schools for the deaf.

Figure 14a-c: (Top) Order placing using coded menu card; (centre) Order ready with name plate; (bottom) Name plate display by EwD to customer during order delivery

- EwD may lack professionalism in some cases – incorrect sense of right and wrong, poor punctuality.
- There is a tendency to take peers along when they leave.
- There is an occasional sense of entitlement.
- EwD preference to morning shift leads to discord with EwoD.

Opportunities

- Payroll cost management is possible by training EwD for managerial roles rather than external recruitment, since they are more focussed, learn faster and stay longer.

- Create a more engaging environment by reinforcing the concept of inclusivity consistently over a long period of time. Can help increase the retention rate of EwD.
- Constant exposure of EwoD to the SHI world through role playing exercises develops sensitivity in staff.
- Special institutes for SHI can help train them for professional jobs in hospitality including training on functional competencies, hygiene aspects and soft skills.

Source: Inputs from Shatarupa Das (HR-Manager, SodaBottleOpenerWala) and Mohit Balachandran (Ex-Country Director, SodaBottleOpenerWala)

3.2 Café Echoes

ECHOES

OVERALL SUMMARY

About

Café Echoes was started in Delhi in December 2015.

India presence

Five restaurants across four cities

No. of Employees; No. of EwD

100+; 40

Disabilities Supported

SHI

Functional Roles for PwD

All roles (except in kitchen and maintenance) till level of Captain

Reasons for Inclusion

Doing something creative yet socially inclusive

Key modifications for EwD

Coded menu cards, flipcharts with instructions, ISL displays, calling switches at tables

Key initiatives

Written SOP, training on mannerisms, functional and soft skills, supporting EwoD managers

Challenges

Little/no formal education, poor discipline, lack of social understanding, poor attendance

Results

- Almost 40% PwD staff.
- Increased PwD hiring in cafes around city, based on Café Echoes' experience.
- More aware millennial customers

Prateek Babbar –Co-founder, Café Echoes

3.2.1 Genesis

Café Echoes was started by a group of six friends - Gaurav Kanwar, Kshitij Behl, Prateek Babbar, Sahib Sarna, Sahil Gulati and Shivansh Kanwar – to create a QSR with a difference. During a visit to Lemon Tree, they noticed the deftness of EwD. They wanted a QSR combining social purpose with business, and wanted to create a community where PwD would not feel left out.

- They started with an interior designer to create a motivating and inclusive ambience, then hired PwD for customer-facing roles.
- The café was positioned in a university area to attract students and parents, and help them get a fresh perspective on inclusion.

- Three of the founders are from a hotel management background, and hence could set up the first café in a very short time.
- They managed to make it profitable from day one by pooling in personal finances.

3.2.2 Organisational aspects

- Deliberately chose to downplay the role of technology by designing Café Echoes in a rustic manner with an old-world feel.
- This created a strong interactive bonding process between customers and EwD.
- Café Echoes took inspiration from the airline industry's use of push-buttons for calling air hostesses/stewards, using a suitable substitute in the form of a hanging switch at each table.

- They hired PwD for all subsequent outlets based on positive customer feedback.
- Kolkata is the only exception as it served alcohol and EwoD were hired to avoid unpleasant situations dealing with drunk customers.
- EwD not hired for kitchen to avoid hazardous conditions.
- Hiring is done mostly through NGOs.
- Freshers are hired and trained in-house including training on mannerisms.
- There is no upselling/down selling. Customers order what they want; this lends authenticity to the overall ambience, and aligned with the simple approach of SHI staff.

3.2.3 Professional development

- Steward to Senior Steward to Captain to Assistant Manager to Manager.
- EwD can rise till the level of Captain.
- EwD travel to other cities to train staff.
- While EwD are encouraged to study, it was noticed that they tend not to study on their own without supervision and mentorship.
- All written SOPs to ensure that all staff understand expectations clearly.
- Interpreters used to train PwD in a shorter period vis-à-vis training by staff, which is more time consuming.
- Train the trainer. PwD keep separate time from their schedule when they can train juniors.

3.2.4 Cultural aspects

Enablers

- No interaction with family (including video calls) at work. Messages are noted and informed.
- Family is informed in case of delay, to discourage drinking by EwD after work.
- PwD are taught code of conduct, relevance of leave, professionalism (no scratching, no relaxation in front of customers) – this is not taught in most primary schools.
- Trust-building exercises done with PwD before training to improve receptivity.

Disablers

- Often, PwD start working as early as at 19 years, skipping school or college, which in turn inhibits their career growth.
- Lack of adequate training schools for PwD means that often PwD sent for work are not matured enough to handle professional environments.
- Owing to lack of experience, at times PwD are unable to appreciate the support provided.

3.2.5 Communication

- Water bottle kept on the table so customers don't need to order water repeatedly.
- EwD waiter carries glasses and a coded menu.
- Orders are placed by writing code, quantity and special notes (e.g., no chillies).
- EwD are equipped with notepads to ensure customer requirements are recorded accordingly.
- Sign language is displayed inside the café and small flipcharts with instructions are available for other instructions or requests besides ordering food.
- Streamlined processes reduce overthinking by customers who often don't even feel the difference vis-à-vis a regular restaurant (without EwD)

3.2.6 Key takeaways

Benefits

- Higher productivity than normal staff at the same pay scale (as per industry standard).
- With adequate training, EwD have also managed to be cashiers.
- They are quick learners and are not resistant to change.
- Employing PwD suits the theme of the café.

Challenges

- Huge supply demand mismatch when looking for qualified and skilled PwD candidates.
- Dealing with vendors requires EwoD since discussions are mostly over call.
- Lack of discipline, often due to lack of formal schooling.
- Maintenance jobs by PwD were found to be difficult due to issues in communication.

- They must be handled sensitively in cases of inappropriate behaviour to avoid retaliation.

- There is a possibility of them misinterpreting the manager's body language; e.g., if a manager shows anger on his/her face, they assume the manager is angry with them, even though the reason could be something else.

- It is difficult to elevate EwD to managerial roles since they may lack social skills – interaction, mannerisms, sense of responsibility – and formal education. Managers typically come with a degree in hotel management, and more than a decade of management experience, which is not the case with in-house EwD.

- High EwD attrition up to 30% due to low mental readiness to accept professional responsibilities.

Opportunities

- More people are hiring PwD based on the experience of Café Echoes.

- Since EwD are the majority, they have a community to connect with, within the organisation.

- Managers must be trained to manage their body language through proper training since PwD are extremely responsive to body language. At present, no such training programmes exist.

- Professionals can start their own certification/ training programme, specifically for hospitality industry. However, it is important to work out payment mechanisms from parents/employing organisation.

- Entrepreneurs can start social media marketing ventures for training sector players, specifically on PwD engagement to create a diverse and inclusive company culture.

Source: Inputs from Prateek Babbar (Co-founder).

3.3 Chai Pe Charcha

OVERALL SUMMARY
About
Chai Pe Charcha was started in December 2015 in Mumbai.
India presence
Eight outlets across Mumbai
No. of Employees; No. of EwD
40; 10
Disabilities Supported
SHI, LD
Functional Roles for PwD
All roles including Manager
Reasons for Inclusion
Inculcating a fighting spirit in PwD
Key modifications for EwD
Minimal. Want all staff to be treated equally by customers.
Key initiatives
Tables have SHI written to indicate the presence of EwD, train the trainer using EwD, elevate EwD to manager roles
Challenges
Complacency, rigidity at times, inability to manage emotions at workplace, tendency to use disability as an excuse to gain sympathy
Results
• 25% PwD staff
• Got awarded the most innovative café

3.3.1 Genesis

- Karan Kohli, the founder, was born with a limb disability. He managed the family-owned hotel in Mumbai for 2 years, post MBA. He then spotted a major market gap – 2/3 of India drinks tea; only 400-500 formal tea shops pan-India – and decided to create a tea chain to serve as a place for meetups over a cup of tea.

- *Chai pe Charcha* literally meaning "conversations over tea", was adapted from an Indian tradition, where people sit around a roadside tea shop for *charcha* (conversations) with a *chai* (tea) glass in hand discussing anything under the sun.

- Objective – to provide casual space for professionals and students to sit, relax, have tea and play board games.

- The founder's own disability since birth served as a motivation to create employment for PwD with

industry-standard salaries and to give them a reason to be proud of themselves.

- The idea was to challenge the notion that they were inferior and to inculcate the fighting spirit in them.

- This was best exemplified when Arun ran his first café by himself for 15-20 days after all his PwD staff left *en masse* the day after getting their first salary, disheartened by low sales.

- An avid cricket player who never let disability get in the way, Anil is often inspired by his victories on the cricket field and applies the principles learnt there, to his business venture.

3.3.2 Organisational aspects

- PwD were hired as key staff to create a distinct identity.

- Initially PwD were hired as servers till they demanded to be given other roles in inventory, ordering and software management.

- The café manager did the shadowing to ensure they eased into their new roles, and then allowed PwD to understand their limitations by themselves rather than being told directly.

- PwD were hired in service (subsequently elevated to manager), tea-making (being trained), in kitchen (with transition to induction oven) and accounts (being explored).

- Two candidates were hired from the job fair (good tray etiquettes).

- There is a HR department for hiring PwD candidates.

Reasonable accommodation measures

- SHI written on tables to inform customers.

- All staff reporting through video calls.

- Interpreters are called occasionally to help PwD understand the company vision.

- In the process, many managers have learnt to communicate with SHIs.

- EwoD and EwD asked to refrain from talking to each other when either is in a state of anger.

Praveen was a PwD manager at Chandivili outlet. He had a locomotor disability and used crutches. With excellent English speaking skills and tele-calling ability, he was a perfect match for the delivery-only outlet.

When he was recruited, the Point-of-Sale terminal (PoS) and computer were on the first floor. This required him to climb small and steep stairs, which was difficult with his crutches. One day, somehow he managed to climb the stairs and use the PoS himself. Inspired by his bold move, Karan made special arrangements to move the PC and the entire setup downstairs.

Moral: **Push them to challenge their limits and be surprised by what they can achieve.**

Box 7: Chai pe Charcha – When will matches skill

3.3.3 Professional development

- ISL is deliberately not used in order to foster equality among all staff.

- Expectations are set during induction to help understand roles and responsibilities clearly.

- EwD are encouraged to work with the reporting manager on issues, rather than escalate to owner undermining hierarchy.

- Managers are trained to understand PwD issues and resolve them effectively.

- Old SHI train new EwD (train-the-trainer).

- No classroom training is provided as everything is learnt on the job.

- Training module prior to on-the-job training being explored to help EwD:
    - select work preferences, locations
    - understand personal finances

- Exploring pre-recruitment internships – PwD attached with an intern to shadow and understand finer details of the business.

- Award ceremonies held every 45 days.

3.3.4 Cultural aspects

Enablers

- The belief is that culture must be process driven.

- Ability of EwD to perform tough tasks.

- They must be open to learning new things, explore opportunities.

- They must be dedicated, non-manipulative and frank.

- Processes must be simple.

- Set expectation for 10-hour shifts after making reasonable accommodations.

Disablers

- PwD are complacent at times. They need to be re-trenched when they do not change despite repeatedly explaining the problem.

- They can be very rigid at times.

- They may try to gain sympathy through their disability.

3.3.5 Communication

- SHI nicknamed *Sign Experts.*

- Customers point to menu/write on paper.

Share experience on forums - Confederation of Indian Industries (CII), National Association of State Chief Information Officers (NASCIO).

- Public relations is done through newspapers.

- Marketing agency is hired for social media campaigns.

3.3.6 Key takeaways

Benefits

- Rich experience, increases brand value.

- PwD manager brings in greater revenues, possibly due to better customer experience despite the same food and quality.

- Lower attrition than EwoD who have very high attrition rates.

Opportunities

- Fairness and industry standard PwD salaries.

- Regular attendance because of outlets being close to home.

- Active SHI employee increase footfall owing to their good customer relations, resulting in repeat visitors, sometimes coming just to talk to SHI.

- WhatsApp groups are used to share positive customer comments and boost morale.

Source: Inputs from Karan Kohli (Co-founder).

3.4 The Leela

OVERALL SUMMARY

About

The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts are an Indian luxury hotel chain based in India.

India presence

Nine hotels, eight cities

No. of Employees; No. of EwD

- India: 4,000; 26
- Gurgaon and Mumbai: 1,000+; 17

Disabilities Supported

Spastic, amputee, cognitive disability, LD

Functional Roles for PwD

Housekeeping, laundry, kitchen, stores, office administration

Reasons for Inclusion

- Part of group ethos since inception.
- Renewed interest from new investor on PwD hiring

Key modifications for EwD

PwD accommodation near hotel.

Key initiatives

- Morning pickup and drop
- ID badge
- ISL training for the Executive Committee, HoDs and Line Managers (every 6 months)

Challenges

- Consistent talent pipeline and facilitator network
- Lack of awareness about PwD engagement process

Results

- Presently 14 EwD with some winning Best Employee Awards.

3.4.1 Genesis

Inclusivity has been part of the Leela group since its inception. Villagers were employed for its first Goa property. In Mumbai, spastics were hired initially and subsequently, people with cognitive disabilities. The intention is to make it a part of the philosophy whereby guests accept EwD as part of the whole experience.

3.4.2 Organisational aspects

- PwD hired in the kitchen; they were also tried as valets, and given concierge roles.
- Best PwD fitment was seen in housekeeping, laundry, kitchen stewarding, stores and receiving and office admin roles.

- In Gurgaon, six PwD were hired initially, increasing to 12. Presently includes seven Front-of-House (FOH), one Mid-of-House (MoH) and one Back-of-House (BOH).
- Some EwD were promoted multiple times reaching supervisory levels and earning best employee of the year awards.
- PwD were found to be ideal for hospitality (requires long work hours in general) owing to willingness to work long (two, even three shifts).
- Most hiring occurs through NGOs and in-house referrals from existing EwD.

3.4.3 Professional development

- Same roles and responsibilities to reduce discrimination.
- GMs/HoDs consider cases based on qualitative aspects to ensure a level playing field.
- Building inclusive metrics in employee Key Responsibility Areas (KRAs) have helped create conscious awareness about an inclusive culture.
- Performance Management System (PMS) comprises open-ended questionnaires assessing functional and behavioural aspects.
- Key metrics are revenue increase, cost, customer ratings (online, offline), feedback forms.
- For higher management, additionally responsible for revenue impact contribution (budgeting, cost control).
- First PwD batch was for 3 months with a special trainer and ISL Training.
- Subsequent batches had short term courses with partner organisations before employing PwD on the premises.
- EwD were hired as trainees for 6 months with few customisations on the standards.
- Suitable candidates were hired full-time with support from training managers and special trainings for EwD.
- Senior management training on ISL arranged, with immediate feedback, ensuring their early buy-in.

3.4.4 Cultural aspects

- Make PwD hiring a part of the company's DNA, by making it an agenda, not a separate entity.

- Engage with key shareholders, especially investors; and help spread inclusion message.

- Build awareness internally – there should be a thought process shift in employees and management.

- Policies on equal opportunities and no discrimination strictly implemented in all areas.

- Supporting ecosystems must be created over time to sustain the inclusive culture such as in-house expertise in engaging EwD, pickup and drop, accessible infrastructure.

- Hiring senior-level executives with a predisposition towards PwD inclusion.

3.4.5 Communication

- Head HR briefs Executive Committee and HoDs about the PwD engagement process.

- Then, GM/HoD briefs the Unit HR and this is passed on to the departments and sub-departments.

- Subtle messaging used across customer interaction value chain (during customer sign in, displays in prominent areas).

- Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) is turned into a major publicity event, which is used by the management for inclusion agenda.

- D&I Committee spreads inclusion agenda at major industry events, forums and chat shows, marketed explicitly with an aggressive approach.

- Company-specific D&I agenda is circulated to all stakeholders for uniformity of interpretation.

- Discussions around inclusion within the system through internal forums encouraged.

- FAQ created for key stakeholders (senior management, floor staff).

3.4.6 Key takeaways

Benefits

- Higher commitment levels at work resulting in reduced attrition.

- More tolerant workforce – being patient is imbibed into the culture and philosophy of the hotel.

Challenges

- No talent pipeline, no facilitator network, inadequate information on sources for hiring PwD talent.

- Lack of awareness about the process of PwD employment.

- Beginners must work 12-14 hours at low pay.

- Managers must be flexible when working with PwD. Sometimes, common sense must prevail over SOPs to address situations appropriately.

Opportunities

- Becoming a preferred employer through PwD hiring.

- Training institutes and mainstream higher education institutes should be encouraged to support PwD interested in higher education including MBA programmes.

- Inclusion message can be used to drive a sense of ownership at each level, thus contributing to reduction in attrition through engagement across the hierarchy, as opposed to only through HR.

- Industry players need to invest in building PwD talent pipeline and nurture that as an industry so that societal value can be created and harnessed by all alike.

Source: Inputs from Sridhar K.R. (Corporate Head of Human Resources, Hotel Leelaventure Limited) Manish Kumar Rishi (Director – HR, The Leela Ambience Gurugram Hotel and Residences).

3.5 The IHCL Group

OVERALL SUMMARY

About

Ginger Hotels is the largest chain of branded hotels and the pioneer of budget hotel space in India. Launched in June 2004, it operates under the company name Roots Corporation Limited.

India presence

42 properties across 31 locations

No. of Employees; No. of EwD

2,000+; 9

Disabilities Supported

SHI

Functional Roles for PwD

Housekeeping, F&B

Reasons for Inclusion

Business perspective

Key modifications for EwD

Numbered menu

Key initiatives

Shadowing of EwD by new PwD recruits

Challenges

Single Point of Contact (SPoC) at unit level, continuous training and sensitisation, inadequate ISL trained staff

Results

High productivity of PwD staff, greater guest appreciation

3.5.1 Ginger Hotels

3.5.1.1 Genesis

Nikhil Sharma, COO at Ginger, leads the PwD inclusion agenda. He was part of the founding team that implemented the PwD inclusion strategy from scratch at Lemon Tree in 2007.

He was instrumental in the introduction of autistic staff at RedFox, a brand under Lemon Tree. He believes investing in PwD makes sense from a business perspective, and focussed on bringing an inclusive culture into India, re-starting with PwD induction at Ginger.

- At Ginger, PwD induction started in 2016 with 16 PwD staff.
- Currently, they have nine EwD including eight on-roll and one off-roll.
- In order to make this an organisation-wide initiative, on-roll EwD are hired across multiple loca-

tions including three in Bhubaneshwar, three in Noida and two in Mumbai.

- Ginger also has a special room for PwD in each property.

3.5.1.2 Organisational aspects

- Ginger has 75% off-roll and 25% on-roll employees.
- The hotel aims to have 8% of its on-roll staff and 25% of its off-roll staff as PwD employees over the next few years.
- Presently, all EwD are placed in Housekeeping and F&B.

Key needs identified to enable PwD inclusion

- Sensitisation and training of managers and staff in ISL.
- Sensitisation of vendors.
- Unit-level SPOC with a good understanding of ISL.
- Visual system for emergencies in areas with SHI.
- Address issues of customer interaction.
- Develop a promotion system enabling PwD as managers.
- Continual routine training and sensitisation for effective PwD engagement.
- Specialised JD for PwD staff.

Ginger is clear that the PwD agenda must be included within existing budgets, and is in the process of building a business case for PwD engagement using its PwD hiring experience over the last 3 years.

They are presently focusing only on SHI hiring, which they believe can be done with minimal infrastructural changes.

3.5.1.3 Professional Development

- Ginger follows the same PMS for all staff, irrespective of disability status.

- In order to ensure a PwD-friendly culture, they have introduced specific manuals to help understand specific ways to work with PwD staff.

- Ginger is keen to develop a culture where PwD staff do not feel special and are treated at par with other staff.

- Focus on highlighting professional benefits of working in a hospitality environment to engage PwD staff.

3.5.1.4 Cultural aspects

- Focus on trying new ways to turn PwD engagement into a process.

- Work at multiple levels to tackle the issues both with EwD & EwoD.

- Explore partnerships with facilitating organisations that can consistently train and sensitise staff at the unit level across all its properties having EwD.

- Aggressively aim for the implementation of EwD inclusion across all levels. As part of this, explore a staffing ratio that allows additional staff to be brought in initially to account for the lower productivity of EwD during the learning phase.

3.5.1.5 Communication

- Ginger does a presentation for the family of potential PwD staff where they explain job roles to them.

- While the exact process differs from state to state, the key objective remains the same: To convince parents of EwD about the potential opportunity of improving their childrens' lives by allowing them to work in a hospitality environment.

- Parents are also taken around a tour of the corporate office and special sessions taken to address mindset issues like dignity of labour ("Will my child wash dishes" is a common question).

3.5.1.6 Key takeaways

Benefits

- Loyalty

- Lower attrition of PwD staff

- Greater customer engagement

- Higher employee engagement

Challenges

- Locational issues for mobility of EwD

- Sensitisation of vendors

Opportunities

- Available, untapped talent pool.

- In the long term, a strong personal feeling is created for the brand among all employees.

- PwD skill matrix development in partnership with group companies who are ahead of the curve in terms of PwD inclusion.

Source: Inputs by Nikhil Sharma (COO, Ginger Hotels), Shantanu Das (Hotel Manager – Ginger Bhubaneshwar) and Loraine Ozorio (Manager, HR).

3.5.2 Taj Hotels

OVERALL SUMMARY

About

Taj Hotels is a part of the Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL), comprising a group of iconic brands showcasing the pride and spirit of India to the world.

India presence

87 hotels pan-India (April 2019)

No. of Employees; No. of EwD

- All IHCL India Hotels; excluding Ginger and TAJSATS: 19,326
- Taj Mahal Palace &Taj Wellington & Taj President: 1,703; 15 (100+ EwD Trainees)
- **Disabilities Supported**

Mild learning disabilities, SHI

Functional Roles for PwD

Food production, front office, laundry, purchase, salon

Reasons for Inclusion

Part of company philosophy

Key modifications for EwD

SMS at work, blinking red light in kitchen, SOS messaging system

Key initiatives

- Hiring in pairs
- Procurement from enterprises supporting PwD

Challenges

- Role mapping, career growth
- Continual NGO support

Results

- Value chain approach to cultural and social inclusion

3.5.2.1 Genesis

At the Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL), business responsibility and social inclusion forms part of the core culture flowing from the parent Tata Group. With a large employee base across its various properties in India, IHCL is one of the largest employers in the sector, and therefore plays a key role in the inclusion story for India.

3.5.2.2 Organisational aspects

- Disability at IHCL falls within the ambit of the company's commitment to social inclusion and diversity. In addition to people with disabilities, it also includes youth and women from low-income group families and underserved regions, educational dropouts, SC and ST communities.

- IHCL has been working on offering accessible hotels, support and facilities for its differently abled guests – with its brand standards incorporating PwD-friendly ramps, rooms and allied facilities including washrooms. This culture also extends to its BoH areas.

- Most PwDs are hired for operational roles that enable opportunities/right fitment for them. At The Taj Mahal Palace, PwD have been placed in the kitchen (promoted from contract to permanent role), laundry and front office (special role created). At Vivanta President and Wellington Mews, PwD have been hired in food production, front office, purchase and salon.

- IHCL focusses on enabling livelihoods of their target communities; skilling and creating a talent pipeline for the industry, while also enabling access to its own workforce.

- Many of its hotels have been volunteering with organisations supporting PwD; offering industrial exposure and training.

- IHCL also tries to retain employees with acquired disability.

- Most PwD hiring is done through NGO partners.

- The tendency is to focus on SHI, since it is simpler to embed them into its work processes. They are versatile in that they have greater mobility and availability of easy aids for support.

- Hotels have also hired PwD with mild learning disabilities.

- Its CSR programme supports several partners benefitting PwD and furthering its supplier diversity and inclusion ethos. This enables the livelihoods of over 300 PwD through procurement of goods from them such as corporate gifting items, welcome garlands, candles, coasters, upcycling its Benarasi saree uniforms to produce a range of housekeeping amenities and so on. The process of the making some of these items is also therapeutic for PwD.

3.5.2.3 Professional development

- Performance Management System is the same for all irrespective of the state of disability. Current practice involves hiring PwD first and then trying to create a career growth path for them.

- Safety training is done separately for SHI through an external translator.

- Communication at work through SMS is common. Blinking red lights in the kitchen, phones on vibrator and SOS messaging system are some examples of process / infrastructural modifications made to accommodate PwD staff.

- In order to support EwD, special gestures like a buddy (by hiring SHI in pairs) and HR manager to support each PwD is ensured.

- While some special benefits may be provided at specific properties hiring PwD, there are no special Reward and Recognition (R&R) strategies for PwD at a group level at present.

3.5.2.4 Cultural aspects

- All young managers joining the company go through a community immersion programme, which sensitises them to the needs of the under-served sections of society – including PwD.

- Several young volunteers spend time with partners serving PwD to support their needs and enable linkages and aids required for furthering the livelihoods of PwD.

- IHCL leaders encourage employees to volunteer and extend support to enable livelihoods for PwD.

3.5.2.5 Communication

- IHCL leverages its corporate communications teams to foster employee awareness and an inclusive culture that enables the company to identify synergies and opportunities to make an impact.

- Knowledge partnerships with inclusion and impact platforms such as Tata Trusts and Tata Engage go a long way in shaping its communications design.

Value chain perspective to PwD Inclusion

With a strong background in social development, Foram believes in a value chain approach to enable social inclusion in India – especially to expand the circle of influence to include medium and small enterprises, and to benefit target communities in non-metros. She asserts that PwD inclusion can be furthered by Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector focussing on inclusion of these target communities and building robust business models. This would be in collaboration with organised industry and large brands to further value chain linkages; with livelihoods for PwD and not just jobs, being the end goal.

Box 8: Value chain perspective to PwD Inclusion
(Based on inputs from Foram Nagori – Corporate Director, CSR at Taj Hotels)

Value Chain Assessment

Foram sees entrepreneurship for PwD as an unexplored opportunity and suggests a simple process to do a value chain assessment:

- Identify items that can be useful for the sector; e.g., tea-light candles, welcome beads (of Tulsi), hand linen (table linen), cane basket range, laundry baskets, chef caps (of paper), uniforms, paper bags, consumables (e.g., garlic peeling).
- Focus on specific items and develop capability of PwD to help them manufacture these items.
- Identify companies (e.g., Taj Sats) that can procure these items from PwD entrepreneurs.

Future trends to create PwD-inclusive culture

Foram asserts that institutional leadership building is crucial to address social inclusion. She suggests creating high-level leadership immersion programmes for top brass from different sectors (corporate, government, civil society, education and innovation spaces) to interact with geographies and communities that badly need hand-holding and inclusion, and experientially sensitise them to build an inclusive mindset.

She also hopes that the not-for-profit sector will collaborate more and build broad-based and sustained diversity and inclusion campaigns as well as use gamification and other forms of technology to create a positive environment that can engage more business leaders – especially from medium and small businesses – to act together. There is a need to rope in important stakeholders not just through discussions and conferences, but through State-led attractive sops and participative action spaces.

- IHCL plans to leverage its brand identity and influence circles to fuel positive campaigns to encourage more people to embrace individual social responsibility and become champions for furthering D&I to include PwD, not just at the workplace but also in society, in general.

3.5.2.6 Key takeaways

Benefits

- Gives guests a feel of contributing to a social cause when served by PwD staff; good for the brand.

Challenges

- Getting buy-in on PwD initiatives from 100+ properties governed as separate businesses.
- Handling customers who may get upset when unable to converse with PwD staff.

Opportunities

- Value-chain linkage model for hospitality and tourism industry.
- Fellowship for PwD in hospitality sector.
- Procurement of items from PwD entrepreneurs.

Source: Inputs from Foram Nagori (Corporate Director – CSR, Taj Hotels), Sandeep Gore (Manager – CSR, Taj Hotels), Hemant Jaiswal (Director of Human Resources, Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai), Neha Vali (Director of Human Resources, Taj Wellington Mews, Mumbai), Swatee Chaturvedi (Director of Human Resources, Taj President, Mumbai), Kamlesh Trivedi (Learning & Development manager, Taj President, Mumbai).

3.6 Radisson Group

3.6.1 Genesis

Alok Kaul, General Manager at Radisson Blu Hitec drives PwD inclusion initiative at his unit in Hyderabad. He is an industry veteran with 17 years of international experience. He has been driving PwD recruitment as part of core business strategy by involving HR, L&D and HoDs.

Alok started with a pilot in 2017, and categorizes the industry into two major future segments:

- Segment 1 – Delivering *services.*
- Segment 2 – Delivering *experiences*; e.g., partnering with tour company; provide curated travel experience.

He believes hiring PwD to deliver experiences (Segment 2) will be key in the future, given the drastic expansion of hospitality chains in India.

Focus areas

- Hire for attitude, train for competence.
- Train EwD to deliver an experience at the same level as EwoD.
- Create inclusion without different signage/declaration.
- Create a strong marketing campaign around delivering experiences through EwD.
- Leverage government incentives for employing PwD.

3.6.2 Organisational aspects

An SHI was hired in mid-2017 as a pilot project in room service, and is currently under training. Key learnings from the pilot so far:

- Perfectionist, very precise with instructions, can do existing jobs well.
- Learning ways to handle new assignments and learning about additional tasks while serving a guest.
- Likes being part of team, knows who to go for help and is patient with colleagues.
- Uses SMS and sign language for communication.
- Exploring ways of two-way communication with guests.
- Trained through internal ex-Lemon Tree trainer.
- Being considered for promotion in a year.
- Buddy hiring being explored to facilitate better communication.

3.6.3 Professional development

The hotel is still in early stages of PwD recruitment. Exploring ways to partner with NGOs to create detailed job mapping for future PwD hires.

3.6.4 Cultural aspects

Key components to initiate and sustain a PwD-friendly culture

- HR recruitment firms should partner with NGOs to make PwD talent available along with normal

talent pool so companies do not have to search for NGOs to source PwD.

- Drive inclusion using experiential service delivery concept rather than as a CSR model that is often unsustainable.

- Training should be done like a project with consistent monitoring.

- There should be a consistent buddy system.

- PwD inclusion must be driven by the GM and constantly monitored for a certain period till it is successful.

Enablers

- Internal and external PwD champions within organisation and in society.

- Passion for PwD inclusion – showcasing of PwD potential.

- Competition among PwD candidates across different hotels; e.g., Beverage challenge – make cocktails in 10 minutes with half the resources. Can help bring out the talent in PwD.

- Supportive PwD parents who are willing to come up and speak about their experiences.

Disablers

- Prejudiced notions of non-disabled people against PwD.

- Inferiority complex of PwD staff.

- Jealousy among unsensitised entry level staff when PwD counterparts perform well.

3.6.5 Communication

Since PwD hiring is still in early stages, communication processes are still being developed.

3.6.6 Key takeaways

Benefits

- Attitude

- Manager knows exact areas in which PwD can be trusted.

Challenges

- Value chain issues – hiring, training, sustenance, SOP for handling EwD.

- Timings and leave.

Opportunities

- PwD need to be trained in large numbers to cater to the huge demand for manpower and quality workforce.

- New sources of revenue (through delivering experiences) can be created using innovative solutions involving PwD, which is both novel and inclusive.

- Willingness to support and partner with NGOs to help them link to HR recruitment firms to foster ecosystem building.

- Unit run exclusively by PwD in future and revenues monitored to test feasibility. If feasible, scale and replicate with NGO support.

Source: Inputs from Alok Kaul (GM – Radisson Blu HiTec, Hyderabad) and Swathi U (HR Manager – Radisson Blu Hitec, Hyderabad).

3.7 Accor Group

OVERALL SUMMARY

About

The Accor Group is the largest hotel operator globally, outside USA, headquartered in Paris, France.

India presence

50 hotels, 9253 rooms.

No. of Employees; No. of EwD

- India: 7000; 40
- Pullman Aerocity & Novotel Hyderabad: 1,000; 19
- Group aims at 5% PwD (2020 target)

Disabilities Supported

SHI, Low vision (<=40% disability)

Functional Roles for PwD

Housekeeping, concierge, laundry, kitchen. Mostly Front of House.

Reasons for Inclusion

Part of Accor-wide CSR initiative

Key modifications for EwD

Weekends off, general shifts preference, 9-hr shifts (9 am–6 pm).

Key initiatives

- Continual sensitisation of EwoD by facilitators.
- Town hall with ISL interpreter, quarterly meetings with PwD involving facilitators

Challenges

PwD prefer government jobs, longer gestation time, lack of motivation and consistency at times.

Results

- Created opportunities for high-performing PwD, which leads to buy-in from top management for more PwD hiring.
- New vertical for Diversity & Inclusion at group level.

3.7.1 Genesis

Accor (global) started hiring PwD since 1992. First PwD hiring started in Pullman India in 2016 . The objective is to provide PwD with a sense of pride and the belief that they are talented and skilled enough to be Accor employees.

3.7.2 Organisational aspects

- Sourcing PwD employees happens mostly through facilitators who are available on call to coordinate activities post hiring.
- Currently, two out of six EwD are still with Pullman (four left for government jobs). Regular dis-

cussions happen with leaders to get requirements that can be filled with PwD roles.

PwD Hiring Process

- Sensitising leadership and interaction with HoDs. There are three sessions including ISL classes by facilitator trainer.
- Identifying NGOs based on transparency and rigour of admission process and discussion on the courses conducted.
- Calling NGOs to Pullman and showcasing the property to PwD students to give them a feel of their potential workplace.
- After first hiring, monitoring for the first 3 months using a coordinator to bridge the gap. Buddy system (trained in ISL) in place.

3.7.3 Professional development

PMS and metrics for assessing EwD

- Overall criteria: Qualification, education, functional competence, attitude, financial and business understanding.
- Attitudinal metrics
  - Positive attitude, leading by example, guest orientation, communication, business improvement, business growth, leadership skills, guest-centricity (number of guests) and feedback, adding skill sets.
  - Must understand the dynamics of analytics.
- Financial metrics – Cost, revenue, upselling, guest rating, productivity (for given tasks).
- Quantitative and financial metrics form part of assessment above assistant manager levels.
- Productivity assessment may be counter-productive arguing against PwD hiring by shifting focus on poor performers.

Special benefits for PwD

- PwD are usually given general shifts (9 am-6 pm), weekends off.
- They work exactly for 9 hours. Focus is on enabling PwD, so not looked at from a pure commercial perspective.

- Discussion with family during recruitment, on economic background and family condition to understand support required.
- For R&R, ensure PwD participation and provide them visibility as part of normal processes. Guddu, an SHI, was recognised twice for his performance.

HR's role to help PwD rise to senior levels

- Annual assessment should focus on providing equal opportunities irrespective of disability.
- Leadership communication training should be given.
- Training should be given on interaction with guests and overall communication to EwD.
- EwD are given understanding of revenue, budgets and analytics.
- Overall, EwD are provided a strong base, enabling them to be successful in whatever role they choose as they grow.

3.7.4 Cultural aspects

Key components to initiate and sustain an inclusive culture

- Long-term approach, consistent mindset, understanding that building an inclusive culture takes time, often 2+ years.
- HR team must believe in the initiative.
- Accountability and encouragement for internal evangelists till a feeling of "my team and I are doing a good job at managing PwD consistently" comes.

Sensitisation process

- EwD are part of the induction process. They are introduced to the basics of team member interactions; told about facilitator and encouraged to raise concerns.
- For EwoD, the facilitator conducts 2-hour sessions consistently for 3 months and follows up on a quarterly basis with HR.

Enablers

- Team leaders taking initiative and interacting with PwD employees.
- Availability of a buddy who knows ISL for every EwD for smooth communication.

- R&R processes that include PwD.
- Concerns on EwD interest areas or performance from HoDs are addressed immediately by HR at the initial stages through appropriate explanations and putting EwD to the right roles.

3.7.5 Communication

- Displays and posters.
- Engaging a partial hearing person who knows ISL for creating awareness at events.
- Whatsapp communication through creation of workplace-related groups.
- Concerns accepted in writing.
- Sensitising customers through facilitator-approved badges to EwD.
- Sensitisation workshop for employees, leaders and HoDs to get buy in from all stakeholders.
- Quarterly meetings with EwD, supported by facilitators. EwD are encouraged to talk to senior management during breaks.
- Townhall (400-500 staff) with ISL interpreter.
- Attract other stakeholders to be part of the PwD success and generate more employment through discussions.

Box 9: Case study of high-performer EwD

M.D. Tamkin, one of the first PwD batch employees, was an exemplary case. He captained Delhi state in cricket and also made amazing coffee! His day of reckoning came when an Australian cricketer gave him his whole cricket kit after a T20 series. His name appeared regularly in TripAdvisor ratings, which made the leaders proud and helped get buy-in on PwD hiring from them.

Srinivas Rao, Director of Talent and Culture at Pullman (2nd from left) with Youth4Jobs team (right) and Indrajit Shaw (extreme left)

3.7.6 Key takeaways

Benefits

- Access to untapped PwD talent pool.
- Creating social good by giving PwD an opportunity and generating employment.
- Acceptance of EwD by the team and leaders lead to a more tolerant culture.
- Livelihood opportunities and greater respect in society for the EwD.

Challenges

- PwD take time to adjust due to lack of professional exposure.
- PwD may have disciplinary issues such as intentional late coming, poor performance.
- Getting PwD interested in designated tasks.

Opportunities

- Whenever recruitment starts, facilitators are kept in loop to try to fill a vacancy with a PwD.
- Addressing grievances from HoD or EwD by involving facilitators to help bridge the gap creates more loyal employees and helps get more buy-in from HoDs.

Trends

- Substantial interest from peers in following similar trends based on Pullman experience.
- At Accor group level, a new vertical called D&I was started, and new Vice President in place.

Source: Inputs from Srinivas Rao (Director, Talent and Culture at Pullman, New Delhi) and Bhavani Dutta (HR Head at Novotel, Hyderabad).

3.8 Marriott Group

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About

Marriott International is the third largest hotel chain in the world with 7000+ properties across 130 countries covering 30 brands.

India presence

84 hotels covering 15 brands

No. of Employees; No. of EwD

- India: 6,000
- Westin-Gurgaon: 390; 3

Disabilities Supported

VI, SHI, LD

Functional Roles for PwD

Finance, Guest Service, Housekeeping, HR, Dairy and Kitchen Stewarding

Reasons for Inclusion

Request from area team

Key modifications for EwD

None at Westin-Gurgaon. Ramps at Sheraton Bangalore, Braille at Courtyard Agra.

Key initiatives

Monthly interaction with HR manager, 3-month induction programme, online self-learning for PwD.

Challenges

Mismatch between EwD aspirations and available opportunities, ISL trained managers, structured career planning for EwD

Results

- EwD promoted to Commie 1.

3.8.1 Genesis

Marriott India started their inclusion journey about 6 years back with a pilot across 5-6 hotels, in partnership with an NGO. They prepared for 6 months putting the basics in place before starting the pilot. Its success resulted in a budget to hire 2–5% PwD at unit level. The first PwD batch started in Westin Gurgaon in 2017.

Learnings from pilot

- Two-way communication with EwD is essential.
- EwD must contribute to overall guest customer experience.
- EwD should adhere to rules.
- EwD must perform day-to-day operation without faults.

- EwD was hired as core resource, not as part of CSR initiative.

3.8.2 Organisational aspects

- PwD are excluded from engineering roles due to safety issues.
- Sourcing is done through facilitator NGOs or referrals.
- PwD are treated as normal associates.
- Others should be sensitive to PwD's needs but no extra attention should be paid to them.
- Once a month, a Training Manager who understands limited ISL interacts with them to understand their issues.

3.8.3 Professional development

- EwD were promoted to Commie 1 in 2018 (interested in bakery).
- No additional facilities were provided except in special cases, depending on disability (e.g., visually impaired may be provided drop facility).
- Training and development for PwD
  - Pre-hire: Based on CV, HR identifies suitable job role.
  - Post-hire: Three-month induction programme where they go around the floor and learn the job, sharing feedback for potential changes with management.
  - Managerial training to facilitate their promotion to executive levels through external support.
  - In-house functional training through online modules.

Assessment criteria

- Qualitative metrics – quality of work, communication, leadership, functional expertise.
- Quantitative metrics – Timeliness (service delivery, work completion, on-time purchase).

3.8.4 Cultural aspects

- PwD have high levels of engagement and dedication; high energy levels.

- They are always smiling and have a humble disposition.
- Create more awareness about working with PwD.
- Provide PwD-friendly infrastructure.
- Attrition is high due to high aspirations for EwoD, and this can be addressed with EwD who actually cherish the job they are given.

3.8.5 Communication

- Internal branding team that works with the area office for branding.
- All internal and external communication about PwD initiatives are done by area office.
- Inputs are taken from HR, and from senior levels.
- EwD statistics and achievements were reported in Business Council Report.

3.8.6 Key takeaways

Benefits

- Presence of PwD creates a positive guest experience. Customers interacting with PwD provide more positive feedback.
- Improved perception of the entire team that works with EwD.
- HR rates them higher than EwoD in terms of dedication.

Challenges

- PwD can have very specific career requirements that are difficult to address at times; e.g., EwD who wanted international exposure but wanted to work in neighbouring countries since he was taking care of his parents. Despite repeated efforts, the company was unable to find a suitable role for him in a property in the neighbouring countries.

Opportunities

- Though attrition rates hover around 30%, all three PwD hired have remained with the organisation contributing to a reduction in attrition numbers.
- Hiring of PwD is an untapped opportunity given the high attrition rates in the industry.

Trends

- Certain companies have made structural changes, e.g., Courtyard by Marriott Agra introduced braille for its VI employees, while Sheraton Bangalore created ramps for its LD employees.
- While the hospitality industry in India has started taking interest in PwD hiring, a substantial amount of preparation in terms of facilities, training modules, environment and engagement (two-way communication) is required to create a genuinely inclusive culture.

Source: Inputs from Jagdeep Shetty (Multi-Property Director of Human Resources)

As the rising corporate stars continue their march towards PwD inclusivity, we move to the next chapter to get a glimpse into the lives of ordinary PwD individuals who have chosen to rise above their disability, and create a niche for themselves through their work as future PwD role models.

4. Hospitality and QSR Sector Staff Champions – Case Studies

Several youth with disabilities have proved to be champions, despite various challenges. These rising stars are profiled to inspire others.

PROFILE BRIEF
Disability
Speech and Hearing Impairment
Sub-Sector
Hotel
Employer
Lemon Tree
Role
Food & Beverage Associate
Future Aspirations
Build his own home with his own money

4.1 Brijmohan – Lemon Tree

4.1.1 Personal life

- Born – August 1991 (Tong, Rajasthan).
- Affliction – At age 6, slipped while playing, hurt his head and lost his hearing.
- Schooling and Training – Went to a school for the deaf in Delhi (no such schools in Tong). Learnt basics about hospitality industry, housekeeping and basic English grammar from NGOs.
- Completed B.Com at a weekend college with special permission from employer Lemon Tree, returning to work after school.
- Despite a successful career, he could not find a girl to marry because of his deafness.
- Support system – family, relatives and friends. Indebted to his father for moving to Delhi – helped him explore professional opportunities despite his disability.

- Loves to communicate with guests and colleagues and with SHI friends in sign language.
- Other interests include computers, soft skills, grammar (to communicate with guests).

4.1.2 Professional journey

- Joined Lemon Tree in 2018.
- Currently, Associate in F&B department.
- Work experience – Appreciates opportunities to discuss performance with his manager. Faces

some difficulty in the absence of ISL interpreters to communicate with colleagues and supervisors.

- Suggestions for improvement – there should be a permanent interpreter; accommodation should be provided for PwD coming from afar.

4.1.3 Interests and aspirations

Most memorable incident – Joining Lemon Tree. He was taught each topic in detail by an ISL interpreter for the first time.

Notes anything he likes or wants to learn using a pen and a pad – learns everything before coming to work the next day.

Brijmohan wants to carve his own path, aspiring to earn enough to build his own home.

4.2 Alka – Pullman (Accor Group)

PROFILE BRIEF
Disability
SHI
Sub-sector
Hotel
Employer
Pullman (Accor Group)
Role
Laundry Associate
Future Aspirations
Learn new skills and excel in her role

4.2.1 Personal Life

- Alka was born in a family of two sisters and two brothers.
- Affliction – At age two, she contracted fever, which resulted in permanent loss of hearing.
- Schooling – She went to a conventional school, and passed 10th standard in 2000 (aged 20).
- Post schooling – Alka got married in 2004 to a person who is also an SHI . She became a housewife and has twin children. All her friends are deaf. She has one childhood friend from Pune with whom she currently lives in Gurgaon.
- Greatest personal challenge – Parents and siblings don't know sign language, so she is unable to share her problems with them.

4.2.2 Professional journey

- Alka decided to work 14 years after marriage, after both her children had grown up.
- She was trained by an NGO, worked on the computer for 3 months accessing Gmail, and got some retail job skills and specific hospitality training.
- She joined Pullman in October 2018, and faced some issues initially owing to lack of ISL trainer. Initially a slow learner, she gradually picked up the work through observation.
- Alka received support and encouragement from her manager and colleagues.
- She discusses issues with her manager who addresses them by speaking slowly in ISL.

- She has a flexible shift timing (9 am–6 pm), though she generally finishes on time.
- She started at an entry-level role, and currently manages a supervisory role in laundry.
- The standing nature of this role requires substantial effort, which she is working on.
- She has monthly meetings with her manager to discuss requirements.
- She is now confident of her role and has been performing well for last 6 months.

4.2.3 Interests and aspirations

- The current job is her dream job and she wants to continue working in this role.
- Since her managers and work colleagues are very supportive, she wants to recommend her deaf friends to work here.
- She is also fond of dancing and performs in cultural events where she has often been praised for her talent.

4.3 Vijay – Café Echoes

PROFILE BRIEF
Disability
SHI
Sub-sector
QSR
Employer
Café Echoes
Role
Service Associate
Future Aspirations
• Complete his 12th standard by 2020
• Learn computers and get a computer-related job.

4.3.1 Personal life

- Vijay was born in Badarpur in 1995; he lives with his mother who is a housewife, and his three brothers.
- Affliction – He was born SHI.
- He never felt different till he joined school for the deaf, believing he was the only deaf person. At school, he realised there were more people like him, learnt sign language and made many friends.
- Greatest personal challenge – Limited communication with family (basic terms like come, eat, sleep, etc.) as they don't know sign language. He is therefore unable to share his feelings with them, and feels that people who can hear will not understand his issues.
- His neighbour Anand, also an SHI, is his only confidante and helped him learn sign language and computers.
- Vijay completed 10th standard, and was unsuccessfully searching for jobs for a year.

4.3.2 Professional journey

- He joined Café Echoes in 2017, based on the suggestion of a friend who worked there.
- He likes co-workers and feels good when customers give good feedback.
- He learnt key aspects of work from his Manager.

- Vijay faces little conflict at work since all staff are SHI. The only non-disabled person is the cleaner.
- Vijay's friends face greater challenges working in hotels where EwoD often don't talk to them.
- Greatest professional challenge – Peak times and high customer volumes. It is a small space and workers are few, hence they must be more efficient as customers don't want to wait long.
- He works in the 10.30 am–7.30 pm shift, and uses a bus pass to travel 30 minutes from home to work.

4.3.3 Interests and aspirations

- Vijay is happy with the present job, but interested in getting varied exposure.
- He has had no formal training thus far; wants to learn computers, and settle down in a computer-related job. He believes it will get him more respect in society.
- He plans to finish his 12th standard by 2020.
- His hobbies include meeting friends and playing cricket.

4.4 Ashish, Glenn and Riten – Taj Hotels (The IHCL Group)

PROFILE BRIEF
Disability
SHI, Learning impairment
Sub-sector
Hotel
Employer
Taj
Role
F&B, Accounts
Future Aspirations
• Want to be a chef
• Be promoted to be a manager

4.4.1 Ashish Dhadve

4.4.1.1 Personal life

- Affliction – Deaf by birth.
- He was supported by his deaf friends during his early years and in school.
- He faced major difficulty in school in understanding the meaning of difficult words.

4.4.1.2 Professional journey

- Ashish joined the Taj group through an NGO who trained him for a year.
- He trained on the job by his supervisors – Rohit and Akash who helped him a lot.
- He chose this sector because he likes to cook, especially making chocolates at Taj.
- He taught everyone sign language so that they could communicate with him.
- He is friendly and very supportive to his colleagues.

4.4.1.3 Interests and aspirations

- He has good cooking skills and is exploring a promotion.
- He wants to learn more and become an expert.

4.4.2 Glenn Pinto

4.4.2.1 Personal life

- Affliction – SHI by birth.

- His friend Ninad (non-disabled) helped him understand the meaning of difficult words.

4.4.2.2 Professional journey

- Glenn was trained on passbook entry and hospitality.
- He worked in Sahara Hotels for 3 years, and was connected by an NGO to Taj.
- He is still under training, and idolises Amol, a manager who is very smart and skilled.
- He attributes his current job and training for his success. Trainers explain through writing and speak slowly so he can lip read.
- He plans to use this work experience to find a better job in the future.
- He is responsible for passbook checking and works in the accounts department.

4.4.2.3 Interests and aspirations

- Glenn wants to continue in his present job to support his family members.
- He aspires to be a manager in future.

4.4.3 Riten

4.4.3.1 Personal life

- Riten has learning disability but has difficulty understanding the nature of his disability.
- His family were very supportive of his decision to work at the Taj group. His mother helped him connect to the Taj through a friend of hers.
- This is his first job. He has no pre-training or job searching experience.

4.4.3.2 Professional journey

- He is undergoing training under Chef Angad in the bakery.
- He has several work friends – Dhonu (daily tasks), Inder (cafeteria), Kiran (kitchen), Sunny (communication).
- HR/ Inder supports him in case of any issues.
- He feels everyone is very supportive around him.

4.4.3.3 Interests and aspirations

- He wants to be a chef.

4.5 Siddharth Chandrasekhar – Founder, Pencil and Monk

PROFILE BRIEF
Disability Dyslexia
Sub-sector Interior Design Company
Employer Self (Entrepreneur)
Role Founder (25 direct employees)
Future Aspirations Create an INR 100 Cr. business.

4.5.1 Personal life

- Siddharth was born in the late 1970s.
- Affliction – Dyslexic by birth.
- Schooling – Multiple schools. Completed 12th through The National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS), and was sent to a premium school in the US but returned in 3 weeks.
- He credits his parents and friends for his success, and appreciates his parents for allowing him to make his own career choices, despite his poor academic credentials.

4.5.2 Professional journey

- Pencil and Monk, his first venture, was a graphics design company started in 1997 with a small order from Taj for developing brochures obtained through a personal connect.
- Designed menu cards, brochures, and visiting cards for hotels.
- Handled brand building (packing and designing) for G.M. Pens, Reynolds master franchisee.
- A stint at film advertising, developing collaterals for 125 films, led to directing a film.
- Later, transformed Pencil and Monk into a space design company focussing on interior design of corporate offices.
- Siddharth designed the Sheraton Grand hotel at Chennai, including the design for its back office.
- He is based in Chennai, and is working on two Taj group hotel projects; and runs the Madras Disability Association.

4.5.3 Interests and aspirations

- Winning traits
  - Determined but positive attitude to life.
  - Refusal to accept dyslexia as disability; focus on learning and career.
  - Confidence in any role undertaken and remaining undeterred by failure.
  - Intuitive and learning on the job.
  - Willingness to experiment and openness to opportunities.
  - Constant innovation – the developer building the Sheraton property liked the interiors of Siddharth's house which he had himself designed and decided to award him the Sheraton Grand assignment.

Interests – Board games, walk on treadmill, take long swims.

Most memorable moment

His father was rewarded for his contribution to the field of education by the same school that refused to acknowledge Siddharth's disability.

His thoughts for fellow PwD

"*You have your dreams and aspirations. Keep looking for signals that tell you, you are on the right path. You keep doing things. You prove people wrong (those who cannot value you for your abilities). When you are successful by conventional standards you make subtle statements to say you've gone over the curve, become a successful person, and built an above average career. Every opportunity is a game changer – learn, make money or make something different. Once you've proven yourself, assignments follow. Find your own path. Prepare to keep falling and getting up (like a child). It's an attitude. Don't take it (your disability) personally. Don't call yourself disabled.*"

5. PwD Engagement Roadmap – Way Forward

This section identifies the role of various stakeholders in order to create equitable opportunities for PwD in the Indian Hospitality & QSR Sector.

5.1 Business case for hiring of PwD in Hospitality & QSR sector

5.1.1 Elements for developing a business case for PwD talent

- Highlight success stories.
- Showcase instances of change in perception, leading to behaviour change at different levels
- Create FAQs with standardised answers.
- Share statistical data to showcase types of PwD employed.
- Package above information and display it as an impactful message across the organisation.
- Create a crisp, high impact presentation for senior management and external stakeholders.

5.1.2 Benefits of hiring PwD

Box 10: Sodexo business imperative for hiring PwD talent

- **Access to talent –** As one of the largest employers globally, Sodexo believes incorporating PwD talent enables it to tap into the single largest minority group in the world - of 1 billion PwD. The employment rate for individuals with disabilities was only 18.7% in 2013, compared to 68.3% of the non-disabled population.
- **Corporate citizenship –** Reputation has become a critical success factor in this challenging and competitive economy. Sodexo's customers and potential customers seek to do business with organisations that promote equality, respect, diversity and inclusion for all. Sodexo's reputation as a leader among inclusive organisations has become a valuable asset and a key competitive differentiator. Acting responsibly has generated trust, loyalty and goodwill among customers, employees, business and community partners and other stakeholders.

Source: Based on inputs from Sodexo literature on "Including Individuals with Disabilities"

Other business benefits of hiring PwD

- **Access to markets** – As per a 2016 report by (The Return on Disability Group), PwD globally, along with their friends and family, control $8 trillion+ in annual disposable income.
- **Lower attrition** – Depending on the function, productivity can increase from 5-30% provided appropriate job mapping is done using skill-sets of the PwD, and adequate reasonable accommodation measures are ensured to reduce impact of the disability on tasks.
- **Brand goodwill** – Presence of PwD staff inherently improves the brand goodwill. Be it customers feeling a sense of social inclusivity in their presence, or their always cheery smiles, they bring a sense of positivity that spills over onto the brand.

- **Lower employee lifecycle cost** – Hiring PwD has a substantial benefit towards employee life-cycle costs. While additional initial investments may be required for training and providing reasonable accommodation measures, this pays for itself over the long term owing to the long tenure of PwD employees in the organisation. This avoids multiple costs due to attrition in the form of re-recruitment, re-training, loss of confidential information, brand goodwill, cost of learning, etc.

- **Positive company atmosphere** – Presence of PwD staff invariably creates a more positive ambience due to their perpetual smiles and simple outlook to life. Most customers love them, as do children. Other staff who interact with EwD are often observed to become more tolerant in general.

5.2 Imperatives for Employers

The following section highlights the key learnings based on interviews with multiple sector players. Figure 15 provides a summary of the imperatives for employers to create a PwD-inclusive organisation explained in the subsequent sections.

5.2.1 Genesis – Creating a strategic plan for a PwD inclusive workplace

- Understand legislative and social context – disability may be defined differently in different countries. It is also necessary to assess whether the country's leadership is truly committed to the cause.

- For an organic growth strategy through expansion, assess current PwD state internally, and understand more about their experiences.

- Assess local NGOs for partnerships to help with complementary services such as understanding local legislation, training managers on PwD engagement, etc.

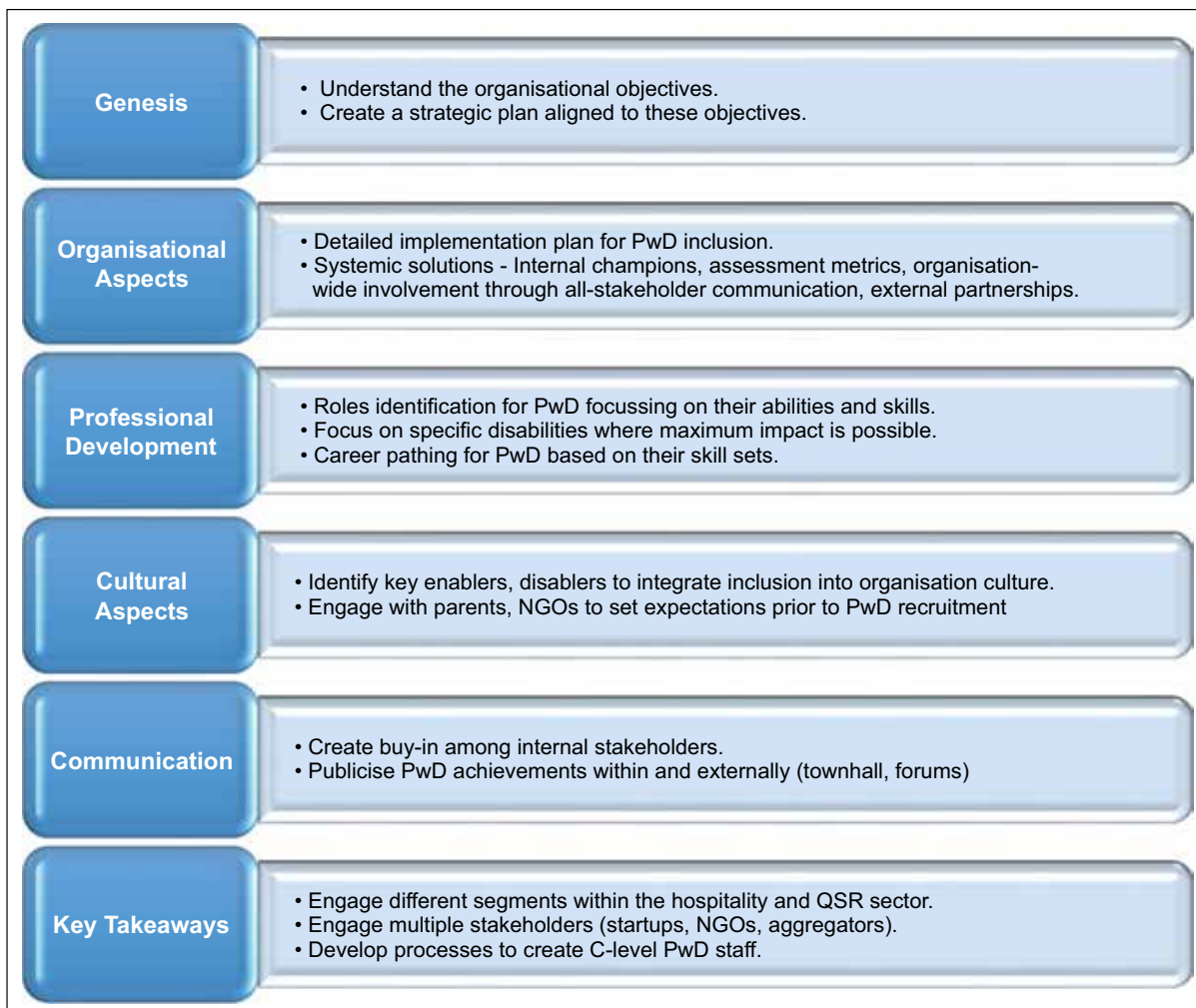|	
Genesis	• Understand the organisational objectives. • Create a strategic plan aligned to these objectives.
Organisational Aspects	• Detailed implementation plan for PwD inclusion. • Systemic solutions - Internal champions, assessment metrics, organisation-wide involvement through all-stakeholder communication, external partnerships.
Professional Development	• Roles identification for PwD focussing on their abilities and skills. • Focus on specific disabilities where maximum impact is possible. • Career pathing for PwD based on their skill sets.
Cultural Aspects	• Identify key enablers, disablers to integrate inclusion into organisation culture. • Engage with parents, NGOs to set expectations prior to PwD recruitment
Communication	• Create buy-in among internal stakeholders. • Publicise PwD achievements within and externally (townhall, forums)
Key Takeaways	• Engage different segments within the hospitality and QSR sector. • Engage multiple stakeholders (startups, NGOs, aggregators). • Develop processes to create C-level PwD staff.

Figure 15. Imperatives for employers to create a PwD-inclusive organisation

- Identify internal champion(s) – one senior champion or a number of champions at mid/junior levels. They should ideally have informational understanding, or can be upskilled to facilitate PwD inclusion processes.

- Understand HR perspective, their provisions, policies and processes for PwD, e.g., policy for reasonable accommodation and training, sensitisation and knowledge transfer policy if a sensitised person is leaving; non-discrimination approach.

- Understand current state, improve on it, and pro-actively increase number of EwD.

- Engage with communication teams for campaign internally and externally.

- Engage with clients and vendors; learn from other organisations who have done well in this aspect.

5.2.2 Organisational aspects – Implementing a PwD inclusion strategy

- Clearly articulated commitment to support PwD across all units and geographies.

- Internal champions identified must present their work to executive committee, and ensure participation across all departments.

- Articulate business case by engaging people in communications and operations to talk about disability; often, they are the face of the company and closest to the ground, and hence have the greatest potential to create the impact by championing cause for PwD.

- Measure progress; e.g., through targets to achieve awareness of all employees on disability initiatives within the organisation in a set timeframe, say 3 years. Develop detailed measures to understand PwD status within the company.

- Identify PwD SPoC to serve as mentor and communicator. Ensure handover if SPoC leaves.

- Creating ecosystem partners; e.g., Sodexo partnered with Disability Confidence, an accreditation body that works with companies employing PwD, to send out a clear message about its focus on PwD hiring.

- Make the commitment towards PwD publicly visible through external recognition (through awards, forum participation, etc.) to attract more PwD to join the organisation.

- Create advertising campaigns and publicise in national newspapers proclaiming it as part of the agenda to help raise the business profile as well as to attract more PwD.

5.2.3 Professional development – Creating new EwD opportunities

- Besides SHI, people with other forms of disabilities are often equal to or even more effective than people without disabilities in specific roles, provided skill-matching exercise is done pre-onboarding.

- Create awareness across sectors about different disability types and their abilities.

- This can be done through training to help develop a mindset that evolves to look beyond the visual aesthetics to focus on skill sets of PwD.

As an example, an autistic person, may have difficulty in a business development role that requires regular client interaction in a dynamically changing environment. But she/he can excel in a process-based role like room supervision requiring limited public interaction but more focussed monotonous tasks. Hence, the focus must shift from *disability* to *ability* using a simple process as indicated below.

- Map the skill sets of the PwD with the skill sets required for the various roles in the organisation.

- Place the PwD in an initial role that matches their skill sets. If interested, expose them to other roles that require similar skill sets, and allow them to demonstrate their ability in new tasks.

- Train high-potential PwD on additional roles paving the way for faster growth.

- Identify fast-learning PwD, and challenge them to take on more demanding tasks.

Table 3: Indicative job mapping based on type of disability

Department	Job roles	Types of disabilities				
		Physical disability (upper limb)	Physical disability (lower limb)	Hearing impaired	Low vision	Visually impaired
Front office	1.Host	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
	2. Bell man	Yes	Yes	Yes	Can be	Can be
	3. Guest service centre	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
	4. Business centre	Yes	Yes	Yes	Can be	No
	5. Reservation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Engineering	6. Electrician	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
	7. Civil Engineering	Yes	No	Yes	Can be	No
	8. Store documentation	Yes	Can be	Yes	Can be	No
House keeping	9. Room attendant	No	Yes	Yes	Can be	No
	10. Public attendant	Can be	Yes	Yes	Can be	No
	11. Florist	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Laundry	12. Attendant – room	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
	13. Attendant – skilled	Yes	Yes	Yes	Can be	No
	14. Attendant semi skilled	Yes	Yes	Yes	Can be	No
	15. Attendant – tailor	Yes	Yes	Yes	Can be	No
	16. Guest valet	Yes	Yes	Yes	Can be	No
Kitchen	17. Helper (kitchen)	Can be	Yes	Yes	Yes	Can be
	18. Helper (cook/cutting section)	Can be	Yes	Yes	Can be	No
Finance	19. Accounts payable	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Can be
	20. Accounts receivable	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Can be
	21. Accounts storage	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Food and beverage services	22. Room service	Can be	Yes	Yes	Can be	Yes
	23. Restaurant	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	24. Banquet aea	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
	25.Outlet	Yes	Yes	Yes	Can be	No
Security	26. Lady guard	Yes	Yes	Yes	Can be	No
Sales and marketing	27.Tactical	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
	28.Transactional	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No

5.2.4 Cultural aspects

Key components to initiate and sustain a PwD-friendly culture internally

- Choose one person, identify one role, select one sponsor to champion the PwD cause.

- Create a Proof of Concept (PoC), and use this to win over initial sceptics and naysayers by addressing deeply held biases against PwD.

- Start small; e.g., start with an internship for PwD to test feasibility. Give the existing EwoD time to work with someone different from them.

- In order to sustain the process, ensure buy-in at unit level. A fine balance must be maintained between top-down approach and local empowerment to avoid it from turning into a token initiative or being used as an excuse for non-performance.

- Involve people from different functions to create buy-in across the board.

- While doing the skill-set vs disability mapping exercise, focus should be on the person's abilities and skills to place them in roles that render the disability irrelevant; e.g., SHI in housekeeping roles, autistic staff in audit roles, etc.

- Hire PwD from different industries, e.g., hiring from liberal arts and commerce backgrounds ensures diversity.

- Training managers on a continuous basis on effective management of PwD must be encouraged and made part of managers' Key Responsibility Area (KRA).

- Focus on the simplest solutions first in the process of hiring, facing problems and finding solutions.

Key components to ensure external engagement as part of the culture-building process

- Parents of PwD should be counselled by employers and facilitating organisations to help them understand the need to send them for training and professional work, stressing on their ability to do relevant tasks with additional training.

- Before they are placed in the hotels, a familiarization visit for PwD and their parents is important to help them understand the future work environment.

- Client (hotel) teams should be invited to visit the PwD training centres and see the different types of PwD at work to ensure sensitisation of the entire client team.

- Selection of PwD as employees must be done after due assessments, based on skill-sets by hiring them as a core resource and not on the basis of compassion alone.

- All PwD referrals from the client or existing employees must be routed through facilitating NGOs to ensure adequate levels of training before PwD are inducted.

5.2.5 Communication

For orienting PwD mind-sets towards professional opportunities

- Treat PwD as independent workers after initial induction and acclimatisation.

- Focus on consistency of tasks – constant reference to process manuals.

- Give responsibility for repetitive tasks (e.g., checking cutlery quality by autistic PwD); maintaining high quality standards.

- Identify PwD strengths – recognise the best grooming, best smile, the most hard-working person, highest guest rating, and so on.

- Social rewards – public appreciation for quality work – showcased in town halls. These R&R processes should be communicated to PwD during induction.

- Role modelling and demonstration by managers and buddy.

- Identify and address discrepancy between parents' ideas and their PwD wards' requirements.

- Address labour dignity issue and parental biases, such as their preference for IT and data entry roles.

- Counsel PwD, their parents and key influencers (friends, relatives and partners) – address the mind-set at individual, household and community levels.

Creating buy-in across different organisational levels

- Top management buy-in – Create business case using industry data/PoC.

- Executive level meeting – Unit GMs across the organisation walked through PwD engagement philosophy in the presence of core HR heads.

- Top management communication to all the employees should be part of the company agenda.
- Communication cascade by respective GMs at unit level.
- Strong branding, messaging by PR team should be shared across all forums, print, social media.
- Align message with group philosophy; e.g., *We believe in luxury through equal opportunities.*
- Buy-in at operational levels – Regular discussion by HoDs with managers on key issues.
- Assessment progress – Specific metrics with action plans based on feedback loops.

5.2.6 Key takeaways

Role of sector players

- **Five star hotels** should lead the way with adequate compensation paid for PwD traineeship. If international brands lead the way by opening their doors to PwD recruitment, the sector could transform the PwD hiring culture because they are often the trend-setters.
- **Mid-market hotels** should ensure reasonable accommodation for PwD and introduce messaging in different ways such as through use of digital screen, ID card or badges to help the guest understand how to interact with PwD. Messaging groups within teams can be created to facilitate better internal communication between EwD and EwoD.
- **QSRs** must focus on creating multiple points of engaging PwD talent to compete with higher-paying hospitality players and reducing attrition of PwD talent. Multi-functional role exposure (learning all tasks) and a warm ambience (less staff, closer bonding opportunities between EwD and EwoD) in a QSR environment may be demonstrated to retain PwD talent.

Opportunities to leverage current positive environment around PwD inclusion

- Institutions and entrepreneurs should support different disabilities and make PwD hiring a norm rather than an exception.
- Start-ups should recruit PwD as a core resources; get dedicated workforce, which results in low attrition.
- When employees leave, they take along the know-whow and USP of the brand. Employing EwD

reduces attrition hence re-recruitment and re-training costs, compensating for the cost of mistakes while new people learn. Thus it is possible to pay PwD higher than industry standard salaries since low attrition pays for itself.

- A lot of children want to celebrate their birthdays with EwD; potential space for such celebrations can be explored by organisations employing EwD, to boost business.
- Opportunity to leverage brand recognition and use it to challenge the whole hospitality business to take up this initiative as part of their business model where they can contribute to society and also create a sustainable profitable business.

Ways to create C-level PwD

- Sensitise HR and Training – Showcase the impact of having C-level PwD using data.
- Encourage further education (key reason for PwD being hired only at entry level).
  - For PwD in entry level and junior management roles.
  - Create new career paths accounting for time taken to complete the course.
  - Take cognizance of their newly acquired qualifications.
- Create academic and professional opportunities for PwD – They are typically not considered for C-level roles due to poor academic qualifications (PwD typically complete 10th at age of 22-23 years).
- In cases of retrenchment, provide EwD with a letter of experience so it can be leveraged for future roles and contribute to their career growth across organisations.
- Address prejudices of PwD towards non-PwD.
  - Constant communication through specialists to understand their needs.
  - Allow them to channelise their emotions through positive expression.
  - Encourage them to create bonding at work to reduce their community-bound mind-set.
- PwD as supervisors – Sensitise non-PwD staff to be comfortable working for PwD managers.
- Common vocabulary
  - Create an organisational-level lexicon for communicating with PwD staff.

- Get consensus from all departments that engage PwD, and the EwD themselves.
- Develop communication/publicity channels.
    - Encourage EwD, especially senior members, to talk about their disabilities.
    - Showcase it as part of their life experience, focussing on their abilities and their path to success rather than on their disabilities.

5.3 Imperatives for PwD

Figure 16 lists out the imperatives for PwD.

5.4 Imperatives for NGOs and Consultants

NGOs and consultants play a key role as the bridge between employees and PwD employees. They can support sector players at each stage of the PwD employee lifecycle process (selection, on-boarding, role mapping, career planning, handling exit cases, etc.). They must work with the PwD across their career to make them job ready, provide continued support while on the job and create a continued engagement system to help them progress in their careers across organisational shifts.

Focus on good quality of life for PwD by harnessing their abilities.

Early life and education
- Seek out empathic associates (parents, siblings, friends) and ISL-trained people.
- Identify personal abilities and skills (e.g., through family, NGO intervention)
- Get trained to manage gestures that are inappropriate in professional environments such as scratching, yelling and showing anger publicly.
- Complete graduation; aim for higher studies for better professional opportunities.

Professional life
- Harness personal strengths through training at facilitating NGOs.
- Take specific training for hospitality and QSR jobs including functional and soft skills training; e.g., customer orientation, cooking, housekeeping, service.
- Develop people management and finance skills for career growth.
- Talk to other associates (EwD, EwoD) in the sector to undestand opportunities.

Future and aspirations
- Seek out professional opportunities actively. Be prepared to handle new roles.
- Don't fear job security. Discuss career progression with managers.
- Ask for reasonable accommodation at work that renders disability insignificant.
- Focus on the abilities and performance, not on the disability.
- Create an ecosystem of supporting people at work and in personal life.
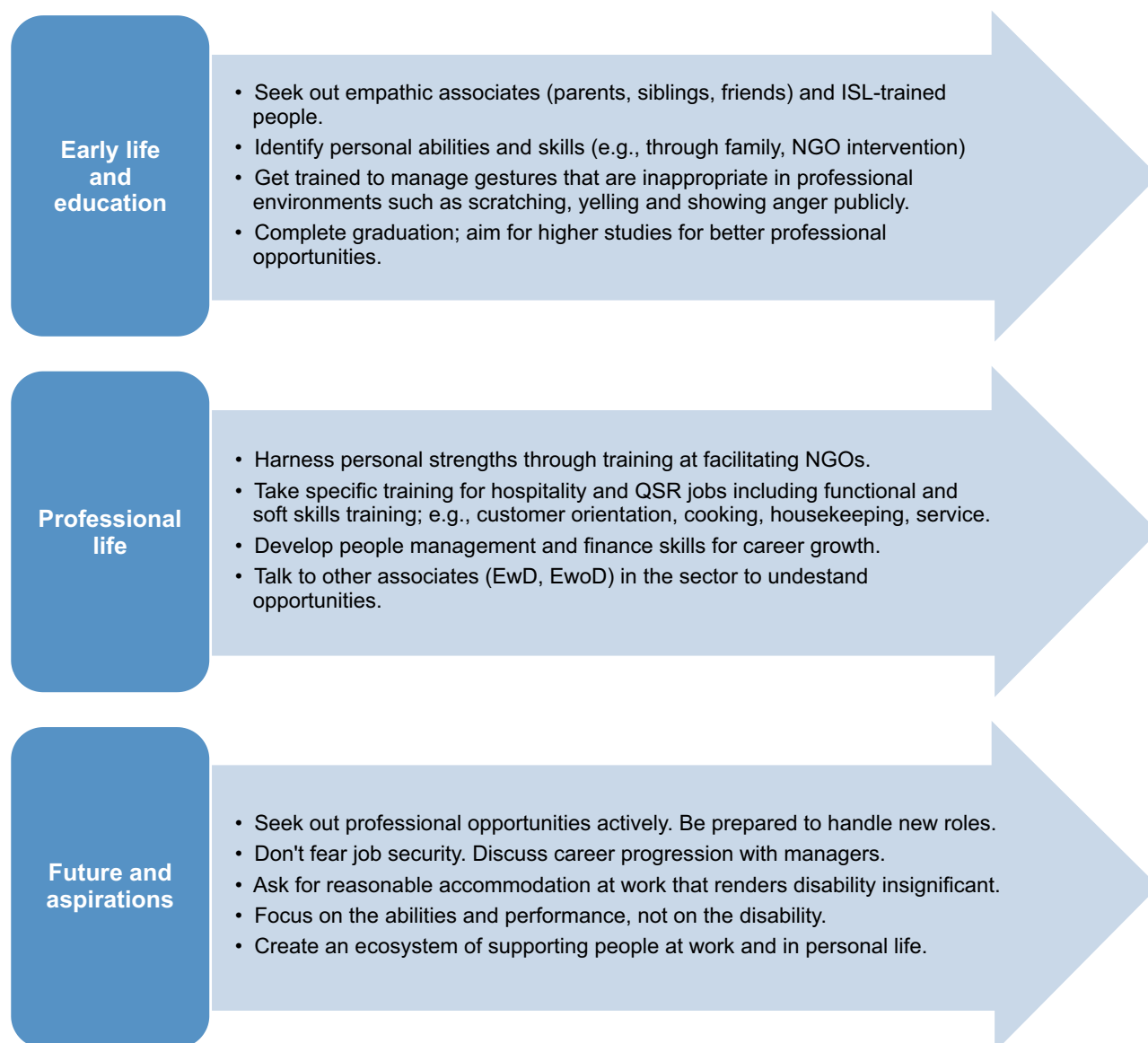
Figure 16. Imperatives for PwD

Box 11: Intervention process to support PwD – An example of autism

- Assess individual → Job mapping → Check with industry for accommodation (visual, structure) → job placement → Sensitise staff → Continual communication.
- Since autism is not visible, it is difficult for non-autistic people to understand it because people with autism can do most things well. Adjustments are required not just for timings but also sensitivity; e.g., low sensitivity (sensory) to smell if working in F&B.
- Creating an inclusive environment – Talk about their strengths and focus on things that can be learnt by rote since they have a good memory. Departments in hotels are usually structured, hence it is easy for them, especially if the system is organised and predictable. If they have difficulty in guest interaction, it may be preferable to avoid it.
- However, those with autism can head technical services owing to dexterity in maths and science. Their main difficulty is in social and communication skills and in understanding others' perspectives.
- People who are autistic can be good at housekeeping jobs because they want predictability in their tasks and housekeeping roles usually provide that.

Deep client relationships	• Jop mapping with clients prior to placement. • Continual on-premise support (esp. for ID/autism). • Awareness training, crisis management. • EwD - Personality and emotion management training.
Ease of access for clients	• Pan-India presence either through vertical (intra-organisational) or horizontal (partner network) expansion. • Provide client SPoC for streamlined communication. • Engage with clients' clients to create awareness.
Strategic partnership models	• Volunteer services in exchange of branding, etc. • Paid services (24x7 support, job mapping support) • Exchange services (place PwD candidates at a discount and get company trainers to train PwD on behalf of the facilitator)

Figure 17: Imperatives for NGOs to engage with sector players

5.5 Imperatives for Government

5.5.1 Creating PwD-friendly infrastructure and ecosystem

Figure 18 highlights the imperatives for the government for creating a PwD-friendly ecosystem through a combination of accessible infrastructure for all public property through PPP projects, channelizing CSR budget towards addressing disability and direct financial incentives for creating enablers for PwD like education, skill-based mapping and employment of people with different types of disabilities.

5.5.2 Using education policies to reduce PwD-related marginalization

One of the key issues in the career progression of PwD population is the lack of education. Hence it is imperative for the government to explore specific measures for PwD to ensure they are educated to appropriate levels, which can ensure their job readiness for the market.

Figure 19 highlights how educational policies can be used to reduce disability-related marginalisation using a PwD lifecycle approach which start from early childhood intervention for disability alleviation, to creating

- **Accessible Infrastructure**
  - Govt. norms to make all public infrastructure such as schools, hospitals, gardens, public & pvt. sector buildings PwD-friendly.
  - Secure funding for above projects through PPP with pvt. sector.
  - These should support both the CapEx and OpEx of all such structures over its lifetime.

- **Monitor CSR Budget**
  - Create inclusive programmes facilitating sensitisation and training modules for both PwD and non-PwD staff members
  - Develop in-house infrastructure and processes for sector players to enable PwD engagement.
  - Develop company-wide communication systems to bridge the gap between PwD and non-PwD staff.

- **Financial incentives to sector players**
  - For conducting job mapping exercises based on skill-set and then extending reasonable accommodation measures.
  - For enabling PwD to take up part-time courses to further their education while on the job.(e.g., through weekend courses).
  - Providing tax breaks for employing different categories of PwD.
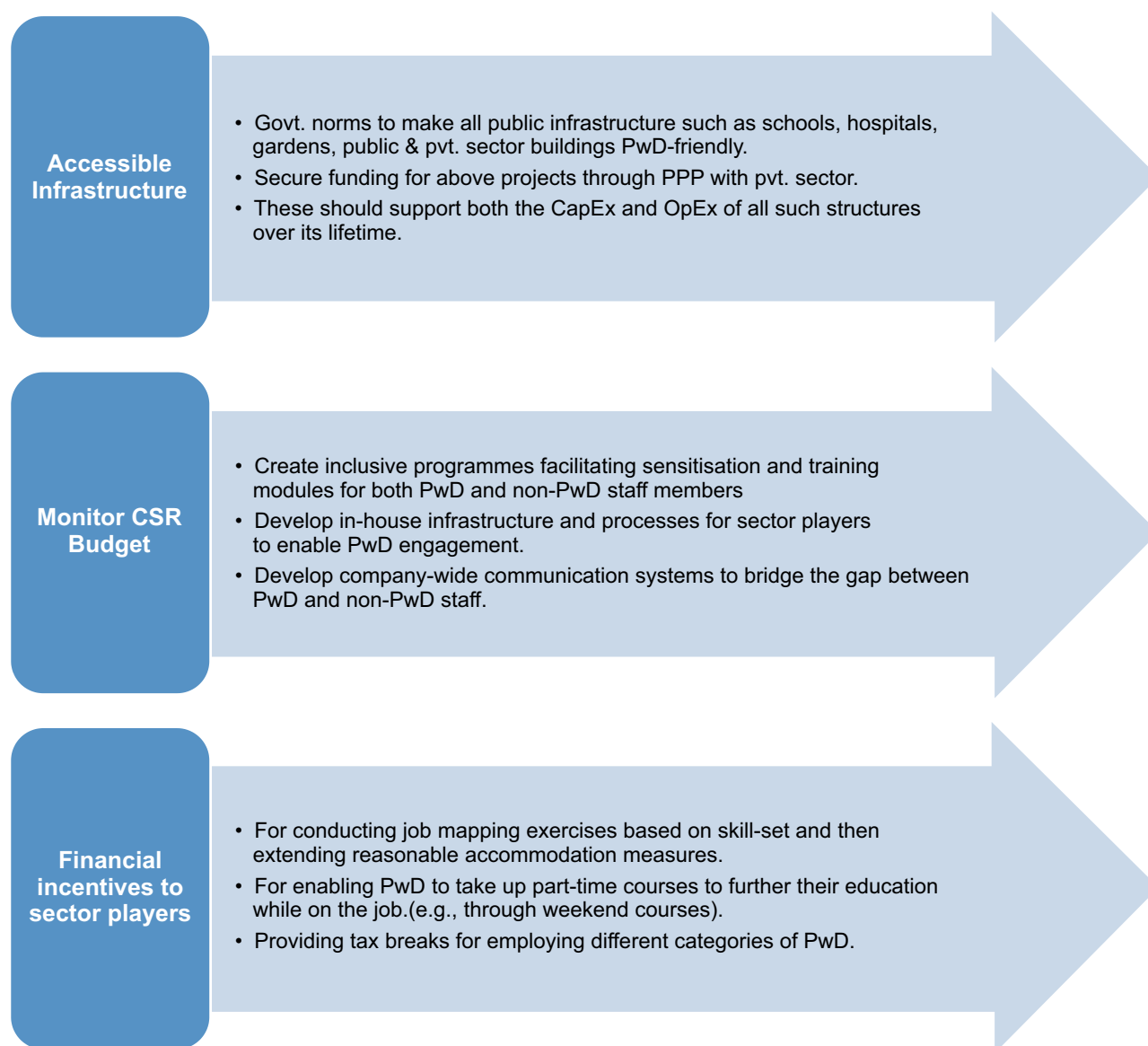
Figure 18: Imperatives for Government for creating PwD-friendly infrastructure and ecosystem

inclusive curricula and empowered teachers at educational institutions and enforcing minimum standards for accessibility in addition to measuring progress of PwD through household surveys.

The following sections provide some additional guidelines to aid PwD employment in the hospitality and QSR sector through vocation-based education system for PwD (refer to section 5.5.3) and skill-set based classification of PwD (refer to section 5.5.4).

5.5.3 Vocation-based education system for PwD

PwD in India are most disadvantaged owing to the lack of alignment between their education and the jobs existing in the sector. In order to address this, the government must overhaul the existing education system to focus equally on different types of vocational training, in addition to degree courses in current major disciplines such as engineering, medicine and management. In a hospitality and QSR context, vocations pertaining to the industry functions must be stressed. This is applicable not just for PwD, but also for the general population with PwD as a subset.
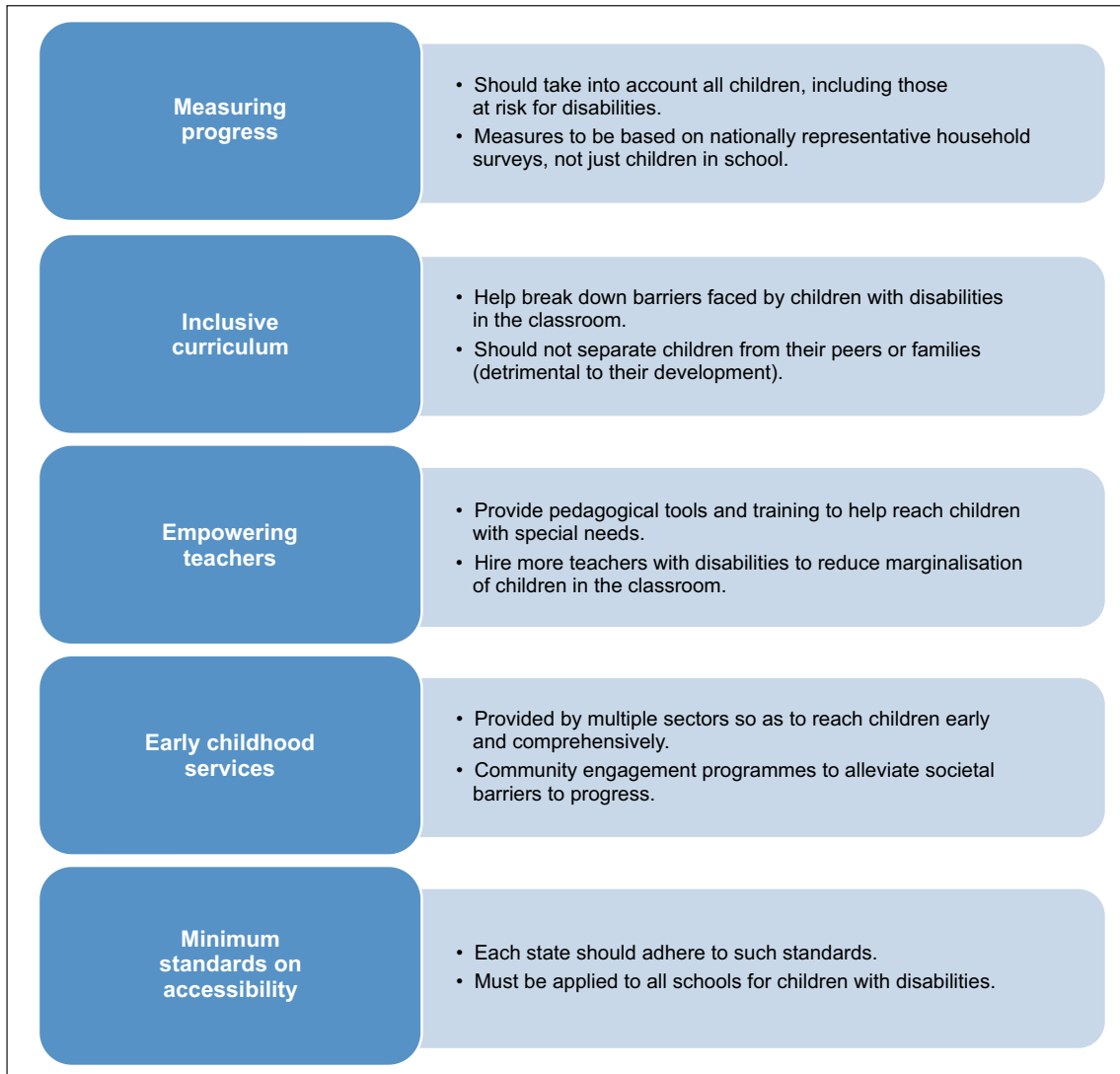
Figure 19: Use of educational policies to reduce disability-related marginalisation.

(Source – UNESCO 2014 report titled "Global Education Monitoring Report Summary on Disabilities and Education")

5.5.4 Moving from classification by disability to classification by skill-set for PwD

Despite segregation of disabilities into 21 categories as per the RPwD Act, 2016 (from the previously existing nine categories), mostly PwD are grouped into a single category – People with Disabilities.

The Government should adapt a two-level strategy to mainstream PwD hiring:

- **Stage 1** – Promote job-role based mapping of various disabilities (refer to Table 3, page 56)

- The disability should be used primarily to ascertain reasonable accommodation measures to be provided at the workplace in a way that the disability becomes irrelevant to the disabled person's daily work.

- **Stage 2** – Based on Stage 1 experiences, promote *mapping of skills for each job role* identified, and then use a combination of legislation and policy measures to encourage sector players to either start hiring PwD with such skills or training them for these skills.

- This will ensure that hiring of PwD moves to the mainstream, by shifting the focus from disability to the abilities (skills) of the individual and bring the PwD hiring process at par with hiring of non-PwD candidates.

- Simultaneously, it should work with other stakeholders like academia, start-ups and development sector to create institutions that can train PwD for this and other sectors, while continually upgrading the training modules to transition through stages 1 and 2 indicated above.

Problem	Proposed Solution	Good Practice Example - Singapore
• Formal education system in India focused on creating graduates. • Large portion of jobs available do not require graduation, leading to a supply-demand mismatch. • Since most PwD go through this education system, they face the same issues as other Indian graduates in addition to the challenges faced by them due to their disability.	• Profiling of entire Indian workforce. • Bring parity of formal education and vocational education over a 25-30 year transition period, esp for PwD. • Mainstream technology and non-technology vocations, in addition to ITI, with equivalent importance as university degrees in engineering, medicine, law and management.	• Compulsory primary and secondary education. • Progress to pre-university or vocational training. • For vocational training, Institutes of Technical Education and Polytechnics (150+ diplomas) are available to chose from creating quality employable talent (as an alternative to universities) aligned to the job market

Figure 20: Comparative analysis of a vocation-based education system for PwD

Blindness	Low vision	Leprosy cured persons	Hearing impairment (deaf & hard of hearing)	Locomotor disability	Dwarfism	Intellectual disability
Mentall illness	Autism spectrum disorder	Cerebral palsy	Muscular dystrophy	Chronic neurological conditions	Specific learning disabilities	Multiple sclerosis
Speech & language disability	Thalassemia	Hemophilia	Sickle cell disease	Multiple disabilities including deaf-blindness	Acid attack victims	Parkinson's disease

Figure 21: Types of disabilities as per the RPwD Act, 2016

52.30 million — **Sector Jobs Required By 2028**
• 26.8 million PwD and increasing... an untapped, potential talent pool can be made job ready through CSPs.

17.07 million — **Unemployed PwD as of 2011**
• Potential for NGOs and companies to collectively upskill them and enable their recruitment *en masse.*

12.20 million — **Illiterate PwD as of 2011**
• Opportunity for NGOs and government to work together to create large-scale impact in job-oriented education/vocational training.
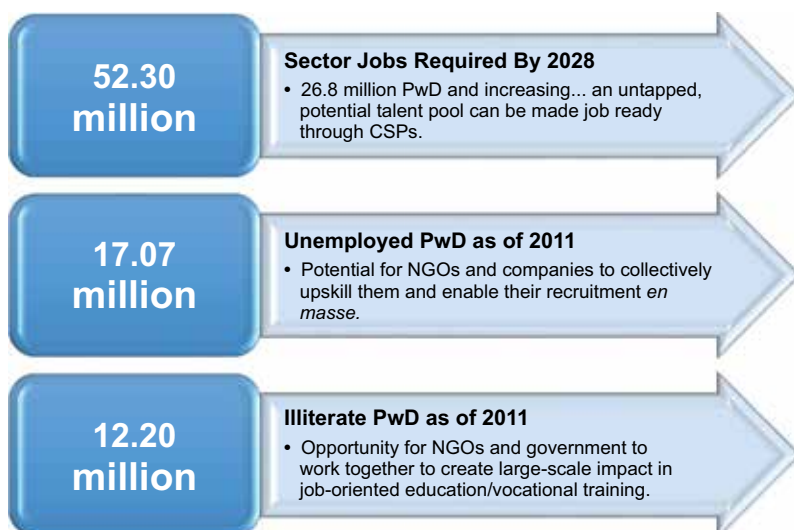
Figure 22: Creating opportunities for PwD through cross-sectorial partnerships

5.6 Opportunities through Cross-Sectorial Partnerships (CSPs)

While correlated literacy and employment data for PwD is unavailable, combining various information around PwD in earlier chapters and following annexures brings forth some interesting opportunities for multiple stake-holders to strengthen the PwD ecosystem (Figure 22, page 63).

5.7 Proposed solutions to create employment for PwD in the Hospitality and QSR sector

This section highlights the key solutions and opportunities for enabling PwD employment in the Hospitality and QSR sector using a holistic, multi-stakeholder, multi-staged approach with customized sector solutions as appropriate.

Ecosystem Approach
- Govt-Corporate-NGO partnerships to create value-chain solutions for PwD employment.
- Knowledge-exchange platforms on PwD employment by Industry bodies like Sector Skill Councils, FICCI, CII and NASSCOM.
- Product/service solutions specifically for PwD by entrepreneurs and corporate players.

Solutions Across Pwd Lifecycle
- Counselling services (candidates, family)
- Job-specific training / vocational training
- Placement services with continual support Personal/professional growth services
- Affordable assistive technology solutions

Sector-specific Solutions
- Sector-specific training modules for PwD delivered through industry trainers.
- Functional and soft skills training.
- NGO partnerships with sector players to help develop employee lifecycle solutions.
- Aggregators like Oyo, Airbnb, Swiggy, etc. recruiting PwD.

Annexure I
Overview of disabilities in India

As per the Census 2011, India has a total PwD population of 26.8 million. The following section provides a deeper understanding about this section of people in India.

1.1 Disability prevalence and distribution in India

The highest percentage of disabled population are in Sikkim (2.98%), Odisha (2.96%), Jammu & Kashmir (2.88%), Andhra Pradesh (2.68%) and Maharashtra

(2.64%). Companies in expansion mode can use data from Figure 23 to understand the key geographies for recruiting PwD population.

In terms of specific types of disability, as indicated in Figure 24, people with difficulty in movement (20%), hearing (19%) and seeing (19%) form the majority of the population. As observed through multiple interviews with employers (refer Chapters 2 and 3 on employer case studies), it was observed that people with speech and hearing issues are the most recruited across all disability categories. This may possibly be attributable to these being more *invisible* forms of disability and the sector's focus on visual aesthetics of its staff; hence a perceived sense of ease in employing people based on specific types of disability.
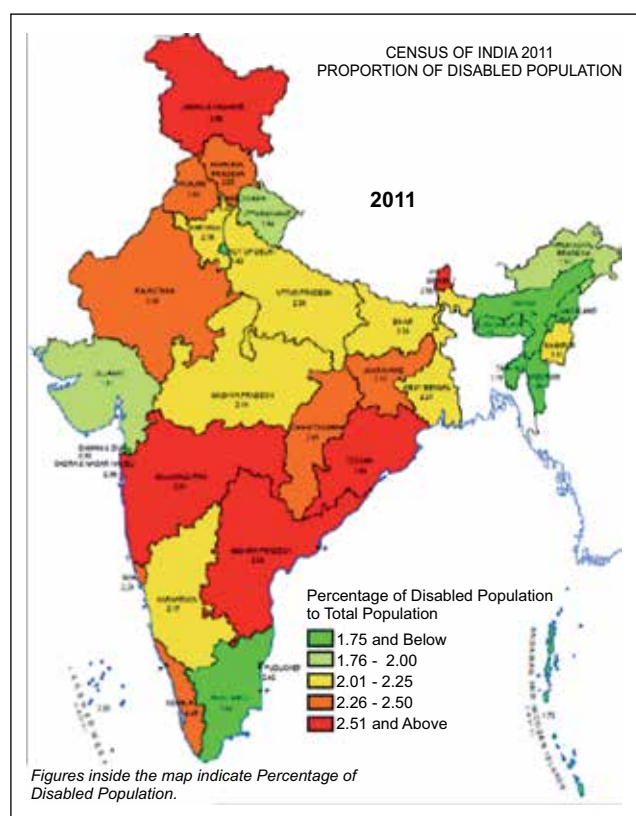

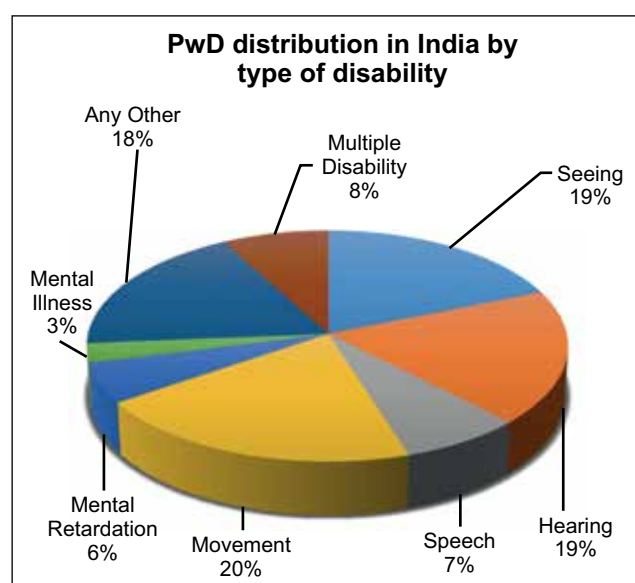*Figure 23: Distribution of percentage of PwD population in India by state*

Figure 24: Distribution of percentage of PwD population in India by type of disability

Figure 25 provides the PwD distribution across various states in India by the type of disability. The top five states – Uttar Pradesh (4.16 million), Maharashtra (2.96 million), Bihar (2.33 million), Andhra Pradesh (2.27 million) and West Bengal (2.02 million) – together account for half of the PwD population in India. Three disability categories namely, seeing, hearing and speech in these five states account for 25% (6.7 million) of all PwD in these categories. Sector players can use this data to identify the type of PwD they would like to hire for specific roles and complement this with a skill-set mapping exercise. NGOs and development agencies can use this data to identify the states to focus on for PwD job readiness to create maximum impact.
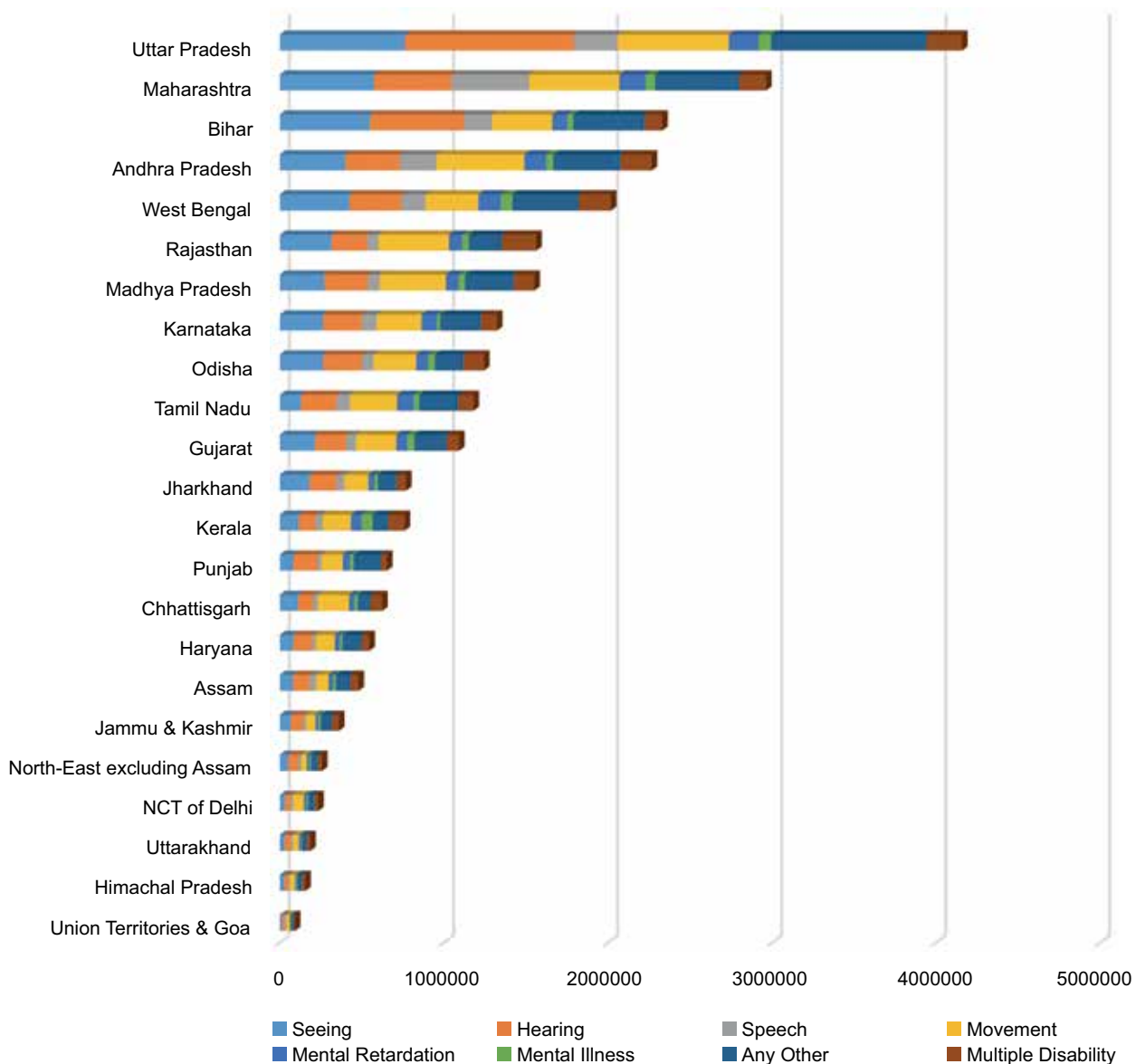

Figure 25: Distribution of PwD population in India by state and type of disability[1]

(Source: Census 2011; Table C-29)

1. For Figures 25, 27, 28 and 29, please note the following:
    •   North-East comprises Mizoram, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Manipur and Tripura.
    •   Assam has been represented as a separate standalone state due to its high absolute PwD population.
    •   Union Territories and Goa comprise Lakshadweep, Daman and Diu, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh and Puducherry, and the state of Goa.
    •   Goa has been combined with Union Territories due to its low absolute PwD population.
    •   Andhra Pradesh includes Telangana since all data pertains to period prior to formation of Telangana as separate state.

1.2 Education levels among the disabled

In a developing country like India, education plays a key role in determining the financial well-being of a person in society. While there are exceptions in India and globally, of entrepreneurs doing well without formal education, in general, education is considered a pre-requisite to a "good life" often, interpreted as a life of convenience and comfort.
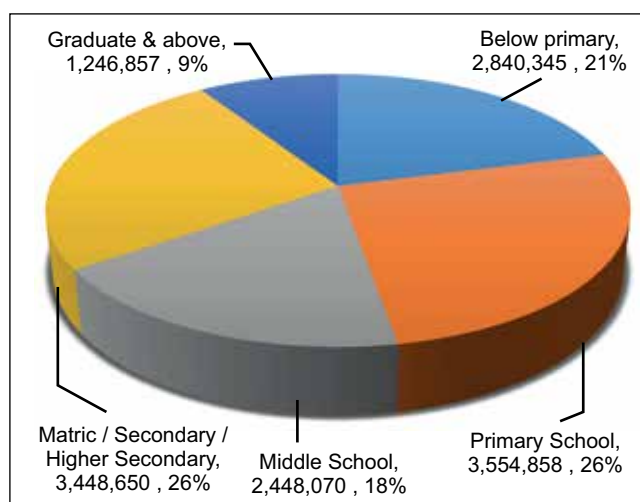

Figure 26: Distribution of literate PwD population in India by level of education

India has 1.25 million (9%) PwD graduates, with another 3.45 million (26%) PwD who have passed 10[th] standard (Figure 26). The top five states (Figure 27) – Uttar Pradesh (2 million), Maharashtra (1.85 million), West Bengal (1.09 million), Bihar (1 million) and Andhra Pradesh (0.98 million) – account for 51% (6.92 million) of all literate PwD in India. This indicates a sizeable PwD population of close to 4.7 million (35%) who have at least 10 years of education, and may be considered for a variety of positions starting from entry level to more senior roles

(after appropriate training) within the sector. While about 50% (13.5 million) are literate, only about 36.34% (9.7 million) of them are employed.

1.3 Employment levels of persons with disabilities

Even though PwD constitute a significant percentage of India's population, their employment needs remain unmet in spite of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, which reserves 3 per cent of government jobs for them. Figure 28 highlights the distribution of the various types of disabilities in the working PwD population found in each state, information that could be useful for companies with pan-India expansion plans,. Combining this with state-wise distribution of non-working PwD (Figure 29) and the role-based skill-set assessment data (to be done by individual organisations) can form a rich source of information to understand the kind of PwD talent available in the market and map them to the appropriate roles.

As indicated in Figures 28 and 29, the top five states (Table 4) account for more than half for both, working and non-worker PwD population. In terms of disabilities within working PwD population, PwD related to hearing, movement and vision account for 22.33% of total PwD population.

Table 4: Analysis of working and non-working PwD population in the top five states in India

State	Working PwD in million	Non-working PwD in million
Uttar Pradesh	1.45	2.71
Maharashtra	1.25	1.72
Bihar	0.87	1.47
Andhra Pradesh	0.88	1.39
West Bengal	0.69	1.33
Top 5 (% of total)	5.14 (52.55%)	8.62 (50.47%)
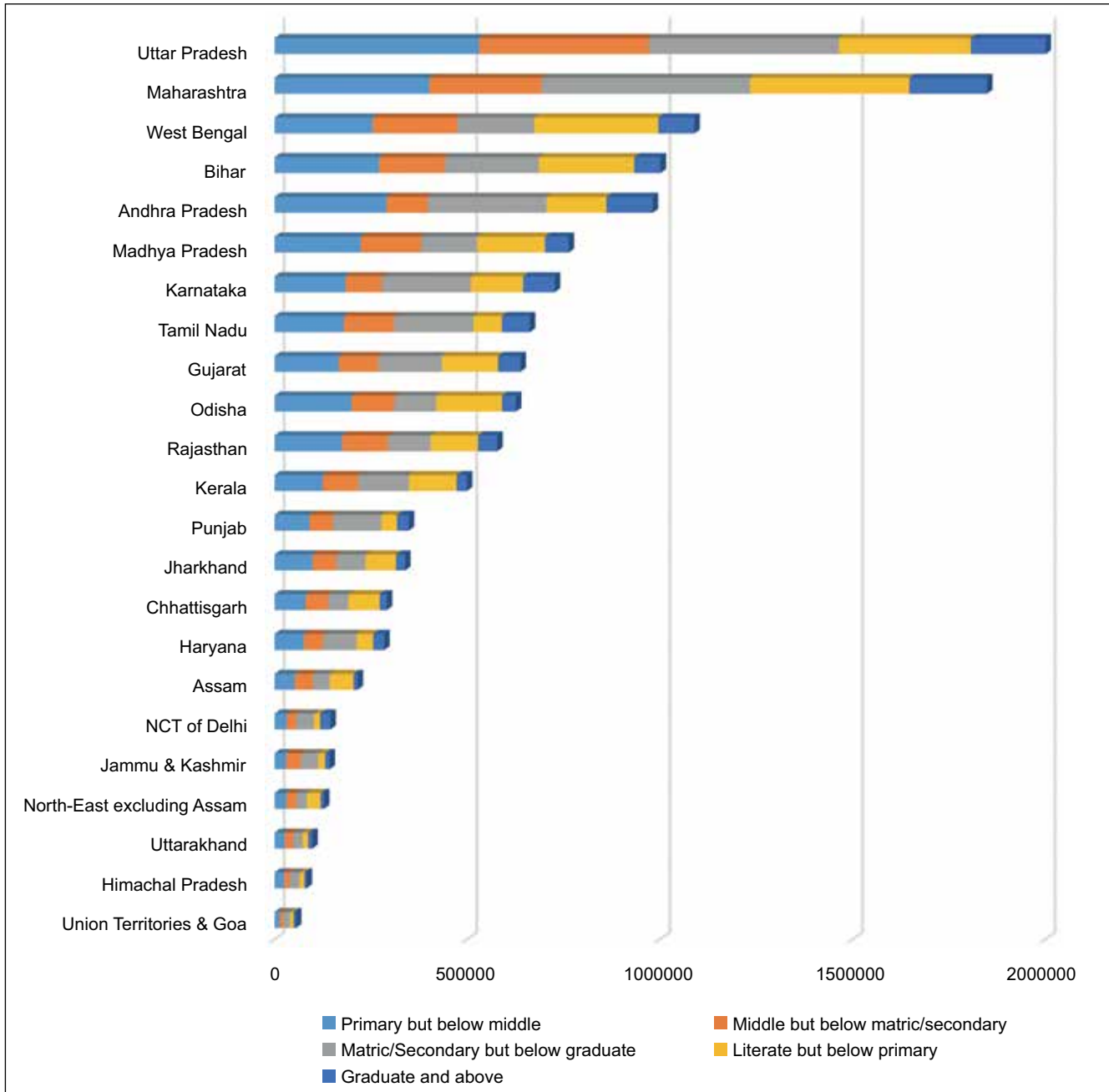
Figure 27: Distribution of literate PwD population in India by state and level of education

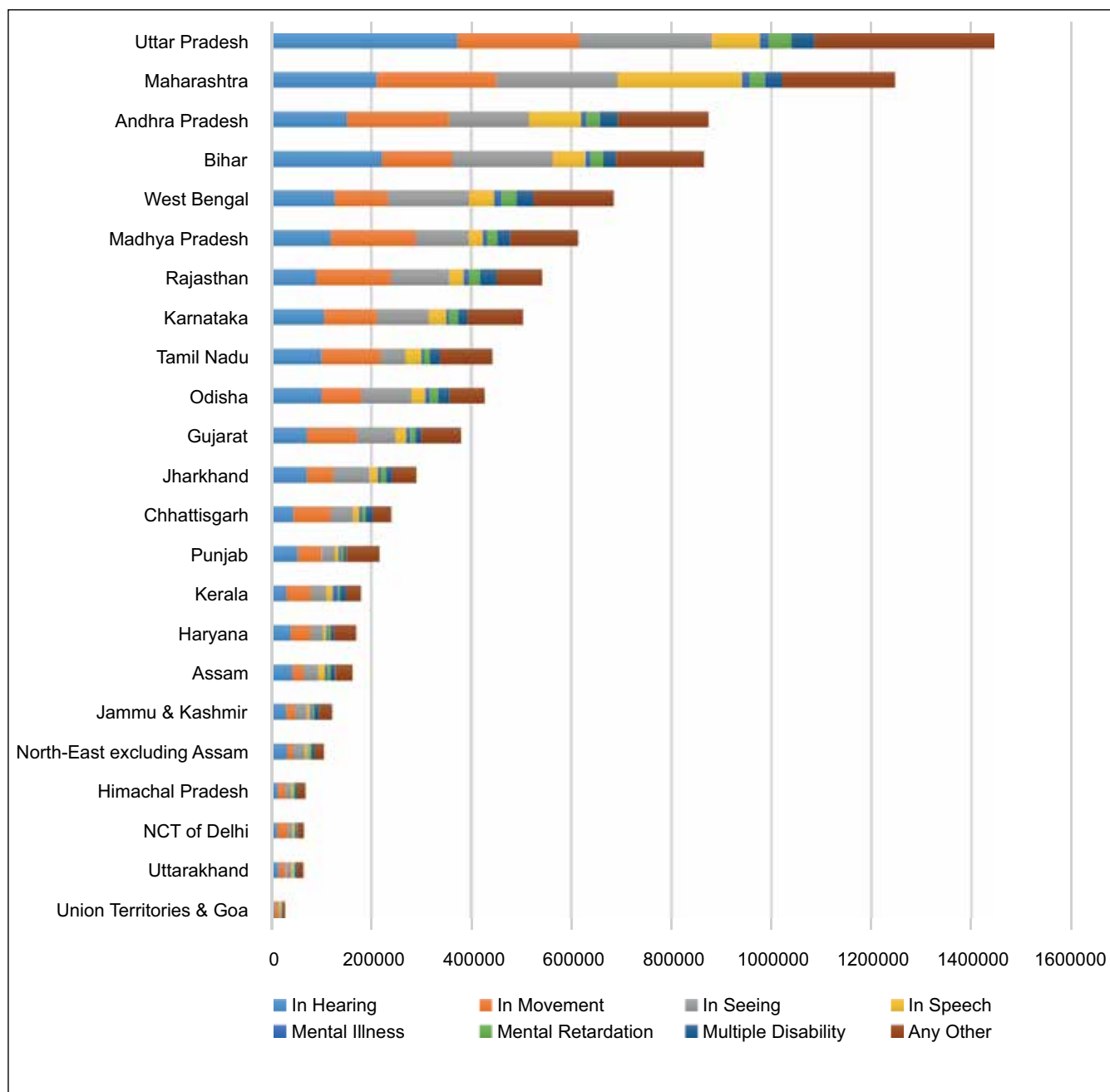*Figure 28: Distribution of working PwD population in India by state and type of disability*
Source: Census 2011; Tables C20 & C29

Non-Worker PwD population in India
(Total - 17,070,608)

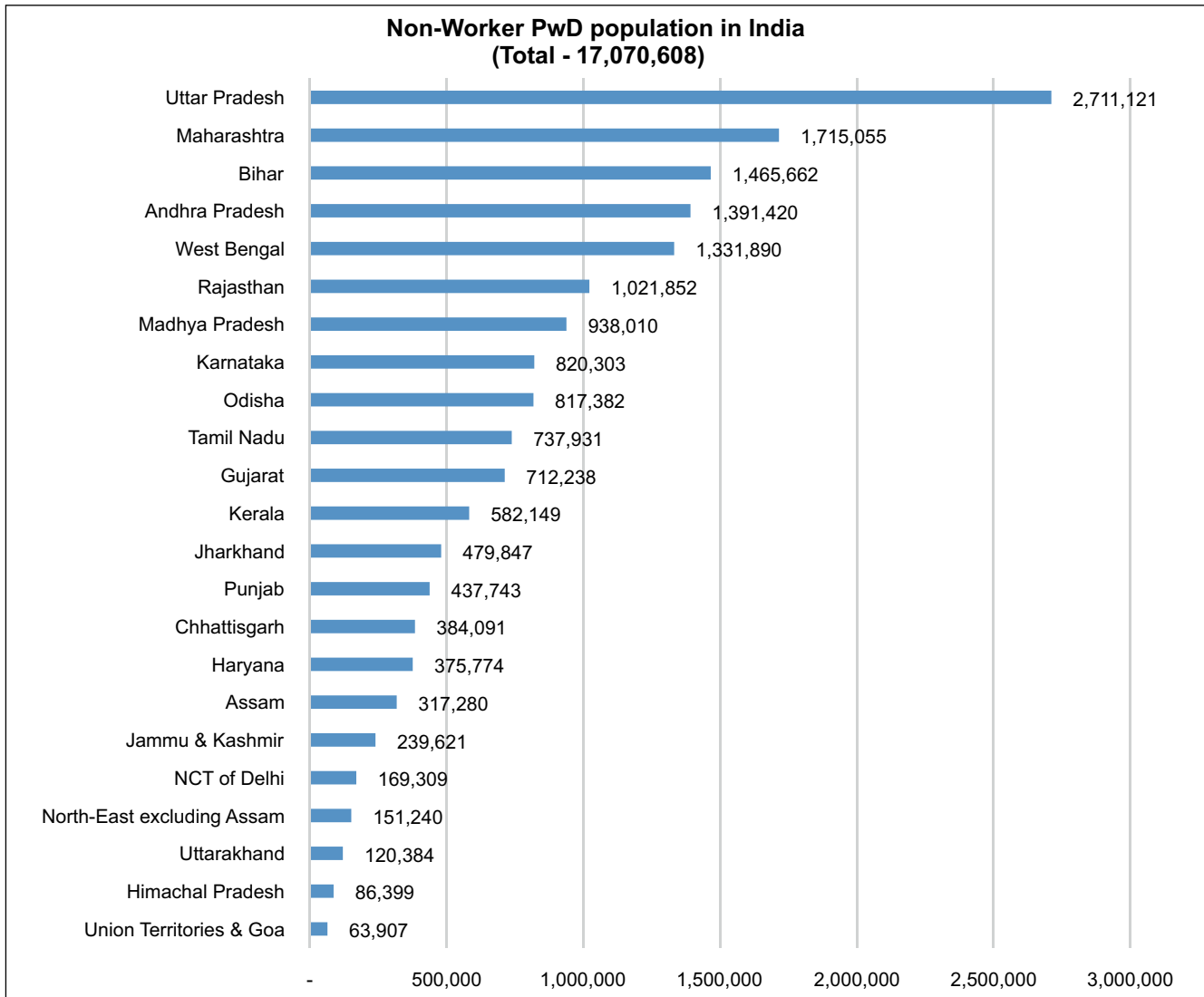| State	Non-Worker PwD population
Uttar Pradesh	2,711,121
Maharashtra	1,715,055
Bihar	1,465,662
Andhra Pradesh	1,391,420
West Bengal	1,331,890
Rajasthan	1,021,852
Madhya Pradesh	938,010
Karnataka	820,303
Odisha	817,382
Tamil Nadu	737,931
Gujarat	712,238
Kerala	582,149
Jharkhand	479,847
Punjab	437,743
Chhattisgarh	384,091
Haryana	375,774
Assam	317,280
Jammu & Kashmir	239,621
NCT of Delhi	169,309
North-East excluding Assam	151,240
Uttarakhand	120,384
Himachal Pradesh	86,399
Union Territories & Goa	63,907

Figure 29: Distribution of non-working PwD population in India by state

Figure 29 shows the unemployed PwD population representing 63.66% (17.07 million) of the PwD population in India. The top five states – Uttar Pradesh (2.71 million), Maharashtra (1.72 million), Andhra Pradesh (1.39 million), Bihar (1.47 million) and West Bengal (1.33 million) – account for 50% (8.6 million) of the total unemployed PwD population in India.

Hence it is clearly evident that there is a huge opportunity to tap the PwD talent pool in India. In order to understand how PwD can be included in the Hospitality and QSR sector successfully, it is essential to get an overall understanding of the Tourism, Hospitality and QSR sector in India, provided in the following annexure.

Annexure II
Overview of Tourism, Hospitality and QSR Sector

2.1 Global demographics

"Globally in the last two decades, tourism has been contributing 6% of the world output, one in 15 jobs and 7% of capital investment. According to UNWTO, it can double its contribution to the world's output, increase jobs by 33% and capital investment can jump by 80%" (Kumar, 2018)

2.2 Indian scenario

The total contribution by travel and tourism sector (which includes hospitality and QSR sector) to India's GDP is expected to increase from INR 15.24 trillion in 2017 to INR 34.45 trillion by 2028. In 2017, India was ranked seventh among 184 countries in terms of travel and tourism's total contribution to GDP. Travel and tourism is the third largest foreign exchange earner for India, earning $28.59 billion with foreign tourist arrivals increasing by 5.20% year-on-year to 10.56 million in 2018.

In 2017, Indian travel and tourism sector contributed to 8.82% of national GDP (INR 16.4 trillion) accounting for about 8% of total employment in India (India Brand Equity Foundation, 2019b). The sector provided jobs to 41.6 million people, set to increase to 52.3 million by 2028 (Vice President's Secretariat, 2018). The Government of India has set a target of 20 million foreign tourist arrivals by 2020, and double the foreign exchange earnings as well, which has a direct impact on the recruitment numbers for the hospitality and QSR sectors. However, there are some fundamental issues with regard to PwD hiring, as indicated below.
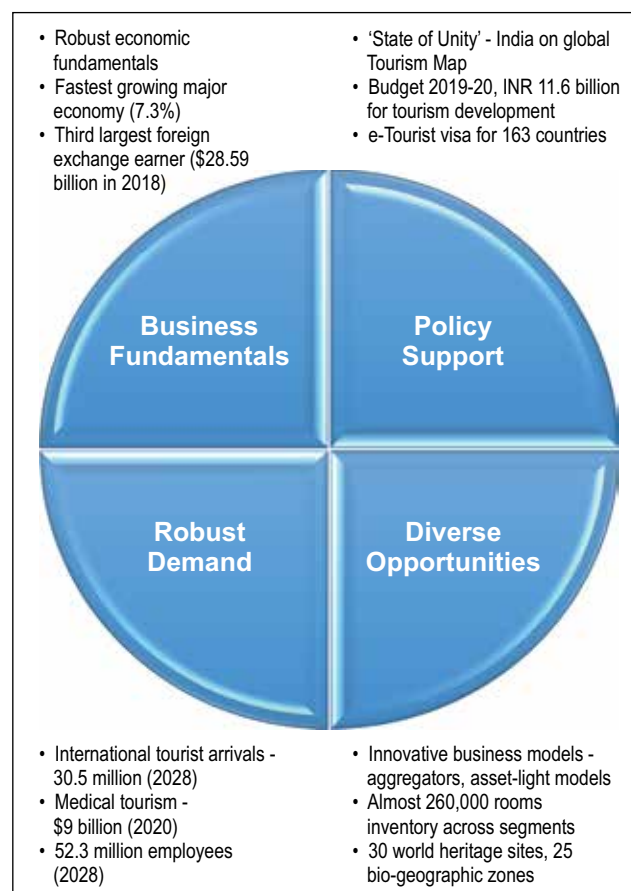
- Robust economic fundamentals
- Fastest growing major economy (7.3%)
- Third largest foreign exchange earner ($28.59 billion in 2018)

- 'State of Unity' - India on global Tourism Map
- Budget 2019-20, INR 11.6 billion for tourism development
- e-Tourist visa for 163 countries

Business Fundamentals

Policy Support

Robust Demand

Diverse Opportunities

- International tourist arrivals - 30.5 million (2028)
- Medical tourism - $9 billion (2020)
- 52.3 million employees (2028)

- Innovative business models - aggregators, asset-light models
- Almost 260,000 rooms inventory across segments
- 30 world heritage sites, 25 bio-geographic zones

Figure 30: Understanding the prospects of the tourism, hospitality and QSR sector in India

Source: Adapted from the India Brand Equity Foundation, Tourism and Hospitality – April 2019

2.3 Key issues with PwD hiring in the Hospitality and QSR sector

2.3.1 Supply-demand mismatch

Based on inputs from top hospitality sector CSR heads

- *Location:* Jobs and people are often not available in the same place, especially considering availability within a given location. For example, a PwD cannot work very far from where s/he lives. This becomes a major challenge given the lack of disabled-friendly public infrastructure systems in India, especially when it is not viable for employers to provide pickup and drop services.

- *Mismatched expectation* from job expectations versus skills and qualifications. For example, a PwD may want to work in Front Office or Finance, but may not have the skills.

- *Parental inhibitions:* Often, family members live in denial and pretend that the child does not have a problem. Hence the child grows up without any guidance, timely intervention or therapy to address disabilities, which are often curable when treated in early childhood. This results in PwD being subjected to poor upbringing resulting in low professional opportunities in life. These can often result in negative professional consequences, especially in a sector like hospitality, which places a premium on physical appearance and soft skills. For example, an adult PwD who responds inappropriately to an irate customer or suffers from poor posture, especially in FoH roles.

2.3.2 Issue with categorisation

Disability is often generalised without a proper understanding and sensitivity. Autistic and dyslexic people are often categorized together and risk being similarly assessed despite having very different needs. If a dyslexic person is given a role more suited for someone with autism, it can demoralise and agitate her/him.

In a professional context, categorisation must first be based on the job role and then on skill-set levels. For example, an autistic person is typically more systematic than a non-autistic person, and is likely to excel in process-driven work. Auditing, which is typically boring for a large section of people, would suit those with autism, who are by nature comfortable and good with repetitive work. In a hotel scenario, making an autistic person in charge of checking every room can poten-

tially provide effective output both in terms of quality and quantity due to this specific attribute.

2.3.3 Challenges of managing PwD as professionals

Some of the challenges faced by the Hospitality and QSR sectors while managing PwD professionals are listed below:

- Lack of services and vocational training courses such as candle making, courses in baking, stationery making, etc., for PwD.

- Inability of PwD to work in large groups, which is necessary to provide pre-skill training to them.

- Inability of PwD to share feelings and emotions with others. This affects their social skills, emotional maturity and work ethics.

- PwD having a distorted sense of reality because parents are often either too protective or too aloof.

- Societal acceptance is a challenge because a large section of PwD are not professionally employed, and people have misplaced notions of working with PwD.

- Use of intelligence quotient method to assess suitability for a role. PwD are often perceived as ineffective due to the widely held notion, often untrue, that they may not be able to perform specific tasks.

- Focus on physical age of PwD is often incorrect owing to the varying levels of training and education required, in contrast to non-disabled people who go through the conventional channels of education. Focus should therefore be on honing their skills based on their mental age and skill sets.

2.3.4 Projected sector employment growth in India

India's PwD employment growth projections in the hospitality and QSR sector can be understood by the expansion plans of several hospitality brands as indicated below.

Based on excepts from report on Tourism and Hospitality by (Indian Brand Equity Foundation, 2019a)

- Berggruen Hotels planned to add around 20 properties under its mid-market segment 'Keys Hotels' brand across India by 2018.

- In 2018, Marriott International planned to add 20 more properties to its existing portfolio of 98 hotels in India.
- Louvre Hotels Group, world's fifth largest hotel group, planned to increase its business in India to 10-15% by 2021 from 5–7%, as of September 2018.
- Hilton planned to add 18 hotels pan India by 2021, along with 15 operational hotels under five brands.

- As of April 2019, Radisson Hotel Group planned to double its portfolio of hotels in India to 200 by 2022 and hire an additional 10,000 people over the next 5 years.
- Oyo Rooms planned to invest about INR 14 billion towards capital expenditure, technology and leadership in its Indian and South Asia business during 2019.
- Airbnb Inc, world's largest home-sharing platform has invested about INR 14 billion in Oyo's Series-E funding round, a clear indication of its interest to grow its market share in India.
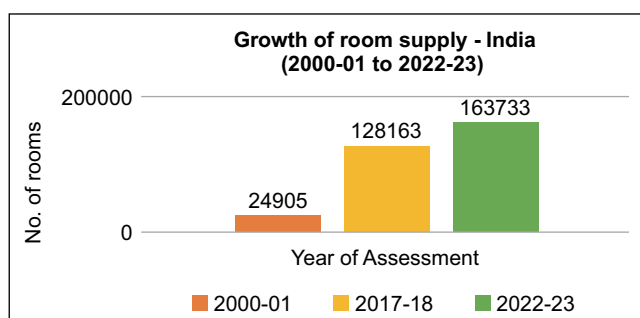
Between 2000-01 and 2017-18, room supply in India has risen at a 9.5% Compounded Annual Growth Rate (CAGR), and is projected to grow at around 5% CAGR over the next 5 years to 163,733 rooms. This, coupled with the high attrition rates in the sector, clearly indicate a need to look for viable solutions to recruit quality manpower who would stay with the organisation and also contribute to high productivity. PwD provide a potential solution to this problem.

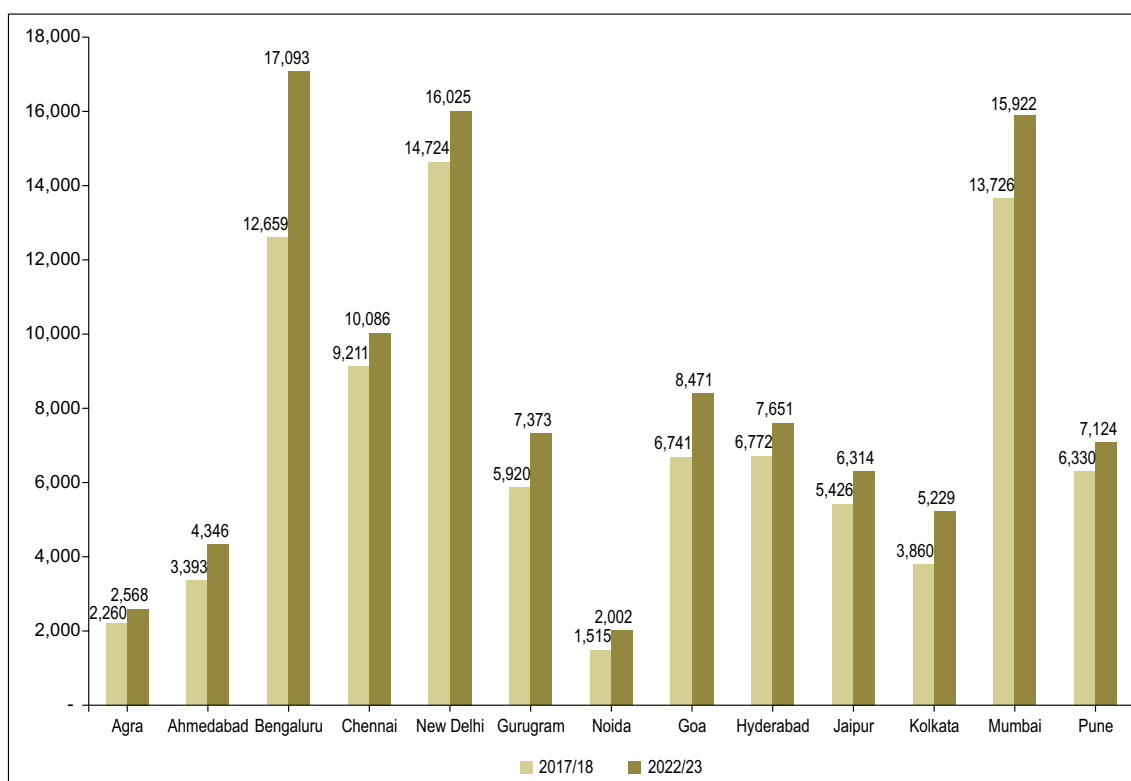Figure 31: Growth of room supply in India (2000-01 to 2022-23)

Figure 32: Proposed branded hotel rooms across major cities (2017-18 to 2022-23)

Note: Supply for 2022/23 has been computed by adding the active future supply to the existing base of rooms on 2017/18

Given the high projected availability of branded hotel rooms by 2022-23 across cities in Uttar Pradesh (Agra – 2,568, Noida - 2002), Maharashtra (Mumbai – 15,922), West Bengal (Kolkata – 5,229), Andhra Pradesh (Hyderabad – 7,651) and Bihar, coupled with the availability of high non-working population (8.6 million) and high literate PwD population (6.92 million) builds a major case for these states to think about recruiting local PwD population for their long-term sustenance (Figure 32).

There is an increasing demand for India as a tourism destination. This, along with the robust growth of the Indian hospitality sector and the lack of a loyal employee base within the sector, presents an ideal opportunity to explore recruitment of PwD. In order to do so, it is essential to simultaneously address the issues around PwD recruitment in terms of supply-demand mismatch, inappropriate categorisation and lack of PwD-friendly ecosystems with the help of different stakeholders in the PwD value chain.

Suggested Reading

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2. **The Road to Inclusion Integrating Persons with Disabilities in Organizations – A report by Youth4Jobs and BCG, November 2015**
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3. **Disabled Persons in India – A Statistical Profile 2016**
   http://mospi.nic.in/sites/default/files/publication_reports/Disabled_persons_in_India_2016.pdf

4. **Disability Employment: Indian Retail Changing Equations – A report by Youth4Jobs and TRRAIN, January 2019**
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6. **Persons with Disability and the Indian Labour Market – Challenges and Opportunities – A report by Youth-4Jobs and International Labour Organisation**
   https://www.youth4jobs.org/pdf/ilo-study-pwd.pdf

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   https://www.who.int/disabilities/world_report/2011/report.pdf

8. **2018 Indian Hospitality Trends and Opportunities – Hotelivate**
   https://hotelivate.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Hotelivate_TO_2018.pdf

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Person	Designation	Company
Arjun	Founder	1589
Preeti Siwach	Head, Vocational and Employment	Action for Autism (NGO)
Pradeep	Staff	Café Echoes
Vijay	Staff	Café Echoes
Prateek	Founder	Café Echoes
Karan Kohli	Founder	Chai pe Charcha
Sakshi Bajaj	People Operations Business Partner	Compass for Google
Pratibha K. Rao	COO	Deeds (NGO)
Amit Mishra	Director - Diversity and Inclusion	Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI)
Shyamala Deshpande	Consultant	Freelance Consultant (Ex-Café Coffee Day)
Nikhil Sharma	COO	Ginger Hotels
Loraine Ozorio	Manager - HR	Ginger Hotels
Shantanu Das	Hotel Manager, Bhubaneshwar	Ginger Hotels
Aradhana Lal	Vice President – Brand, Communications and Sustainability Initiatives	Lemon Tree
Kuntal Vegad	AGM - Learning and Development	Lemon Tree
Brij	Staff	Lemon Tree
Seema	Staff	Lemon Tree
Kamal Singh	Executive Chef	Lemon Tree
Dilshad Mehershahi	Founder	Mann (NGO)
Rajesh Varatiya	Staff	Mirchi and Mime
Raja Sekhar Reddy	Founder and Advisor	Mirchi and Mime
Wasim Sheikh	Staff	Mirchi and Mime
Alina Alam	Founder	Mitti Café
Surender Singh	Manager (Employment)	Muskaan (NGO)
Bhavani Mani Shankar Dutta	Director of Talent and Culture	Novotel (Accor Group)
Vidyashankar S	Area Director of HR	Park Hyatt Hyderabad
Thomas Abraham	GM	Park Hyatt Hyderabad
Siddharth Chandrasekhar	Founder	Pencil and Monk
Alka	Staff	Pullman (Accor Group)
Srinivas Rao	Director of Talent and Culture	Pullman (Accor Group)

Person	Designation	Company
Alok Kaul	GM	Radisson Blu HiTec
Zubin Ghiara	VP - HRD	Sarovar Hotels and Resorts
Yash Raghav	Corporate Training Manager	Sarovar Hotels and Resorts
Piyush Kalra	Staff	SodaBottleOpenerWala
Pradeep Singh	Staff	SodaBottleOpenerWala
Rakesh	Staff	SodaBottleOpenerWala
Shatarupa Das	Manager	SodaBottleOpenerWala
Mohit Balachandran	Ex-Country Director	SodaBottleOpenerWala
Megan Horsburgh	D&I Head, UK & Ireland	Sodexo
Sreya Oberoi	HR Manager	Sodexo
Prashant Issar	Consultant	Statix Hospitality (Ex-Mirchi and Mime)
Foram Nagori	Corporate Director - CSR	Taj Hotels
Sandeep Gore	Manager - CSR	Taj Hotels
Hemant Jaiswal	Director of HR	Taj Mahal Palace Hotel
Swati	Director of HR	Taj President
Ashish Dhadve	Staff	Taj President
Glenn Pinto	Staff	Taj President
Riten	Staff	Taj President
Sneha	Director of HR	Taj Wellington
Dinesh Singh	Staff	The Leela
Janki	Staff	The Leela
Manish Kumar Rishi	Director - HR	The Leela
Sridhar K. R.	Corporate Head of HR	The Leela
Jagdeep Shetty	Multi Property Director of HR	Westin (Marriott Group)
Akshay Katyal	Head of Diversity and Inclusion	Yum

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