

# Assessment of Relationship between HR Practices and Employee Empowerment Among Differently-Abled Employees in Services Sector in Coimbatore District

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## Abstract

India has made significant strides in recognizing and addressing the rights and needs of differently-abled individuals. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, of 2016 replaced the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, of 1995, broadening the scope and coverage. However, there exists a social stigma about the capabilities of the differently abled employees, while, on the other hand, such employees face several challenges in terms of infrastructure and accessibility, limited skill development opportunities and less employer awareness towards suitable work environments for differently-abled employees. Based on this premise, there arises a need to study how empowered are the differently abled employees working in various sectors. In any organization, HR practices determine the effectiveness of people management. An analysis of the HR Practices that actively engage differently-abled employees may be looked at as an indicator to understand the empowerment status of such employees. The objective of this article is to explore the association between HR Practices and Employee empowerment among the differently abled employees working in the services sector in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. To assess the relationship between these two criteria; the “canonical correlation” tool is applied. The result illustrates the correlation between HR practices and Employee Empowerment. There exists a strongly significant correlation between HR Practices and Employee Empowerment. The derived result portrays the direct relationship between HR Practices and the Empowerment of differently abled employees, with the Grievance Redressal Mechanism as a key indicator. Therefore, it may be vividly expressed that every organization must tailor its HR Practices to make the differently abled employees feel more empowered. It may be comprehensively stated that the stakeholders ought to collaborate and build a positive environment to create a more inclusive and equitable future for all, to achieve organizational success. The study has suggested significant measures like compatible software, mental wellness, skill-specific Training and exclusive PwD cells that could be implemented in the organizations for the increased performance and empowerment of differently-abled employees.

**Keywords:** Differently-Abled, Employee Empowerment, HR Practices, Organizational Success

## 1. Introduction

India, with its vibrant cultures and economies, has witnessed a paradigm shift in labour dynamics, where the workforce is increasingly becoming more diverse. Coimbatore District, the Industrial Hub of Tamil Nadu, boasts a burgeoning services sector that encompasses a wide range of industries, from IT to hospitality. Against this backdrop, the present research endeavours to unravel how HR practices influence the empowerment of differently-abled employees in this specific regional context. The systematic organizational support enforced by the organizations in their HR practices determines the career development, upskilling, coaching and mentoring programs for the workforce. Maheshwary (2012) highlights the importance of enhancing accessibility for employees with disabilities through training, technical advancements, and physical accessibility. HR practices and employee empowerment components are interconnected. Human Resource practices have been identified as a primary enabler of inclusion, yet research on disability-related HR Management is scattered across disciplines. HR plays a vital role in creating an environment that nurtures and supports the development of empowerment competencies, which, in turn, contributes to a culture of employee empowerment within the organization. Empirically, effective execution of policies and procedures predicts an organization's development (Schloemer-Jarvis *et al.*, 2022).

Empowering differently-abled employees requires thoughtful and inclusive HR practices that recognize and support their unique abilities and needs. Mira *et al.* (2019) suggest that organizations should consider HR practices as a channel to achieve their goals through employee performance. Additionally, fostering specific competencies among differently-abled employees can enhance their empowerment within the workplace. Theories based on resources propose that organizations must develop a competitive "differently abled workforce" which is diverse in nature. The resource-based workforce theory focuses on the strategic utilization of human resources as a source of competitive advantage for organizations. This theory is an extension of the broader Resource-Based View

of the firm, which suggests that a firm's sustainable competitive advantage lies in its unique and valuable resources.

In this article, the HR practices considered are *Recruitment and Selection, Training and Development, Performance appraisal, and Career Planning and Development*.

According to the "Impact Analysis of work environment of Employees with Disability in the Government Organizations of Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar Districts" carried out by Gujarat National Law University (2023), the study focused on the comparison of employees with disabilities and other employees, there was clear evidence of discrimination against employees with disabilities, along with reduced accessibility, dissatisfaction with workplace treatment, compensation, and promotion policies. This remains the case even after co-workers and employers acknowledge that the productivity and performance of workers with disabilities are on par with those of their peers. A large portion of disabled employees (7.8%) have rated the Grievance Redressal Mechanism as "Below Average." Accessibility problems and the communication barrier could be some of the causes. The study recommended that to address the problems of employees with disabilities, more attention needs to be paid to the Redressal norms.

Employee empowerment, a key driver of individual and organizational growth, takes on heightened significance in the case of differently-abled individuals. Ivanova and Von Scheve (2020) express that employee empowerment develops a positive attitude among the employees towards the organization. Employee empowerment is giving employees a certain degree of autonomy and responsibility for decision-making about their specific organizational tasks.

This research aims to scrutinize how HR practices, ranging from recruitment and training to quality workplace and organizational culture, impact the empowerment of differently-abled employees. By exploring the HR factors, the research seeks to contribute insights to identify effective human resource

management strategies of organizations. Further recent studies argue that the organizational environment is not only based on judgment but affects the productivity of the organization (Patterson *et al.*, 2004) Promoting deliberately positive environments to boost ongoing actions and favourable HR policies will maximize the human capital. This will also develop healthy competition among all the employees in the organization (Hodgetts *et al.*, 1994). Nowadays, HR has become a strategic enabler in managing people effectively and working for the retention of employees in the long run, including differently-abled professionals.

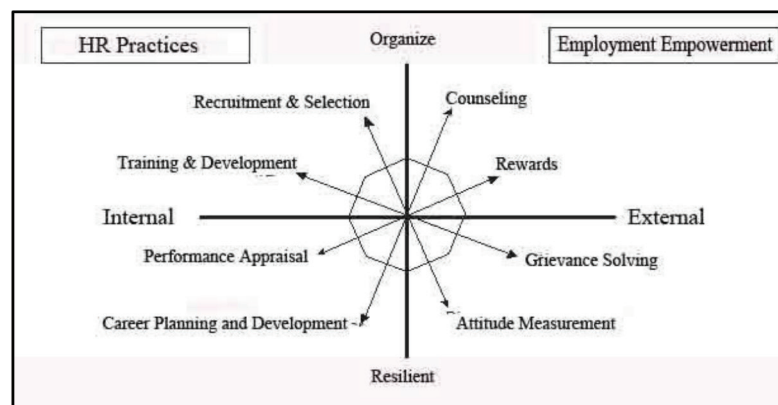
In the dynamic landscape of the services sector in Coimbatore District, the integration of differently-abled individuals into the workforce poses a multifaceted challenge that warrants a thorough investigation. Despite an increasing recognition of the importance of inclusivity and diversity, a significant gap exists in understanding the relationship between Human Resource (HR) practices and the empowerment of differently-abled employees. The HR practices stand as the backbone of all other organizational functions.

### 1.1 HR Practices and Employee Empowerment Competencies

Effective Leadership of an organization depends on the HR practices adopted by the organization, especially in the case of organizations engaging differently-abled employees. The HR practices under consideration in the study are *Recruitment and Selection, Training and*

*Development, Performance appraisal, and Career Planning and Development.*

The work zeal deals with peers, with supervisors, senior managers and leaders. Employee empowerment includes independence, criticism, and consequential (Kaplan & Kaiser, 2003). The study by Yin *et al.*(2019) explains that the research on the competency framework strives to strike a balance between the components of “HR practices” and “Employee Empowerment”. The present study involves one framework in which the factors comprising HR Practices (Figure 1) with that of Employee Empowerment are applied. Utilizing the relationships between these frameworks to derive an associative construct between the given variables is the aim of the research. The vertical section contains “Organised systems” contending with “Resilient systems”, while the horizontal section contains “Internal focused” systems contending with “External focused” systems. The HR practices model placed in between “Recruitment and Selection and Training and Development” promotes development and support through work intentions and morale. The internal and external model suggests consequential results and is linked with “Career planning and development” within the organization. The employee empowerment model combines the external elements of Counseling, Rewards, Grievance Redressal Mechanism and Attitude measurement through work intentions and morale. The perceptual opposite is the internal model which combines resilient and internal attributes. The morale



**Figure 1.** HR practices and employee empowerment.

(**HR practices:** Recruitment and Selection, Training and Development, Performance appraisal, Career Planning and Development. **Employee Empowerment:** Counseling, Rewards, Grievance Solving, Attitude Measurement.)

of employees gets an impetus with empowerment and takes ownership of their role which is much needed to fulfill the targets.

This reflects that employee empowerment is a collaborative effort of the Management with its HR practices and that of the employees with internal and external factors put together. Disabled employees need a lot of resilience and organising capability comparatively to achieve the targets set.

This model systemizes the documentation and provides the baseline for the HR practices and Employee empowerment programs. Ghoshal and Bartlett (1995) derived a set of attributes executing a detailed case study, which identifies the four sets of attributes for employee empowerment. Table 1 explains each attribute explored during the study.

This study aims to explore the correlation between HR practices and Employee Empowerment among the differently abled employees in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. To assess the relationships between the chosen criteria, the “canonical correlation” tool is being used in this study.

## 2. Literature Review

The intersection of HR practices and the empowerment of differently-abled employees has gained considerable

**Table 1.** Employee empowerment- attributes

Attribute	Definition
Counselling	Flawless Performance
	Feedback
	Free to communicate
	Commitment management
Rewards	Shared incentives
	Identify talents
	Link between individuals
Grievances Redressal	Equity indecision-making
	Individual problem solving
	Individual competence
Attitude Measurement	Access to resources and coordination
	Freedom to make decisions
	Guidance and help
	Management coaching and support

attention in scholarly work. This review synthesizes existing literature to provide a comprehensive understanding of the current state of knowledge on this crucial relationship, with a specific focus on the services sector, in India.

**1. Recruitment and Selection:** To ensure a diverse workforce, research by Van den Berg *et al.* (2020) highlights the significance of inclusive recruitment strategies.

Attracting talent with disabilities requires the use of strategies like accessible application processes and customized recruiting campaigns (Henry *et al.*, 2014).

**2. Training and Development:** For employees with disabilities, training programs specifically designed to meet their needs are essential to their career development. Pandey and Deshpande (2023) emphasize the value of tailored training programs in building the abilities and self-assurance of people with disabilities, which eventually leads to their empowerment.

**3. Performance Appraisal:** According to research by Dangol (2021), equitable and open performance review processes have a favourable effect on employees with disabilities’ sense of empowerment. Acknowledging individual contributions and accommodating a range of skill sets in performance measurements are essential factors to take into account.

**4. Workplace Accommodations:** Pal (2011) highlights the importance of workplace accommodations in empowering employees with disabilities. It becomes clear that having accessible workspaces, assistive technology, and flexible work schedules is essential to creating an inclusive and empowering work environment. (Suresh & Dyaram, 2021) in their study specified from employer perspectives on workplace disability inclusion toward understanding the nuances of organizational dynamics and human perceptions. The organizational determinants included are knowledge about the type of disability; work characteristics; accommodations based on the type of disability; accessibility of physical infrastructure and external pressures.

**5. Organizational Culture:** The experiences of differently abled employees are greatly influenced by

their employer's culture. According to the research by Forbes Insight by Laura Hamill (2019), empowering outcomes are favourably correlated with establishing an inclusive culture where diversity is acknowledged and employees feel like they belong.

6. **Legal and Policy Perspectives:** It is essential to have a legal system that upholds the rights of workers with disabilities. In this sense, India's Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 is historic, setting the groundwork for inclusive HR practices (Duffy & Kelly, 2020).
7. **Regional Context - Coimbatore District:** Although generic studies offer significant insights, there is a dearth of research specifically focused on the Coimbatore District. A thorough understanding of the relationship between HR practices and employee empowerment necessitates taking into account the regional quirks, cultural considerations, and industrial dynamics specific to Coimbatore.

Few other empirical studies indicated how noteworthy the differently abled people policies are over time successfully proved to become part of the regular HR policies. Through similar studies, the organizations started recognizing the importance of these existing capabilities and explored methods of developing the skills among differently-abled employees. Kavyashree *et al.* (2023) have studied that HRM practices in organizations empower employees and make them more engaged to perform better in their job roles. The results of the study imply that HRM practices need to be considered a priority in business organizations for long-term success. Therefore, organizations devote a generous segment of their budget to human resources to develop capabilities among the differently-abled employees of that organization. Management skill sets enable differently-abled employees in the firm to do better than its competitors and facilitate the development of healthy competition. However, it is still skeptical that the efforts of the management in developing this human resource will turn favorable to the organizational environment and whether or not it fulfills the needs of the differently abled workforce of that organization.

**Employee Empowerment:** Empowering the employees is all about creating a positive working

condition, including the act of extending meaningful support from the managers, seniors and supervisors, modifying easy job elements combined with fiscal benefits and enabling policies to sustain amicable relationships with colleagues at the workplace. This will enhance positive attitudes and behaviors, and eventually lead to optimistic change in justifying negative tendencies (Boudrias *et al.*, 2009).

Traditional measures for employee empowerment include Characteristics of the Job (Yin *et al.*, 2019), Resources and Demands of the job (Van De Voorde *et al.*, 2020) and psychosomatic empowerment (Hassard *et al.*, 2022). In addition to this apparent organizational support and HR practices, other factors such as reward systems, new learning practices, and development opportunities are considered critical factors affecting employee behaviors and attitudes. Also, the HR practices boosting relationships and improving collaboration within the organization and among peers will play integral analyzers of employee behaviors. A set of scales (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990) has been developed to measure employee empowerment as a secondary line construction to include situations in HR practices and work zeal (i.e., linked with peers, linked with supervisors, senior managers and leaders). Differently Abled Employees:

In the World Report on Disability, Krahn (2011) stated that "If people with disabilities and their households are to overcome exclusion, then they must have access to work or livelihoods, breaking some of the circular links between disability and poverty". People with disabilities are habitually unemployed or employed with very fewer earnings, than "non-disabled people" and employed in jobs with awful working conditions with meager promotional prospects, particularly if they are women. Many such disabled people work in unprotected environments that offer unceremonious fiscal benefits. In this scenario, many do not feel empowered and for the remaining, growing opportunities are rejected that could enable them to earn a decent living.

Differently-abled employees, constituting a vital part of the workforce, have gained increasing attention

in recent research. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (2016) in India serves as a pivotal legal framework for their rights and inclusion. Studies indicate that despite legal advancements, attitudinal biases and accessibility challenges persist, impacting the professional experiences of differently-abled individuals (Mitra & Sambamoorthi, 2013). Workplace accommodations, including accessible infrastructure and assistive technologies, play a crucial role in enhancing the work environment for differently-abled employees (Marinaci *et al.*, 2023).

The differences in terms of disabilities, gender, and socio-economic factors create the need for approaches to inclusion (Armstrong *et al.*, 2011). Recent work has highlighted the importance of organizational culture in shaping the experiences of differently-abled employees, emphasizing the role of inclusive practices and supportive leadership (Suresh & Dyaram, 2021). However, a literature gap remains in understanding the specific HR practices that contribute to the empowerment and career advancement of differently-abled individuals in the Indian context.

This brief review highlights the evolving landscape of research on differently-abled employees in India, pointing to legal advancements, challenges, and the growing recognition of the need for inclusive HR practices. The ongoing research is essential to bridge existing gaps and focus on targeted strategies for fostering a more inclusive and empowering work environment for differently-abled individuals who are a part of the Indian workforce.

**Research Gap:** In summary, the literature review emphasizes the necessity of an all-encompassing strategy for HR procedures that acknowledges and meets the various demands of workers with disabilities. Furthermore, although worldwide perspectives hold significance, a research gap exists concerning the Coimbatore District, hence requiring additional investigation of local dynamics to customize HR methods for optimal influence on the empowerment of individuals with disabilities in the services industry.

### 3. Methods

This study is striving to prove that two separate models HR Practices and Employee empowerment model are not “independent” and to explore the association between each other. Further an effort is made to determine the extent of the relationships that exist between these two variable sets. The study also has the responsibility to investigate the contributions of “independent” and “dependent” variables when the models show correlations with each other. To assess the relationships between the criteria, a “canonical correlation” analysis is done. By calculating the relativity contribution of each variable individually in the canonical regression, the least and the most contribution of the individual variables can also be determined also the relationship among the two models.

#### 3.1 Hypotheses

- **Null Hypothesis (H0):** The HR Practices in the services sector in Coimbatore District do not significantly impact the empowerment of differently-abled employees.
- **Alternative Hypothesis (H1):** Inclusive and supportive HR Practices in the services sector in Coimbatore District positively correlate with the empowerment of differently-abled employees.

#### 3.2 Data Collection

The population for the study is the Differently abled employees of Coimbatore- 10,895 as per Census 2011. The method of sampling is Judgmental sampling as only differently-abled employees working in the mentioned sectors of Coimbatore district. The Sample Size of 370 was determined using the (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970) table for determining the Sample Size for a finite population. Around 400 employees were approached out of which 177 employees showed willingness to participate in the study. The sample for this survey consists of a differently abled workforce (n=177), working at different organizations and Government departments of (non-corporate) technical and non-technical nature from Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. These companies are in the Special Economic Zone as well as other areas of Coimbatore city. The sample consisted of 75 from Clerical jobs, 46 from

mid-level managers, 24 from the transport department and 32 from the administrative department. The context of HR practices and Employee Empowerment questionnaire designed by the scholar was administered in this survey to measure those effects. The electronic version of the questionnaire designed in Google Forms was disseminated through e-mail and duly completed responses received (n=177) were included in the study.

The factor analysis of the two separate variables yielded 8 factors for the HR practices values framework and 4 factors for the Employee Empowerment values framework. Correlations of the central constructs were represented in the factor loadings analysis. Canonical correlation analysis will determine the correlation between independent variables and dependent variables, both multiple statuses. For the central constructs, assessments of correlation will be conducted in the aforementioned manner.

### 3.3 Data Analysis

Multivariate statistical analysis (Carroll & Green, 1997) “Canonical correlation analysis” facilitates the linear interrelationships between two sets of variables in this study. Among the two different sets of variables, the first set is referred to independent variable HR Practices and the second set is considered as the dependent variable- employee empowerment; a canonical correlation variance is constructed for both variable sets. Always a “canonical variance” is constructed from multiple dependent variables; on the contrary, the multiple regressions are habituated to a single dependent variable only.

A canonical function that maximizes a correlation coefficient is developed from the Canonical correlation function between these two canonical variables. The main job of the correlation coefficient is to measure the potency of the relationship that exists between the given canonical variances. Further, the “canonical correlation” is interpreted from a canonical loadings point of view, in terms of individual variables and their respective attributes. While the canonical loadings are compared to be similar to factor loadings analysis, each variable from this portion of the analysis is equivalent to approximate factors for individual sets of variables.

This maximizes the correlation between the two sets of factors.

Canonical correlation analysis comprises of unique component which helps in developing “multiple canonical functions”. Therefore the canonical function constructed in each factor is independent of the factors of the other set of canonical functions. This supports deriving the canonical function at dissimilar relationships existing among the sets of dependent and independent variables. It is understood that the “canonical loadings” of each variable are always unique in each “canonical function” and will represent that individual variable’s contribution to the specified association that is subject to analysis.

## 4. Results and Discussion

The description of the variables includes eight (8) “independent variables” and four (4) “dependent variables”. To ensure that the analysis best suits this research on differently abled employees, *selection* has been considered as a separate variable and three supporting variables to HR Practices have been included namely- *infrastructure development, delegation of authority and retention*. Canonical correlation variable designation is the least important when compared to the simple correlation analysis. The number of variables present in the study is very small; there are only four variables to determine the classification number.

Depending on the concept in both variable sets, it is well established and therefore there is no need to suggest different variable combinations. The variables resulted in a 12:1 ratio to observe and that exceeds the recommendation of the basic requirement of 10 points per variable. The routine hypothesis appears to be standard, even though a few typical departures from normality appear to head off from the oblique. In canonical correlations, the requirement for normality is not very important as observed in the regular “correlation analysis”.

The canonical correlation analysis, with all assumptions met, has derived four canonical functions in this study. This looks consistent when compared with that of the

functions of the total, which appear to be equal to the smallest number of variables, irrespective of whether they are dependent or independent.

Table 2 indicates the statistically significant four canonical correlation functions tabulated from the analysis. These results are derived from the significance tests of the functions, individually and multiple variance tests. These functions are subject to revealing simultaneous results in the statistics of Pillai's criterion test, Wilk's Lambda, Roy's Largest Root and Hotelling's Trace, presented in Table 3. All these tests in four "canonical functions" were found statistically significant in the assumed model.

Now that it is derived, the second stage is to decipher the practical significance. Always, the practical consequences are examined with the size of the "canonical correlations" that decide on a particular "canonical function" to infer. The findings of Alpert and Peterson (1972) in which generally the canonical correlation squares give an estimate of the shared variances between the canonical functions, are referred to. While this may be a very convenient measure of "shared variance," sometimes it might lead to misinterpreting the variance since the canonical correlation squares always represent the value of the variances yielded from the sets of dependent variables, which are composite and linear; they do not exactly represent the same extracted from the sets of variables. The idleness indexes consent to the analysis and remove

the intrinsic prejudice and uncertainty instituted to the canonical roots, which is a measure of the standard belief of shared variances.

The methodology to extract the "redundancy index" for the "first canonical variance" is shown in Table 4. The square value of the average loading of the canonical r-square (for the "first canonical variance") gives the "redundancy index". The same formula is being used for all four canonical functions in the study.

An explanation of the majority of the overall model fit is given in the first canonical correlation function. The index in redundancy suggests that more than half (values in redundancy 0.215 and 0.325) of the result are caused by the shared variances between the dependent and independent variable sets. Table 5 tabulates the canonical loadings of all four functions, comprising the dependent and independent variables.

From Tables 4 and 5, it is proved that one canonical variance can be both virtually and statistically significant. On the other hand, "canonical function" and "redundancy index" resemble good enough; this proves that the objective of this research is aligned with the result analysis. As mentioned, the objective of this analysis is to determine the level of independence among the two sets of variables and thus, to determine the contribution level towards

**Table 2.** Fit-measures: Overall model

"Canonical Function"	"Canonical Correlation"	"Canonical Square"	F Stat	Sig
1	.731	.535	4.3537	.000
2	.448	.201	1.8283	.000
3	.378	.143	1.4937	.003
4	.268	.071	0.8916	.010

**Table 3.** Significance test multiple variance

Statics	Value	F Stat	Sig
Pillai's Trace	.2945	5.36537	.007
Wilk's Lambda	.9547	4.73363	.003
Roy's Root	1.6591	6.01397	.001
Hotelling's Trace	.5358	1.71243	.001

**Table 4.** Canonical loadings - for canonical functions

	Function 1	Function 2	Function 3	Function 4
<b>Variables - Dependent</b>				
Counselling	.402	-.143	-.843	.322
Rewards	.185	-.886	-.139	-.398
Grievances Redressal	.738	-.293	.208	.567
Attitude Measurement	.919	.061	-.372	-.103
<b>Variables -Independent</b>				
Recruitment	.817	-.211	-.205	-.112
Selection	.713	-.446	-.193	-.008
Infrastructure Development	.702	-.473	-.365	-.151
Training	.705	-.397	-.399	-.065
Delegation of Authority	.861	-.332	-.292	-.086
Performance Appraisal	.916	-.321	-.131	.084
Retention	.754	-.085	-.255	.074
Career Planning	.831	-.304	-.043	-.172



**Table 5.** Canonical function - redundancy calculations

Variables	Canonical loadings	Canonical loading (squared)	Avg. loading (squared)	R-Square canonical	Index redundancy
<b>Variables – Dependent</b>					
Counselling	.402	.161	.125	.117	.052
Rewards	.185	.034	.085	.125	.057
Grievances Redressal	.738	.545	.092	.142	.056
Attitude Measurement	.919	.845	.095	.152	.050
<b>Average</b>		<b>1.588</b>	<b>.397</b>	<b>.536</b>	<b>.215</b>
<b>Variables - Independent</b>					
Recruitment	.817	.668	.072	.073	.053
Selection	.713	.509	.096	.085	.052
Infrastructure Development	.702	.493	.072	.062	.041
Training	.705	.497	.067	.067	.039
Delegation of Authority	.861	.742	.075	.065	.037
Performance Appraisal Appraisal	.916	.840	.083	.073	.032
Retention	.754	.569	.086	.056	.035
Career Planning	.831	.691	.076	.055	.036
<b>Average</b>		<b>5.017</b>	<b>.627</b>	<b>.536</b>	<b>.325</b>

each set of variables. Hence, the next step would be to proceed towards determining the contribution of canonical variance to the individual variables and vice versa.

Among the “Employee Empowerment” variable sets that are dependent, the most important contribution is “Counseling”. Interestingly, “Attitude Measurement” has a huge inverse effect on the canonical variance. Among the HR practices variables that are independent, “Delegation of Authority” and “Performance Appraisal” contribute the maximum to “canonical variance”. Also “Selection” displays a huge contrary effect on the identical variable. The derived “canonical weights” are unstable because of the statistical concept where several independent variables in the model are correlated and therefore the canonical loadings are more appropriate evaluators.

**Table 6.** Canonical weights - for all canonical functions

Variables	Function 1	Function 2	Function 3	Function 4
Counselling	.327	-.217	1.037	.695
Rewards	.000	-.914	.022	-.465
Grievances Redressal	-.358	-.406	-.573	.870
Attitude Measurement	-.941	.607	.001	-.910
<b>Variables – Independent</b>				
Recruitment	.317	1.025	-.357	-1.670
Selection	-1.128	-2.971	.674	1.143
Infrastructure Development	-.395	-.770	-.977	-.775
Training	-.033	.918	-.826	.662
Delegation of Authority	.387	-.484	-1.217	-1.491
Performance Appraisal Appraisal	.991	-.225	1.273	2.717
Retention	.164	1.652	-1.083	1.152
Career Planning	.575	.664	.2132	-1.741

The dependent variables behave entirely differently in this analysis (Table 5). The pattern is like this, two variables have very high loadings (Attitude Measurement .919, and Grievances Redressal .738), one variable at moderate loading (Counseling .402), and one variable at a low load (Rewards .185). The result of this study has proved that HR practices and Employee Empowerment variables have contributed highly towards the best “canonical variance”.

To determine the extent of contribution, the “canonical weights” are represented by analyzing the contribution to variance. “Canonical variances” for all the “canonical weights” are tabulated in Table 6; however, the only important variance for this analysis is the “first canonical variance”.

The analysis proceeds towards assessing the “first canonical variance” to accomplish importance in terms of relativity within individual variables. Considering that only the “first canonical variance” is important and ignoring the other “canonical loadings “since they are considered equal to the “linear correlation”. The “canonical loadings “are like “factor loadings” in assessing the relativity contribution in the individual variable set that is present in the “canonical function”. It is proven that “the larger the coefficient”; the more

“important the variable set” is. In this study, all the variable sets have contributed highly to the “canonical functions”, implying all eight factors loading from .817 to .831 (Table 5). This recommends a high degree of inter-correlations present between all the eight variables and that all contribute towards highly efficient HR practices in place.

Finally, the redundancy index that is calculated (Table 3) shows the general contribution to “individual variables”. The results very well supported the variables and fairly forecasted the functioning of a group. *In addition, the private contributions which are listed as the “key predictors “appear to be the entire set for HR practices, and for Employee Empowerment “Grievances Redressal” and “Attitude Measurement” are the key predictors.* Therefore the Null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted stating that an inclusive and supportive HR Practices in the services sector in Coimbatore District positively correlates with the empowerment of differently-abled employees.

Based on the citations reviewed, which emphasize the importance of HR practices and their impact on the empowerment of differently abled employees, the analysis of the present study also highlights the correlation existing between all the HR Practices and Employee Empowerment. More specifically, it is similar to the review “Impact analysis of work environment of differently abled employees in Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar districts (Marisport *et al.*, 2021) which revealed that 7.8% of the differently abled employees rated “below average” for the Grievance Redressal system adopted and that satisfaction levels of the employees in terms of treatment at the workplace is low, the present analysis has reflected that Grievance Redressal and Attitude Measurement are key predictors of employee empowerment in correlation to the HR Practices followed by the organizations which again is a crucial factor to be considered.

Hence, it is more evident that the Grievance Redressal measures and other factors like accessibility, infrastructure, treatment etc., contribute to the welfare of the differently abled employees and should be addressed

in such a way that the employees feel more empowered. Therefore, the study comes up with suggestions that enhance the HR Practices of the organizations to serve the differently abled employees in a better manner and traverse through the path of sustainable development in terms of the performance of the employees and collective development of the organization.

## 5. Suggestions

The following suggestions are made having in mind the key predictors which reflect upon high correlative values between HR Practices and employee empowerment, viz, Grievance Redressal and Attitude Measurement with other factors namely access to resources and coordination, freedom to make decisions, guidance and help.

### **Creating Accessibility through JAWS or NVDA:**

It was understood from the respondents that it is difficult to access the organization’s ERP for visually challenged employees. Hence, it is suggested that the organization’s ERP should facilitate the use of Job Access with Speech (JAWS) Non-Visual Desktop Access (NVDA) or other compatible software to empower the performance of the visually challenged employees.

**Exclusive Cell for PwD:** According to the analysis, Grievance Redressal and Attitude measurement are key predictors of empowerment. Hence, the companies need to institute a separate cell for the PwD to address their grievances and other issues. It is suggested that the active functioning of such a cell would help in resolving the top grievances and accessibility issues for such employees.

**AI-Enabled Mental Wellness Application:** Providing an AI-enabled mental wellness or counseling application like a Chabot or Mobile App within the intranet of the organization will increase the emotional stability of the differently abled employees and help them perform better in their jobs. When the employees can express their issues with utmost confidentiality and privacy, it gives them better avenues to overcome their psychological concerns.

**Career Advancement Opportunities:** HR practices should support the career growth and advancement of differently-abled employees. Providing opportunities for skill development and promotion based on merit helps foster a sense of empowerment and belonging.

**Skill-Specific Training:** Empowerment Workshops for persons with disability can be organized and enhance the awareness of the “rights to employ PwD”, and encourage hiring in respective organizations so that their special needs are met at the workplace.

**Employee Resource Groups:** Establishing employee resource groups or affinity networks for differently-abled employees can create a supportive community within the organization, allowing for shared experiences and peer support.

**Inclusive Policies and Benefits:** HR policies and benefits should be designed with inclusivity in mind. For example, offering flexible work arrangements can help differently-abled employees balance their work and personal lives more effectively.

**HR Audit:** The HR department can plan for an audit with specific components to measure the effective systems created to elevate the performance of disabled employees. It is a real concern when it comes to preparing for the challenges of the Industry 4.0 environment. Such an Audit would vividly present the focus areas of concentration and identify the gaps in compliance.

**Accommodations and Accessibility:** HR should work closely with employees to identify and implement reasonable accommodations that enable them to perform their job duties effectively. This may include providing assistive technologies, modifying workspaces, or adjusting work schedules.

**Empowerment Strategies:** HR practices can plan a social marketing campaign, to subsequently balance the employee’s eco-sphere through creating a web portal, providing a knowledge repository and compendium of best practices that persons with disability are capable of. This study also sheds

light on the fact that employment opportunity itself is considered as the grassroots empowerment for differently-abled persons.

## 6. Conclusion

The study included objectives to determine whether the two sets of variables representing HR Practices and Employee empowerment are independent or related to each other, in the context of a differently abled workforce through deriving sets of canonical loadings and canonical weights for the “dependent and independent” variables. The analysis revealed that there exists statistically significant relationships among the variables and various suggestions have been indicated to bring in more betterment in the services sector of the specified district i.e., Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. The differently abled employees are significant categories who deserve inclusiveness not only in policies but also in practices. The study implies that the organizations must implement various empowerment programs for the differently abled employees which can go a long way in strengthening their contribution to the organization’s success. However, the Grievance Redressal and other measures contributing to the welfare of these employees should be given more importance and focus as there is a prevalence of studies that show the dissatisfaction of disabled employees in terms of the Grievance Redressal Mechanism adopted by organizations and in terms of accessibility, infrastructure and treatment given to such employees. The various impactful HR Practices suggested may be implemented to create a barrier-free environment for those employees.

It is suggested that future research can be done in several different industries and with a diversity of workforce. Future research may also focus on AI-enabled practices to promote empowerment and inclusiveness as HR analytics will play a major role in powering charge of HR decisions. Further, following are a few specific areas of possible extension.

In-depth analysis of empowered HR practices: Carrying out a thorough investigation to pinpoint particular HR practice that shows a higher association with

employee empowerment by comparing the outcome of the controlled group and experience group of samples. Examining components including mentorship programs, training courses, and performance counseling to see which practices have the biggest effect on empowerment. A mediation of psychological capital or work-family conflict on empowerment can sprout new knowledge towards fulfilling UN SDGs data support for Agenda 2030 on decent work and economic growth.

Longitudinal studies: Undertaking longitudinal studies to track the sustained impact of HR practices on the empowerment of differently-abled employees over an extended period. This will offer insights into the long-term effectiveness of interventions and provide a comprehensive understanding of the evolving relationship.

Comparative analysis across industries: Extending the research to encompass various sectors within the services industry. Attempting to compare and contrast the impact of HR practices on differently-abled employees in sectors such as IT, hospitality, healthcare, and finance. Understanding industry-specific nuances can inform tailored strategies.

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