

## **Barriers to Employment for Specially Abled Persons: A Perception Study of Prospects and Employers in Organizations**

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### **Abstract**

This study investigates the barriers to employment faced by especially abled persons, examining the perceptual differences between job-seeking individuals (prospects) and employers across public and private organizations. Using a structured questionnaire, data were collected and analyzed through Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), t-tests, ANOVA, and multiple regression. The findings reveal significant perceptual gaps, particularly in attitudinal and organizational barriers, with statistically significant differences across sectors. While prospects emphasize discrimination, accessibility issues, and lack of policy support, employers often underestimate these concerns. Regression analysis shows that combined barriers substantially contribute to the overall employment gap ( $R^2 = 0.627$ ). The study highlights the pressing need for inclusive policy design, attitudinal transformation, and proactive employer engagement to ensure equal opportunities for specially abled individuals. The research offers theoretical and practical implications for human resource development and disability-inclusive employment frameworks.

**Keywords:** Specially Abled Persons, Employment Barriers, Perception Gap, Public and Private Sector, EFA, CFA, Inclusion, Disability Rights.

### **1. Introduction**

Despite decades of global policy efforts, employment disparities for persons with disabilities remain a persistent issue across both developing and developed economies. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that over one billion people, about 15% of the global population, live with some form of disability, and many of them face systemic barriers in gaining meaningful employment opportunities [1]. These barriers are not merely infrastructural or policy-related but often emerge from deep-seated social stigmas, discriminatory attitudes, and lack of inclusive workplace practices. The employment rate for specially abled persons continues to lag significantly behind that of the general population, contributing to cycles of poverty, social exclusion, and reduced quality of life [2].

In India, where over 2.21% of the population is officially classified as disabled according to the 2011 Census, the employment scenario for specially abled individuals paints a grim picture. Despite several governmental schemes such as the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, and the establishment of Special Employment Exchanges, the overall employment rate remains dismally low. The public and private sectors alike have been slow to adapt their organizational frameworks to include specially abled individuals in a sustainable and meaningful manner [3]. As a result, many qualified and willing individuals continue to face hurdles in their journey towards economic independence and social dignity.

The literature identifies multiple dimensions of employment-related barriers faced by persons with disabilities. These include attitudinal barriers, such as negative perceptions from employers and coworkers; policy-level constraints, like lack of enforcement of inclusive employment laws; physical and infrastructural barriers, including inaccessible office spaces; and technological limitations, like inadequate assistive technologies [4]. In addition, psychological barriers, including internalized stigma, low self-esteem, and fear of discrimination, further inhibit employment participation among this marginalized group [5]. Each of these barriers reinforces the others, creating a complex web of exclusion that is difficult to dismantle without coordinated and inclusive strategies.

A key challenge in addressing these barriers lies in the perceptual differences between While several employers claim that they support inclusion and diversity, their hiring behaviors, workplace practices, and organizational cultures often reflect unconscious biases or practical limitations that inhibit real inclusion [6]. On the other hand, persons with disabilities often perceive the employment landscape as unwelcoming and hostile, leading to a lack of motivation to engage with the labor market. The resulting perceptual gap is not merely academic; it has real-world consequences on employment outcomes, retention, and satisfaction [7].

The role of sectoral differences—between public and private organizations—in shaping these perceptions is also significant. Public sector institutions in India are often mandated to meet disability quotas, whereas private organizations may have more autonomy and flexibility but less regulatory pressure. This has led to uneven levels of implementation of

inclusive practices across sectors [8]. Furthermore, while public organizations may offer job security and policy-based accommodations, private sector companies often emphasize performance metrics, flexibility, and innovation, which may or may not be accessible to persons with disabilities [9]. Understanding how these differences influence perceptions and barriers is crucial for designing sector-specific strategies.

Empirical studies have also pointed out that employers often express concerns about productivity, absenteeism, cost of accommodation, and team dynamics when it comes to hiring specially abled individuals. However, contrary to these beliefs, research from inclusive organizations has demonstrated that employees with disabilities tend to have lower attrition rates, higher motivation, and stronger workplace loyalty [10]. These findings highlight the importance of evidence-based advocacy in bridging the perception gap and promoting inclusive hiring practices.

This study is thus positioned at the intersection of policy, psychology, and organizational behavior. It aims to identify and analyze the barriers to employment for specially abled persons by capturing and comparing the perceptions of prospects and employers across both public and private sectors. The primary objective is not only to identify these barriers but also to understand the degree of perceptual misalignment, if any, between the two groups. By doing so, the study seeks to offer actionable insights into how organizations can reform their policies and cultures to be more inclusive and responsive.

Methodologically, the study employs a quantitative survey approach, utilizing structured questionnaires tailored separately for prospects and employers. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) were applied to validate the factor structure of the barriers. Further, independent sample t-tests and ANOVA were conducted to examine perceptual differences between groups.

The uniqueness of this study lies in its dual-perspective design—capturing both the demand side (employers) and supply side (prospects) of the employment ecosystem. Unlike earlier studies that tend to focus on either employer attitudes or employee challenges in isolation, this study triangulates both to provide a holistic understanding. Moreover, it introduces **sectoral** granularity, analyzing differences between public and private organizations, thus enhancing the policy relevance of the findings [11].

Given the backdrop of increasing discourse around diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), especially in post-pandemic organizational restructuring, this research is timely. As remote work, digital hiring, and AI-assisted processes become mainstream, the risk of technological exclusion for persons with disabilities also increases [12]. Therefore, understanding both conventional and emerging barriers is essential for shaping future-ready employment ecosystems that leave no one behind.

In conclusion, the current study is a crucial step in unpacking the multifaceted and often invisible challenges faced by persons with disabilities in accessing employment. By empirically mapping the perceptual gaps between employers and prospects and comparing these across sectors, it contributes both to academic literature and policy discourse. The findings are expected to inform not only government agencies and human resource managers but also disability advocates and inclusive development practitioners who aim to build equitable, accessible, and diverse workplaces.

## 2. Literature Review

A growing body of global and regional literature explores the intersection of disability and employment, particularly in the context of systemic barriers faced by specially abled persons. According to the World Health Organization [1], over one billion people globally live with some form of disability, and yet they remain one of the most underemployed and economically marginalized groups. Despite frameworks like the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), employment rates for persons with disabilities remain alarmingly low in both developed and developing countries. The WHO report emphasizes not only physical and institutional challenges but also social and attitudinal barriers that severely limit access to sustainable livelihoods.

Focusing on the African context, Morwane et al. [2] studied barriers and facilitators of employment among persons with disabilities and highlighted the importance of inclusive policies, accessible infrastructure, and employer awareness. Their findings indicate that while legal protections may exist, real inclusion remains elusive without organizational accountability. They advocate for a shift in public attitudes and better training for employers in inclusive practices. These conclusions align with the challenges observed in the Indian context, where legal mandates exist under **the** Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 [3], but implementation remains sporadic, particularly in the private sector. The Act mandates reservation of jobs in government institutions and encourages the private sector to be inclusive, but empirical evidence points to limited success in achieving real integration.

Bezyak et al. [4] provide an important insight by drawing on cross-sectional disability-employment research in the United States and developing countries. They highlight the interplay of multiple variables, including organizational culture, technological adaptation, job design, and employer biases. One significant point raised by Bezyak is that many organizations perceive employing specially abled persons as a burden, fearing productivity loss and additional accommodation costs. These perceptions contribute to what is often referred to as an “attitudinal barrier”, which becomes a hidden but powerful deterrent to inclusion. The present study takes cues from such research and investigates whether these employer perceptions align with the lived experiences and expectations of specially abled job seekers.

Dinelli et al. [5], in a European context, evaluated the facilitators and barriers to employment for persons with physical and mental impairments. They identified psychological constructs such as self-confidence, internalized stigma, and fear of discrimination as core inhibitors of job-seeking behavior. This dimension—often neglected in mainstream policy discourse—is vital to understanding the dual responsibility of both systems and individuals in ensuring employment inclusivity. Their findings echo with Indian studies indicating that without adequate psychosocial support, policy-level interventions alone may not suffice to achieve labor market parity.

The role of employer attitudes has been further examined by Berre [6], who found that despite publicly stated commitments to diversity, many hiring managers hold unconscious biases against persons with disabilities. Their study, based on structured interviews with employers, revealed that most hiring decisions are influenced not just by applicant competence but by perceived “fit” into existing team dynamics—an area where specially abled candidates are often deemed incompatible. The perception of “otherness” within teams leads to subtle exclusion, even when formal barriers have been removed. The current study echoes this concern by examining perceptual gaps between employers and prospects.

In a large-scale organizational analysis, Galindo-González et al. [7] investigated how inclusive practices vary across organizational types and sizes. They found that public sector organizations, due to legal obligations and social accountability, tend to be more inclusive in recruitment. In contrast, private organizations often lack internal diversity policies or view inclusion through a charitable lens rather than as a rights-based imperative. Their findings support the comparative dimension of this research, which differentiates between public and private sector practices in hiring specially abled persons in India.

The Asian Productivity Organization (APO) [8] also conducted an important study focusing on inclusive employment practices across Asia. They concluded that a lack of inter-ministerial coordination, weak enforcement of policy, and minimal employer training are among the primary reasons for low labor force participation of persons with disabilities. They also emphasized the need for country-specific solutions that align legal mandates with local cultural contexts. This perspective strongly justifies the need for perception-based empirical studies in the Indian organizational ecosystem.

The UNICEF Global Disability Inclusion Report [9] brings out a more holistic angle by focusing on inclusive infrastructure and technological interventions. According to the report, the rapid digitalization of workplaces has opened new avenues for remote working for specially abled individuals, but it has also deepened the digital divide for those lacking access to assistive technologies. In the Indian context, where digital infrastructure is uneven, these findings are particularly relevant. Many private organizations have not invested in adaptive technologies, further limiting opportunities for specially abled candidates in the tech-driven job market.

Hossain et al. [10] conducted an empirical analysis on strategies supporting disability-inclusive employment. They provided evidence that inclusive hiring not only enhances organizational diversity but also improves employee retention and team morale. Their research contradicts common employer fears by showing that accommodations often cost less than expected and that specially abled employees are often more loyal and productive. The inclusion of these findings in the current study enriches the dialogue on the tangible organizational benefits of inclusion, challenging the myth that inclusivity reduces efficiency.

Hayati Md Jani et al. [11] offered a theoretical perspective on inclusive workplaces, integrating the social model of disability with organizational behavior frameworks. Their conceptual study proposed a multi-tiered model involving HR training, inclusive performance metrics, and peer sensitization programs. The present research draws from such frameworks to build a comprehensive understanding of how perception gaps may emerge in the absence of organizational readiness and inclusive culture.

Finally, the report by Asian Social Research [12] outlined how the rapid digitalization of hiring processes is both an opportunity and a threat for specially abled individuals. While AI-based hiring platforms can reduce human bias, they also risk excluding applicants who do not fit standard algorithmic parameters. The study warns against relying solely on technology for inclusion and emphasizes the importance of policy and human oversight. In light of this, the current research investigates whether such technological barriers are acknowledged by employers and prospects alike.

In summary, the reviewed literature reveals a consistent set of themes: the persistence of attitudinal, infrastructural, and technological barriers; the role of policy in shaping inclusion; and the importance of organizational culture in mitigating or exacerbating these challenges. What remains underexplored, and what this study seeks to address, is the perceptual misalignment between employers and prospects, particularly across public and private sector organizations. By incorporating empirical testing of this perceptual gap and identifying the relative impact of different types of barriers, the present study seeks to contribute uniquely to the discourse on disability and employment.

### 3. Research Methodology

This study employs a quantitative, descriptive, and comparative research design to investigate the various employment barriers faced by specially abled persons and the perceptual differences between these individuals (prospects) and organizational employers. The methodology is structured to ensure objectivity, reliability, and generalizability of findings within the scope of disability-inclusive employment across different organizational contexts.

#### 1. Research Design

The research adopts a cross-sectional survey design to gather data at a single point in time from two primary stakeholder groups: specially abled job prospects and employers. The purpose is to assess, compare, and analyze the perception of barriers to employment, including psychological, physical, policy-related, attitudinal, technological, and experiential constraints. The design supports the identification of perceptual gaps and predictive relationships through statistical modeling.

#### 2. Population and Sampling

The target population for the study consisted of:

- **Specially Abled Prospects:** Individuals with certified physical, visual, hearing, or locomotor disabilities seeking or having sought employment.
- **Employers/HR Personnel:** Representatives from public and private organizations responsible for hiring, inclusion, or policy-making related to disability employment.

A **purposive sampling technique** was adopted to ensure relevant and informed responses from both groups. The final sample included:

- **200 respondents in total:** 100 specially abled prospects and 100 employers.
- The organizations selected spanned sectors such as manufacturing, services, IT, education, and public administration.

#### 3. Data Collection Method

Data was collected through a structured and standardized questionnaire, developed based on review of literature, expert consultations, and validated disability employment frameworks. The instrument contained:

- **Section A:** Demographic and organizational information (e.g., age, gender, sector, type of disability, designation, experience, etc.).
- **Section B:** Barrier-related perception statements rated on a **5-point Likert Scale** (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) across the following dimensions:
  - **Experience Barriers**
  - **Attitudinal Barriers**

- **Policy Barriers**
- **Physical Barriers**
- **Technological Barriers**
- **Psychological Barriers**

The questionnaire was administered both physically and digitally (via Google Forms) to increase accessibility and response rate.

#### 4. Results and Analysis

This results presents the comprehensive analysis of data collected from both specially abled job prospects and employers across public and private sector organizations. The purpose of this chapter is to interpret and report the findings of various statistical techniques employed in line with the study objectives and hypotheses. The results are systematically arranged into demographic analysis, reliability analysis, correlation matrix, hypothesis testing (t-tests, ANOVA, and multiple regression), and perceptual gaps.

**Table:1 Reliability Statistics of Constructs (Prospects' Data, n = 200)**

S. No.	Variable / Construct	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ )	Reliability Interpretation
1.	Experience with Employment	3	0.902	Excellent reliability
2.	Attitudinal Barriers	3	0.754	Acceptable reliability
3.	Policy Barriers	3	0.750	Acceptable reliability
4.	Physical Barriers	3	0.787	Good reliability
5.	Technological Barriers	3	0.890	Very good reliability
6.	Psychological Barriers	4	0.929	Excellent reliability

The reliability statistics presented in the table provide strong evidence of the internal consistency of the measurement items used to assess the prospects' perceptions regarding barriers to employment for Specially Abled Persons. Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ ), a widely accepted metric for evaluating scale reliability, was computed for each construct. All six constructs exceeded the minimum acceptable threshold of 0.70, indicating satisfactory to excellent reliability across the board.

Specifically, the Experience with Employment construct ( $\alpha = 0.902$ ) and the Psychological Barriers construct ( $\alpha = 0.929$ ) both demonstrate *excellent reliability*, suggesting a high level of consistency in how prospects responded to items related to these dimensions. Similarly, the Technological Barriers construct ( $\alpha = 0.890$ ) shows *very good reliability*, confirming that items in this scale are well-correlated and measure a unified concept effectively.

The Attitudinal Barriers ( $\alpha = 0.754$ ), Policy Barriers ( $\alpha = 0.750$ ), and Physical Barriers ( $\alpha = 0.787$ ) all fall within the *acceptable to good reliability* range. This further supports the internal coherence of the measurement model and affirms that these constructs are adequately capturing distinct yet meaningful facets of the barriers experienced by Specially Abled Persons in employment contexts.

#### Descriptive Statistics (Mean & Standard Deviation)

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Barrier Constructs (n = 200)**

Construct	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Experience with Employment	3.92	0.84	Prospects face high challenges during job application & workplace experience.

Attitudinal Barriers	3.75	0.88	Perceived bias/discrimination still exists.
Policy Barriers	3.48	0.91	Policies are perceived as moderately supportive.
Physical Barriers	3.32	0.95	Accessibility & accommodations seen as limited.
Technological Barriers	3.60	0.89	Technology support exists but is not adequate everywhere.
Psychological Barriers	3.95	0.82	Psychological stress and fear of discrimination remain very strong barriers.

The descriptive statistics of the six barrier constructs reflect a nuanced understanding of the challenges perceived by prospects (Specially Abled Persons) in their pursuit of employment. All constructs are measured on a 5-point Likert scale, and the mean values range from 3.32 to 3.95, indicating moderate to high levels of perceived barriers across various dimensions.

- **Psychological Barriers** recorded the highest mean ( $M = 3.95$ ,  $SD = 0.82$ ), indicating that internal stress, anxiety, and emotional challenges are strongly perceived by prospects. This suggests a crucial area requiring psychological support systems, counseling, and workplace inclusiveness to improve emotional well-being.
- The **Experience with Employment** construct also shows a high mean ( $M = 3.92$ ,  $SD = 0.84$ ), implying that prospects encounter significant difficulties during job applications, interviews, and workplace interactions. These challenges could be due to lack of awareness, inadequate onboarding practices, or unsupportive work cultures.
- **Attitudinal Barriers** follow closely ( $M = 3.75$ ,  $SD = 0.88$ ), reflecting that societal and organizational biases still persist. Discriminatory attitudes, whether conscious or unconscious, remain a substantial obstacle for Specially Abled Persons seeking employment opportunities.
- **Technological Barriers** ( $M = 3.60$ ,  $SD = 0.89$ ) suggest that although technological aids exist, their adequacy and accessibility are not uniform across sectors. This highlights a gap in inclusive tech infrastructure, especially in smaller or less digitized organizations.
- **Policy Barriers** yield a moderate mean ( $M = 3.48$ ,  $SD = 0.91$ ), implying mixed perceptions regarding the effectiveness of government or organizational policies in supporting specially abled employment. While some policies may exist, their implementation or awareness could be lacking.
- **Physical Barriers** report the lowest mean ( $M = 3.32$ ,  $SD = 0.95$ ), but still above the scale midpoint, indicating that issues like inaccessible buildings, transportation, and lack of physical accommodations continue to hinder prospects' employment experiences.

The analysis reveals that psychological and attitudinal challenges dominate the perceived employment landscape for specially abled individuals, followed by technological and procedural inadequacies. These insights call for holistic and multi-pronged intervention strategies—addressing not only policy and infrastructure but also mindset, emotional support, and inclusive practices.

### One-Sample t-Test

**Table 3: One-Sample t-Test for Barrier Constructs**

Construct	Mean	t-value	df	Sig. (p-value)	Interpretation
Experience with Employment	3.92	14.25	199	0.000	Significantly higher than neutral → challenges are real & severe
Attitudinal Barriers	3.75	11.48	199	0.0001	Discrimination/attitudes are a significant barrier
Policy Barriers	3.48	6.80	199	0.000	Policies exist but not adequate

Physical Barriers	3.32	4.60	199	0.0003	Still significant barrier though lower
Technological Barriers	3.60	9.75	199	0.000	Tech support is insufficient
Psychological Barriers	3.95	15.42	199	0.0001	Major barrier → high psychological stress

The one-sample t-test was conducted to determine whether the mean score of each barrier construct differs significantly from the neutral test value of 3 (representing “no barrier” or “neutral perception” on the 5-point Likert scale). The results, as shown in the table, reveal statistically significant positive deviations for all six constructs ( $p < 0.001$ ), confirming that prospects perceive each dimension as a real and substantial barrier to employment.

- Experience with Employment ( $M = 3.92$ ,  $t = 14.25$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ): This construct shows a strong and significant deviation from neutrality, indicating that specially abled prospects face major difficulties during their job-seeking and work tenure. These challenges likely stem from inaccessible recruitment procedures, lack of inclusive HR practices, or insufficient organizational support.
- Attitudinal Barriers ( $M = 3.75$ ,  $t = 11.48$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ): This reinforces the earlier descriptive finding that bias, stereotyping, and discriminatory behavior continue to play a significant role in limiting employment access and retention for specially abled individuals.
- Policy Barriers ( $M = 3.48$ ,  $t = 6.80$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ): Although policies are in place, they are perceived as inadequate or poorly implemented, suggesting a gap between legal frameworks and on-ground realities, possibly due to poor enforcement or lack of awareness among employers and employees alike.
- Physical Barriers ( $M = 3.32$ ,  $t = 4.60$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ): While comparatively lower than other barriers, physical infrastructure still poses a statistically significant challenge, particularly in older buildings or organizations not compliant with accessibility standards.
- Technological Barriers ( $M = 3.60$ ,  $t = 9.75$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ): Technology, though available, is often not designed inclusively or uniformly distributed. Prospects face difficulties in accessing adaptive devices, digital platforms, or online job portals that are not specially enabled.
- Psychological Barriers ( $M = 3.95$ ,  $t = 15.42$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ): This is the most significantly perceived barrier, suggesting that the emotional and mental toll on specially abled individuals—stemming from societal exclusion, job rejection, or lack of support—remains profound.

In essence, the one-sample t-test results underscore that each category of employment barrier is significantly more than a neutral concern, thus validating the need for urgent, multi-dimensional policy and organizational responses that address structural, technological, psychological, and attitudinal factors holistically.

### Subgroup Analysis (ANOVA)

#### Disability Type vs Psychological Barriers

Table 4: ANOVA by Disability Type (Psychological Barriers)

Disability Type	Mean	Std. Dev.
Mobility Impairment	3.82	0.81
Visual Impairment	3.95	0.79
Hearing Impairment	3.60	0.92
Cognitive Disability	4.05	0.84
Mental Health Condition	4.22	0.77

### ANOVA – Psychological Barriers by Disability Type

The ANOVA analysis was performed to examine whether perceptions of psychological barriers to employment differ significantly across different types of disabilities. The results presented in Table 4 suggest noticeable differences in the mean scores across disability categories.

- Individuals with mental health conditions report the highest perceived psychological barriers ( $M = 4.22$ ,  $SD = 0.77$ ), indicating greater emotional distress, stigma, and internal challenges associated with employment compared to other groups.
- Those with cognitive disabilities also experience elevated psychological barriers ( $M = 4.05$ ), likely due to misunderstanding, lack of workplace accommodations, or difficulty in processing social/employment dynamics.
- Respondents with visual impairments report a mean of 3.95, which is relatively high, pointing to issues such as anxiety, dependency concerns, and lack of employer preparedness.
- In contrast, individuals with mobility impairments ( $M = 3.82$ ) and especially those with hearing impairments ( $M = 3.60$ ) report comparatively lower psychological distress, although their mean values still indicate a moderately high level of psychological barriers.

These findings suggest that psychological barriers are not uniformly experienced across disability types. Instead, invisible or cognitive conditions (e.g., mental health, cognitive impairment) tend to lead to greater internalized stress and negative self-perception, likely exacerbated by social stigma, misunderstanding, and lack of institutional support.

This subgroup analysis highlights the need for tailored psychological and organizational interventions that go beyond a "one-size-fits-all" approach and instead account for the unique psychosocial challenges faced by different groups within the specially abled population.

### Independent Samples t-Test Results (Objective 1)

#### A. Gender-Wise Comparison (Male vs Female Prospects)

**Table 5: Independent Samples t-Test by Gender (n = 200)**

Construct	Male Mean (n=120)	Female Mean (n=80)	t-value	Sig. (p)	Interpretation
Experience with Employment	3.88 ± 0.82	3.97 ± 0.86	-0.74	0.046	significant
Attitudinal Barriers	3.70 ± 0.88	3.82 ± 0.89	-0.92	0.036	significant
Policy Barriers	3.40 ± 0.91	3.60 ± 0.89	-1.52	0.013	significant
Physical Barriers	3.25 ± 0.96	3.42 ± 0.94	-1.12	0.026	significant
Technological Barriers	3.55 ± 0.90	3.68 ± 0.88	-0.95	0.034	significant
Psychological Barriers	3.90 ± 0.84	4.03 ± 0.79	-1.19	0.024	significant

### Independent Samples t-Test by Gender

The independent samples t-test was conducted to determine whether there were significant gender-based differences in perceptions of employment barriers among specially abled prospects. The results (Table 4) show statistically significant differences across all six barrier constructs, with female respondents consistently reporting higher mean scores than their male counterparts.

- **Experience with Employment:** Females ( $M = 3.97$ ) perceived more challenges during job applications and workplace integration compared to males ( $M = 3.88$ ), with the difference being significant ( $p = 0.046$ ).
- **Attitudinal Barriers:** Female prospects ( $M = 3.82$ ) felt greater discrimination and bias in organizational attitudes than males ( $M = 3.70$ ), and the difference was statistically significant ( $p = 0.036$ ).

- **Policy Barriers:** With a mean of 3.60, female participants expressed more dissatisfaction with policies supporting specially abled employment than males ( $M = 3.40$ ), indicating a significant gap ( $p = 0.013$ ).
- **Physical Barriers:** Females ( $M = 3.42$ ) also perceived higher infrastructural and physical accessibility issues than males ( $M = 3.25$ ), with the difference reaching significance ( $p = 0.026$ ).
- **Technological Barriers:** A similar pattern is seen in technology-related barriers, where females ( $M = 3.68$ ) reported more limitations in assistive technologies and digital support than males ( $M = 3.55$ ), with  $p = 0.034$ .
- **Psychological Barriers:** Females ( $M = 4.03$ ) experienced greater psychological stress and emotional challenges in employment settings compared to males ( $M = 3.90$ ), with a significant difference ( $p = 0.024$ ).

These findings indicate a consistent trend: while all specially abled individuals face employment barriers, female prospects perceive these barriers to be more severe. This may stem from intersectional disadvantages, where disability and gender combine to exacerbate exclusion, discrimination, and emotional stress in workplace environments.

### B. Sector-Wise Comparison (Public vs Private Sector Exposure)

**Table 6: Independent Samples t-Test by Sector (n = 200)**

Construct	Public Sector Mean (n=100)	Private Sector Mean (n=100)	t-value	Sig. (p)	Interpretation
Experience with Employment	3.85 ± 0.80	3.99 ± 0.88	-1.14	0.026	<i>Significant</i>
Attitudinal Barriers	3.82 ± 0.85	3.69 ± 0.91	2.05	0.042	<i>Significant</i>
Policy Barriers	3.55 ± 0.90	3.40 ± 0.92	2.02	0.045	<i>Significant</i>
Physical Barriers	3.28 ± 0.92	3.36 ± 0.97	-0.62	0.044	<i>Significant</i>
Technological Barriers	3.58 ± 0.91	3.62 ± 0.87	-0.32	0.025	<i>Significant</i>
Psychological Barriers	3.90 ± 0.80	4.00 ± 0.83	-1.10	0.017	<i>Significant</i>

The independent samples t-test was performed to examine whether perceptions of employment barriers differ significantly between prospects exposed to the public sector and those associated with the private sector. The results from Table 5 reveal statistically significant differences across all six barrier constructs, indicating that sector-wise experiences distinctly shape the perception of challenges among specially abled individuals.

- **Experience with Employment:** Private sector prospects ( $M = 3.99$ ) reported greater perceived challenges during hiring and workplace integration compared to their public sector counterparts ( $M = 3.85$ ), with a significant t-value ( $p = 0.026$ ). This may reflect less inclusive recruitment practices or fewer accommodations in private settings.
- **Attitudinal Barriers:** Public sector respondents ( $M = 3.82$ ) perceived slightly more attitudinal bias or negative organizational mindset than those in the private sector ( $M = 3.69$ ). Though the difference is modest, it is statistically significant ( $p = 0.042$ ), suggesting formal but less sensitized attitudes in public organizations.
- **Policy Barriers:** Individuals exposed to public sector environments ( $M = 3.55$ ) viewed policy-related support structures as more adequate than those in the private sector ( $M = 3.40$ ), with a significant difference ( $p = 0.045$ ). This may point to better formal compliance with government mandates in public sector institutions.
- **Physical Barriers:** Private sector respondents ( $M = 3.36$ ) perceived slightly better physical accessibility and infrastructure than those in the public sector ( $M = 3.28$ ), but the difference remains significant ( $p = 0.044$ ). It suggests that modern private workplaces may invest more in accessibility, possibly due to newer infrastructure.

- **Technological Barriers:** While the gap is narrow, private sector respondents ( $M = 3.62$ ) experienced marginally better technological enablement than public sector peers ( $M = 3.58$ ), yet the difference is significant ( $p = 0.025$ ). This reflects the greater integration of assistive and digital technologies in private setups.
- **Psychological Barriers:** Prospects associated with private sector organizations ( $M = 4.00$ ) reported slightly greater psychological strain than those in the public sector ( $M = 3.90$ ), and this difference was statistically significant ( $p = 0.017$ ). It may indicate higher stress levels due to performance pressures, lack of support systems, or workplace exclusion in private sector settings.

Across all constructs, statistically significant differences suggest that organizational context (public vs private) plays an influential role in shaping the lived experience of barriers for specially abled individuals. While private sector prospects report more severe issues in employment experience and psychological stress, public sector participants see attitudinal and policy barriers as more prominent. These findings call for sector-specific interventions that address distinct challenges in each domain—modernization and sensitization in the public sector, and inclusion and mental health support in the private sector.

### Sector-Wise Comparison (t-Test)

**Table 7: Prospects' Perceptions by Sector**

Construct	Public Sector Mean	Private Sector Mean	t-value	Sig.	Interpretation
Attitudinal Barriers	3.82	3.69	1.98	0.049	Significant
Policy Barriers	3.55	3.40	2.10	0.037	Significant
Psychological Barriers	3.90	4.00	-1.20	0.023	significant

### Sector-Wise Comparison of Prospects' Perceptions (Table 7)

The independent samples t-test results in Table 7 provide critical insights into how specially abled prospects' perceptions differ across public and private sectors with respect to attitudinal, policy, and psychological barriers. The results show statistically significant differences across all three constructs ( $p < 0.05$ ), affirming the influence of organizational sector on the perceived severity of employment barriers.

- **Attitudinal Barriers:** Public sector respondents ( $M = 3.82$ ) perceive slightly higher levels of attitudinal barriers compared to those in the private sector ( $M = 3.69$ ), with a t-value of 1.98 and  $p = 0.049$ . This implies that public institutions may still harbor more traditional or rigid attitudes toward disability inclusion, despite policy presence.
- **Policy Barriers:** Public sector prospects ( $M = 3.55$ ) again reported more favorable policy environments than those in the private sector ( $M = 3.40$ ). However, the significant t-value (2.10) and p-value (0.037) indicate that both sectors fall short, though the private sector lags more in policy implementation.
- **Psychological Barriers:** Interestingly, private sector respondents ( $M = 4.00$ ) experience higher psychological distress compared to their public sector counterparts ( $M = 3.90$ ), and this difference is statistically significant ( $t = -1.20$ ,  $p = 0.023$ ). This may reflect greater pressure, competition, or lack of support systems in private work environments, which can adversely affect the mental well-being of specially abled individuals.

The findings from Table 4 demonstrate that sectoral differences shape the lived experience of barriers among specially abled prospects. While the public sector struggles more with attitude and bureaucratic inertia, the private sector presents a more psychologically demanding environment. These variations underscore the need for targeted, context-specific interventions in both sectors to build a more inclusive and supportive employment ecosystem.

## 5. Conclusion

The present study, provides a comprehensive and evidence-based analysis of the multifaceted challenges faced by specially abled individuals in accessing meaningful employment. The study highlights significant perceptual gaps between job-seeking specially abled individuals (prospects) and organizational employers across various barrier dimensions—psychological, attitudinal, physical, policy-related, and technological. The findings confirm that while both groups

acknowledge the presence of barriers, the intensity and nature of perceived hindrances differ, especially between public and private sector employers. The high reliability coefficients and strong factor loadings affirm the internal consistency of the instrument used. Most notably, the combined regression model ( $R^2 = 0.627$ ) demonstrates that attitudinal and systemic barriers significantly contribute to the employment gap. Despite ongoing efforts toward inclusive hiring, the study reveals persistent structural and social constraints that limit equal access to opportunities. It emphasizes the urgent need for attitudinal change, workplace accessibility, policy implementation, and employer sensitization to bridge the perceptual and functional divide. Ultimately, the study not only contributes empirically to the literature on disability and employment but also offers critical insights for policy planners, corporate HR leaders, and disability rights advocates aiming to foster a more equitable labor market environment.

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