CHAPTER 11

Managing Disabled Inclusion Within the Colombian Workplace

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Introduction

This chapter presents an academic reflection regarding the status of workplace inclusion processes for disabled persons in Colombia from the perspective of their rights and a premise that disabled persons represent a form of enrichment advantageous to any workplace. The regulatory framework that supports national inclusion processes is presented and the figures for the current state of the disabled population's participation in work environments are described. Next, proposed is offered emphasizing

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C. T. E. de Aquino and R. R. Rojas (eds.),
Diversity and Inclusion in Latin American and Caribbean Workplaces,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-35419-0_11

the value of the disabled within the business agenda. Therein, the productive potential of disabled persons was recognized, as were the challenges implied by work inclusion for the business sector and other social entities. Thereafter, a transdisciplinary approach is postulated as the most appropriate social response to the complexity of workplace inclusion for the disabled. A journey through the University Institution Colombian School of Rehabilitation is presented as an example of experiences that link the business sector to academia on working together along a path to workplace inclusion. Finally, the national need to continue reinforcing the bases required for the effective achievement of work inclusion for the disabled, including the involvement of various players, disciplines, and societal sectors, is emphasized.

Diversity, Inclusion and Disability

Diversity is recognized as a manifestation of richness and added value to humanity. All actions or circumstances which place the free exercise of personal or group human rights at risk owing to differences from a majority (racial, cultural, gender, function, etc.) are considered to create a situation of vulnerability and artificial constraint, which must be addressed by the state.

The human rights outlook permeates all social spheres and makes it imperative that the state devote appropriate attention to human diversity as an integral task that involves all goods and services within the nation. This requires considering the existence of persons and groups who have historically had their rights dishonored precisely as a result of their differences, and knowing well that exclusion is generated in part by the existence of totalitarian policies created for hegemonic majorities. Thus, the concept of social inclusion—and inevitably workplace inclusion—is a political response which seeks to eliminate exclusions created by social

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biases. Inclusion—both social and in the workplace—involves all forms of actions in order to guarantee the active and complete participation of all citizens regardless of their race, gender, political or religious affiliation, age, origin, physical or social condition (García, 2004).

Currently, social inclusion is considered as an effort designed to eliminate the barring of persons or groups against which traditionally have discriminated, owing it to any condition that represents a departure from the general social norm. Social inclusion strives to preserve and capitalize upon diversity, enrich the solidary conscience, and reinforce commitments made to defend the rights of all (García, 2004).

Within the framework of the social and workplace inclusion, disability has acquired a growing interest worldwide, propelled by the increase in situations of disability related to population aging (Harwood, Sayer, & Hirschfeld, 2004). In the specific case of Colombia, the interest is also associated with an increase in the number of cases of survivors of accidents attributed to violence and illnesses which were previously considered fatal. Also, this topic has become more widely known, thanks to the efforts of a "People with Disabilities" (PwD) movement which proclaims the achievement of participation and equality within the framework of diversity defense and the search for innovative and inclusive solutions for the future of humanity (García, 2004).

Today, the term functional diversity has been situated, by independent life movements (social movements by the disabled worldwide), as a neutral alternative to traditional concepts such as disability, which in their opinion, carry negative implications. These movements instead prefer to define their differences based on biological damage and ability (Palacios, 2008). Without disregarding the political struggle of the social movements that have coined this concept—for effects of the present chapter and for the sake of the selection of an epistemological field that contextualizes the discussion of the topic addressed—the concept defined by the *Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities*, created by the United Nations (UN, 2006) will be utilized.

The disabled have come a long way toward the attainment of full-fledged social and workplace participation in a process that has combined the efforts of families, disability organizations, professionals, and institutions. Yet there are still a great many physical and social barriers which limit the disabled's effective participation in society. For this reason, it is urgent that programs, plans, and projects for the benefit of their inclusion continue to evolve and be implemented.

According to the human rights perspective—and within the framework of the *Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities* (UN, 2006)—inclusion scenarios are considered for those with disabilities in all social contexts whether public or private, in which a majority is involved. The achievement of inclusion is based on the effective strategies and actions performed by societies in order to promote, protect, and ensure the full enjoyment of equal conditions for all human rights and fundamental freedoms, by all PwD, in these scenarios.

The social inclusion of PwD implies guaranteeing access, permanence, quality, and exercise of freedom in the provision of goods and services of the societies to which they belong. Said goods and services include: physical contexts, transport, information, communication, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), justice, social security (health, rehabilitation, education, work, and employment), and cultural goods and services, as well as recreational activities, leisure, and sport.

In the case of work and employment, the disabled must have the opportunity to earn a living, by way of a freely chosen or accepted job in a market and work context that is open, inclusive, and accessible, and not face discrimination in selection, hiring, employment continuity, remuneration, or professional promotion processes as a result of their disability. They disabled employees must also have, safe and healthy working conditions as well as the right to retirement benefits.

This new condition has generated significant transformations within companies, organizations, and work environments. Competencies which permit inclusion have been added to the soft competencies required in the business world, which include leadership, assertive communication, the ability to change, and analytical thought, among others, although there is greater confusion regarding the ways in which these new competencies may be enhanced. Until recently, companies managed inclusion topics by appealing to altruistic values based upon tolerance for minority groups. However, this approach has evolved in the direction of lucrative and business sustainability and competitiveness viewpoints, which represents emphasizes differential values for companies that wish to compete on national and international levels. Despite these considerations, the gap for companies to become pertinent scenarios for inclusion in Latin American and Caribbean countries remains sizable.

Since 2011, the World Health Organization and World Bank, in their World Report on Disability (WHO & World Bank, 2011), have declared that the business sector, both public and private, should concentrate their

efforts to include the disabled, ensure fair hiring practices and reasonable adaptations to work posts, and support the incorporation of those whose work activity has resulted in disability. Similarly, the generation of financing and business ventures—among other incentives for the disabled—should be promoted in order to achieve dignified employment and improve the quality of life.

Additionally, there seems to be a clear relationship between business productivity increases and inclusive organizational policies. The Gartner consulting affirms that for 2022, 75% of companies that are able to achieve their financial goals will be those with inclusive leaders and in which both Diversity and Inclusion are valued. Similarly, McKinsey & Company stated that companies with Diversity and Inclusion policies have a 35% greater chance of improving their financial performance (Gartner, 2018).

All of the above requires that the business sector comprehend Diversity and Inclusion as business and organizational value of the culture. Gartner (2018) affirms that in order to have inclusive teams, companies must reach beyond the inclusion of obvious diversities such as gender and race in order to create commitments and cultures that facilitate the inclusion of the disabled. Similarly, reviews of the institutional contexts must include better inclusion measurement indicators.

Work Inclusion for the Disabled in Colombia: Advances, Challenges, and Opportunities

The work inclusion process for the disabled in Colombia has been both slow and complex. It began with Agreement 159 of 1989, of the International Labor Organization for Professional Rehabilitation, and has continued with other agreements that, in the past forty years, have advanced the struggle against all forms of discrimination toward the disabled. The most recent link in this sequence of improvements has been a guide developed by the Colombian Ministry of Labor (2019), in which, for example, provisions were made to concede and broaden new existing benefits for companies that hire disabled individuals.

However, this law for the incorporation of PwD is just one additional step on a long journey. It is still imperative to continue addressing issues, particularly within the business sector in order to provide adequate conditions for PwD in the labor market. This business sector effort must advance a much-needed consciousness and awareness, as well as prepare

suitable leaders to promote transformation in organizational cultures that ensure inclusion. Industrious sectors, such as agroindustry and technology, are capable of contributing significantly, yet the number of PwD job postings within these sectors remain scarce. One challenge that must be overcome is a lack of tougher inclusion indicator at national level for all organizations and sectors. Although certain governmental institutions, as well as the educational sector, have incorporated inclusion as quality indicator there are still few organizations that meticulously use the inclusion formula, called INES. The INES formula was developed by the National Ministry of Education with the support of the Saldarriaga Concha Foundation and currently there is no public information which reflects the actions performed to favor organizational inclusion as a result of this inclusion index. Yet several evident cases do merit mention. For example, the "Juan Valdez" stores and property of the National Federation of Coffee Growers have designed a PwD inclusion policy using the metric. Also the "Gran Estación Mall" in Bogotá has displayed positive experiences with PwD inclusion and the indicator. These businesses have showcased the value of PwD for both the disabled persons and the organization.

In conducting a more detailed review at regulatory, political, and cultural advancements in Colombia, it can be acknowledged that since the enactment of the Political Constitution of 1991, a broader regulatory framework has been defined to favor the economic, social, and cultural rights of the disabled (Moreno, 2007). Table 11.1 details the most notable regulations and provisions from the framework.

At the national political level, the May 10, 2011 ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Disabled is noteworthy. This convention recognizes—among other things—the right of PwD to live independently and be included in the community (Art. 19) as well as to be able to work in equal conditions with others, and the right to work and employment (Art. 27).

Accordance to the Registry for the Characterization and Location of People with Disability (RCLPD), as of March 2010, 15.2% of disabled individuals in Colombia were working, while 4.3% were seeking work. This indicates that the PwD activity rate in 2010 was 19.5% (or 42% below the rate for the rest of Colombian population). In other words, the unemployment rate for the PwD population was 22.1% (OISS, 2014). Additionally noted, this population's ability to access work opportunities declined with age.

Table 11.1 Colombian regulatory framework which favors work inclusion for the disabled

Law	*Objective*
361 of 1997	Establish social integration mechanisms for individuals with limitations, as well as other provisions
762 of 2002	Approve the international convention for the elimination of all forms of discrimination against the disabled
1145 of 2007	Organize the National Disability System
1346 of 2009	Adopt the UN convention regarding the rights of the disabled
Statutory law 1618 of 2013	Establish guarantees for the free exercise of rights for the disabled, including their work environment. Indicate inclusive measures, affirmative actions, and reasonable adjustments
Decree 2011 of November 30, 2017	Establish the percentage of PwD to be hired in the public sector (considering the size of the entity workforce and the support of worker disability certificates)
Decree 2177 of December 22, 2017	Create the Council for Disability Inclusion. Coordinate actions with the private sector, in order to favor the social, work, and productive inclusion of the disabled (includes information for work, productivity, and employment)
Decree 392 of February 26, 2018	Establish hiring process incentives for companies that hire disabled individuals

Source Guidelines for Workforce Inclusion—People with Disabilities (Colombian Ministry of Labor, 2019)

Yet in an assessment performed by the Ombudsman's Office and the Universidad de los Andes, three areas of concern were identified that must also be addressed by the government: information system improvements in order to make PwD exclusion from work a more visible issue, the design of a national plan for the elimination of workplace barriers to PwD, and the enhancement of antidiscrimination laws (Hernández, 2005). In 2016, the UN Committee for the Rights of People with Disabilities similarly recommended that the Colombian state adopt affirmative measures

for the full employment of PwD, reduce discrimination, and regulate reasonable adjustments in the workplace in order to ensure productive, dignified work for said population (PWC, ONCE, FOAL, & OISS, 2017).

According to figures reported by the National Department of Administrative Statistics (DANE), in 2010, 73.71% of PwD were not actively employed, compared to 37.25% of the rest of the Colombian population in the same situation. Regarding perceived salaries, the disabled are paid 40% less than the able-bodied population (PWC, ONCE, FOAL, & OISS, 2017). In this sense, the disabled are more likely to be unemployed and have lower incomes as compared to the able-bodied population (Colombian Ministry of Health and Social Protection, 2014). According to information from the Work Observatory of the Public Employment Service, between 2013 and 2018 over 15,600 disabled individuals nationally registered, which shows improvement in making disability and employment reporting a more visible issue in Colombia (Fedesarrollo, 2018).

Health, education, and dignified quality work represent some of the fundamental rights that guarantee the quality of life and social well-being of PwD. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 15% of the world population are PwD, a proportion which certainly increases over time. In the specific case of Colombia, a population projection carried out by the Colombian Ministry of Health and Social Protection (2015) observed from the 2005 national census there was a total population of 48,203,405 people, of which 1,178,703 (2.45%) were PwD.[1] In a separate report, the RLPCD reported a 3.85% increase in PwD, on the basis of the overall population statistic from the 2005 census, which jumped from 2.45% in 2005 to 6.3% in 2015 (Colombian Ministry of Health and Social Protection, 2015).

Most studies of PwD access to rights in Colombia are still based upon the projection of 2005 census information. Hence it is estimated that, of the 1,178,703 (2.45%) PwD, 11% are between the ages of 0–19, 43% are between the ages of 20–59, and 46% are 60 or more years old. Given that Colombian work legislation imposes a minimum work age of 18 years old, and establishes the retirement age for women at 57 years old and 62 years old for men, it may be estimated that approximately 45% of PwD are of working age (Colombian Ministry of Health and Social Protection,

[1] In the 2018 Colombian census, which updated the information available for the demographic composition and characterization of the country, specific PwD data figures were unavailable.

2015). Along this characterization, the employment statistics generated by the government establishes a person's work within defined institutional (organizational) and legal frameworks, moderated by the factors of permanency over time and the nature of the business. Both factors are easily calculated, since an individually assigned salary or wage represents the fact and time frame of being employed. Besides, making the index visible is a way to widely disseminate the reality of certain legal guarantees and social protection, although this type of cautionary warning may be somewhat normalized by professional statutes or collective work agreements (Neffa, 1999). The details of this characterization are presented in Table 11.2.

Notwithstanding these statistics, they further point to a situation of inequality in the job market where 63.17% of PwD have no income, and 68% are lacking a work contract. Thus, even in the case that PwD perform productive tasks, many of them do not receive remuneration in exchange or work informally (volunteer), which increases their situational vulnerability and disqualifies them social security entitlements.

Yet the solution to this problem goes much further than what may be achieved by way of the norms or readiness of a system strictly based productivity. Work inclusion implies a coordinated effort on the part of various social systems and requires cultural transformations that involve effort on many levels, in the short, medium, and long-term outlook of an organization. It is essential for educational and labor systems to diversify the educational offerings and work opportunities which guarantee the right of PwD thereto. Consider the figures that reflect the educational level of PwD registered in the 2005 census. It was revealed that 42.8% of PwD had education levels at primary school levels, while 32.8% had no education whatsoever. The lowest percentages corresponded to the higher educational levels. Just 20.7% had completed secondary education, whereas 1.8% had a technical or technological education, 1.6% had a university education, and only 0.30% postgraduate education. Essentially, the percentage of PwD with educational levels adequate for a job which would secure access, permanence, and promotion in the workplace is in low and troublesome. In summary, to guarantee the right to education which facilitates access to dignified work for PwD, inclusion criteria must be transformed—not only in the workplace environment—but also within the educational system.

As previously indicated, work inclusion—as a component of social inclusion—is a complex social process. Workplace inclusion demands a different paradigm, one of better understanding social as well as academic

Table 11.2 Characterization of PwD work participation in Colombia

	N	*%*
Type of occupation		
Unable to work	392,508	33.30
Housework	225,132	19.10
Hired work	152,053	12.90
Study	99,011	8.40
Seeking work	47,148	4
Retired	18,859	1.60
Receive income	5894	0.50
Other activity	174,448	14.80
Unspecified activity	63,650	5.40
PwD total 2005 census	**1,178,703**	**100.00**
Monthly income range (in dollars)		
No income	744,587	63.17
Income equal to or less than $146	289,961	24.60
Income between $146 and $292	33,004	2.80
Income between $292 and $438	4597	0.39
Income between $438 and $584	2122	0.18
Income between $584 and $730	825	0.07
Income over $730	2240	0.19
Unspecified income	101,368	8.60
PwD total 2005 census	**1,178,703**	**100.00**
	N	*%*
Type of hired work		
Non-contractual	801,518	68
Undefined contract	212,167	18
Contract with undefined term	99,011	8.40
Fixed-term contract	66,007	5.60
PwD total 2005 census	**1,178,703**	**100.00**
Sector of hired work		
Service	254,600	21.60
Agriculture	231,026	19.60
Unspecified sector	432,584	36.70
Commerce	183,878	15.60
Industry	61,293	5.20
Fishing	15,323	1.30
PwD total 2005 census	**1,178,703**	**100.00**
Type of work performed		
Freelance work	398,402	33.80

(continued)

Table 11.2 (continued)

	N	%
Private sector laborers-employees	215,703	18.30
Undefined modality	203,916	17.30
Day laborer	163,840	13.90
Domestic help	74,258	6.30
Public sector laborers-employees	51,863	4.40
Unpaid family work	44,791	3.80
Boss or employer	25,931	2.20
PwD total 2005 census	**1,178,703**	**100.00**

Note These percentages are presented as related to the number of PwD—2005 census: 1,178,703 (2.45%) of the total population (the above table was created considering the information reported by the Colombian Ministry of Health and Social Protection [2015])
Source Authors at ECR. Unpublished

contexts. Inclusion is a sociocultural process which interprets public policies and makes them viable only by way of social practices. Inclusion must also be expected in educational endeavors as a strategy that responds constructively to Diversity and Inclusion, something beyond just social and work interventions. In the case of the right to work, a work integration approach focuses on normalization, the subject's adaptation to the system. This perceives PwD from standpoints of deficiency, sectorization, adaptation, and competitivity. From another perspective, work inclusion is designed for the full guarantee of human rights in equity and equality, based on recognition and the valuation of differences. Thus, subjects, with their potential abilities, may participate in the workforce in adequate contexts, free of physical, economic, and attitudinal barriers (Heras, 2018). With this distinction, workplace Diversity and Inclusion require recognition of the interdisciplinary and intersectoral efforts made to achieve its final purpose, namely, the full guarantee of these rights to PwD. An example of this pursuit is illustrated by some current Colombian initiatives which address work Diversity and Inclusion in a broader sense—certainly attending PwD cases, but also focusing on women, victims of violence, and youth—by way of prioritizing the Colombian Ministry of Labor implementation of employability and entrepreneurship programs. Here, economic ventures on both urban and rural levels have been integrated into formulating Diversity and Inclusion initiatives for new businesses that favor self-employment and the expansion of existing businesses

for individuals or groups of people, from prioritized populations (Oller, Pazoa, Oviedo, & Jorda, 2016). These employability and entrepreneurship strategies are preliminary attempts to incorporate interdisciplinary and intersectoral approaches to PwD work inclusion. Different fields have contributed to personal empowerment and social development actions, both with PwD as well as with the able-bodied. The interventions and successes from other disciplines provide ideas and initiatives to increase PwD participation in the labor pool.

Within this landscape, the contributions of the educational sector—especially those of Higher Education Institutions (HEI)—are foundational for the achievement of these social initiatives. HEI commitment to this purpose is increasing but is still small compared to the current need. In fact, HEI's themselves have been unable to adequately guarantee PwD right to education, where access, permanence, and promotion levels remain quite low. Given this constraint, it may be said that academia's institutional effort toward PwD work inclusion remains more of a longing than a reality. In light of this situation, the PwD experiences of the Colombian School of Rehabilitation (ECR) merits analysis, since it represents a case study where higher education's contribution to PwD work inclusion can be attained within the Colombian cultural context.

Approaches to Work Inclusion for the Disabled in Colombia

In Colombia, workplace Diversity and Inclusion has been addressed from approaches in accordance with the evolution of the disability concept, moving from the biological to the biopsychosocial model. From this perspective, multidisciplinary approaches, linked to assistance-related or rehabilitation models, interdisciplinary models more closely related to integration and normalization approaches, and transdisciplinary models, which attempt approaches from complexity, the perspective of rights and work inclusion, have become more frequent.

Each approach, at a given moment, has made significant contributions to the improvement of work possibilities for PwD, and has provided the necessary bases for the emergence of more efficient approaches. The multidisciplinary approach is important for the comprehension of the movement toward interdisciplinarity, owing to the need for an integrated

response to facilitate work inclusion. Interdisciplinarity mixes the practices and suppositions of the disciplines implicated, and enables greater integration therebetween (Sánchez, 2002). Thus, the interdisciplinary approach permits an improved focus on human integrality, encompassing all of its dimensions: physical, emotional, spiritual, familial, social, and cultural, in an evaluative way.

Based on the interdisciplinary perspective, PwD inclusion involves centering oneself on these individuals' abilities, identifying their strengths, in order to enhance and direct them toward the productive sector, and performing accompaniment and permanent training, in order to guarantee its continuity and promotion in the work environment. Further, it must generate satisfactory results for the individual, their family, company, and society. This process occurs through the integration of different disciplines, such as rehabilitation, health, and the social and administrative sciences, among others.

The complexity involved in a globalized society demands social, environmental, and technological challenges. As such, it requires transcendence to a transdisciplinary approach, or overcoming the discipline-based approach, as "the transdisciplinary exceeds the limits of the interdisciplinary. Its intention is to overcome knowledge fragmentation, beyond discipline enrichment, with different know-how (multidisciplinary), and via epistemological exchange and the scientific methods associated with said know-hows (interdisciplinary)" (Pérez & Setién, 2008, p. 15). From the transdisciplinary perspective, work inclusion processes must be permeated, their complexity and multiple realities understood within those in which they are framed, with a holistic point of view. This demands constructive and purposeful dialogue about the whole.

Several challenges are proposed for all protagonists in work inclusion. The health system, for example, is challenged with the connection of the entire process of attending to the disabled. Disciplines transition from egotistical competition to cooperative, proactive work, and discover new ways to find solutions. Companies must create a culture of inclusion for those with disabilities, in pro of economic growth and social transformation, while foundations must establish efficient connections that provide greater opportunities to this population. All of this must be framed within the guarantee of compliance with public policies, and together with PwD, understood as active subjects in an opportunity-laden context.

The Colombian School of Rehabilitation's Experience (Escuela Colombiana de Rehabilitación—ECR) in Work Inclusion Processes for the Disabled

When the Colombian School of Rehabilitation (ECR) started in 2012, it initiated a line of work for work inclusion, along three functions: education, research, and social projection. In terms of education, the ECR sought to diversify the traineeship and internship environments provided to students with speech therapy, physical therapy, and occupational therapy majors, in order to promote teamwork, interdisciplinary approaches to social problems and allow students to familiarize themselves with the PwD reality from an inclusion perspective. Since then, traineeship and internships have been implemented together with organizations dedicated to the promotion of linking processes between the disabled and the production sector.

The Colombian School of Rehabilitation initiated its work-centered inclusion proposal with a transdisciplinary approach, implemented in stages, namely, the preliminary, entry, and follow-up stages. Each stage required compliance with a series of actions which favored disabled individuals' access to the production sector and respectable jobs, but also sought working relationships that could be sustained over time. Figure 11.1 presents a diagram of the model used at the Colombian School of Rehabilitation and the relationship between the stages of the process and the activities implemented in each one of the phases. A brief narrative of each stage follows.

In the **preliminary stage**, the future employee's work profile had to be defined in terms of the education, training, and learning processes required for the jobs to which they had access. In this stage, task and competency evaluation processes were formulated in order to create worker profiles and use those profiles to identify elements to be strengthened prior to hiring. Concurrently, personalized interventions were performed, which allowed PwD candidates to continue at the companies they worked, while including the participation of psychology, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech therapy professionals, among other professionals, whose tasks were to provide an integral assessment of personal and job training needs based upon the individuals or the institutional needs to which of each PwD. Accordingly, an in-depth analysis of mutual tasks performance expectations was performed with the objective of identifying

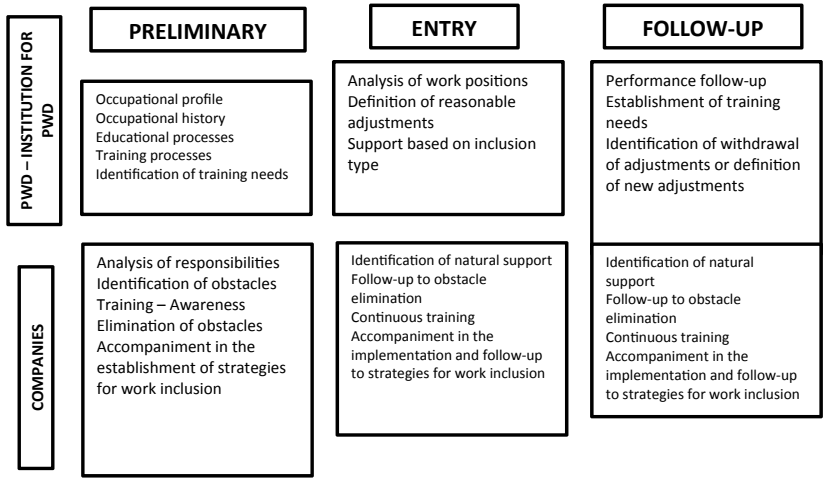

Fig. 11.1 Work inclusion as a process: ECR (*Source* Authors at ECR. Unpublished)

obstacles and potential facilitators. These assessments aided in formulating personalized strategies intended to eliminate the obstacles to job performance. Essentially, a job analysis was carried out and strategies beneficial to the PwD and the organization's Diversity and Inclusion goals were addressed simultaneously.

During the **entry stage**, the organization had to identify the jobs or posts to be filled. Then, a job post analysis was performed, in order to define the task demands of each post and identify reasonable adjustments as well as the PwD accommodations that might emerge. This allowed the definition of reasonable and necessary adjustments which would permit PwD to be independent and autonomous in their jobs and achieve the organization's expected performance thresholds. Often, the team of professionals that participated in this stage included occupational therapists and psychologists.

In the **follow-up stage**, or the third and last stage of the process, PwD worker follow-up activities and assessments of outcomes within the company were conducted in order to identify those actions with potential to improve the organization's workplace policies and further address medium- and long-term inclusion processes.

It is key to recognize that within the employment modalities available to the disabled that are available to PwD are the following: protected employment, supported employment, and personalized employment, as described by Gottlieb, Myhill, and Blanck (2010). *Protected employment* is described as the least desirable and occurs in environments in which the majority of workers are disabled and therefore require permanent supervision and support for the performance of their tasks. This modality does not significantly impact individuals' productivity in the long term, nor their socio-occupational inclusion. *Supported employment* is described as a modality through which part of the education process occurs at the work site, accompanied by a professional who offers some support but progressively disengages once PwDs become competitive and are able to establish stable relationships with their employers. Finally, *personalized employment* modality requires only the implementation of reasonable adjustments and the support necessary for task implementation. This approach is focused on persons who promote respect for diversity, company productivity, improve the organizational culture, and seek to place individuals in jobs with competitive salaries. Below is a brief description of those actions implemented by the Colombian School of Rehabilitation (ECR) via networks, foundations, and institutions that attend to PwD in the work inclusion processes.

Network Experience with the Work Support (WS) Model

The ECR is linked to the *Employment Support Network* organization, which works toward socio-occupational inclusion of the intellectually disabled by way of the ECA methodology. This methodology consists of five inclusion phases, namely, pre-placement, education and training, work search, placement, and post-placement. Of these phases, the ECR is involved in to two, which are pre-placement and the work search phases. In the *pre-placement* phase, the Faculty of Speech Therapy participates in the evaluation of communicative profiles, in various contexts. The physical therapy is charged with gross motor and muscular strength skill evaluations, while the occupational therapy area evaluates participant performance in daily activities. At the same time, the candidates' occupational profiles were composed. In this stage, the ECR was involved in the evaluation of 290 intellectually disabled individuals (Bermúdez, 2015).

In the *employment search*, the occupational therapy program participated by way of work traineeship. In this phase, analysis for the adaptation of five work posts was performed for 45 of the candidates evaluated in the first stage (*post-placement* phase).

In 2013, the first innovation derived from this alliance was created: the creation of the *Candidate Preselection Test* which includes: the evaluation of candidates' family and social contexts, the definition of competency, cognitive ability, orientation, money management, interest, commitment, management of organizational and social contexts, communicative ability, and fundamental movement pattern profiles were defined. Fundamental movement patterns included candidate ability, duration, and attention spans for performance of the motor skills associated with their work performance.

During the same period, the *Modified Evaluation Test—Type 1* was designed and implemented. This provides occupational performance information for candidates involved in a given type of activity (box assembly), and the *Pre-labor Competency Definition Test* permits the definition of a minimum competency profile at the family, pre-labor ability, comprehensive and communicative, and healthy lifestyle history levels, based upon a general observation which determines the possible factors which may positively or negatively influence candidates' occupational performance, and guide the observation to be implemented thereafter, for occupational evaluation. The network alliance also allowed the implementation of research processes related to the design of an instrument for a communication profile of the intellectually disabled, this spearheaded by professors from the speech therapy program.

Experience in Work Education Processes for the Intellectually Disabled

In 2014, the occupational therapy program designed a workshop titled *Learning to Employ You* as a project for an international foundation.[2] This project was offered to a group called "Amigos del Alma" that had

[2] This international organization is present in over 50 countries, in which it is dedicated to the promotion of the social and work inclusion of intellectually disabled individuals (Amigos del Alma).

not been able to secure or maintain any form of employment. The workshop sought to develop work competencies and the understanding of the capacities, abilities, and skills necessary to access the job market.

This workshop was framed within the phase previous to hiring, and was structured into four modules: *Social support networks, social interaction abilities, the management of executive abilities which favor pre-work and work activities, and social abilities for work*. Among the improvements made to the workshop, in 2017 a module for *Work with families* was implemented, and in 2019 a practice in real job contexts was added. Upon completion of the process, the "Amigos del Alma" occupational profile was compiled. To date, 54 persons who continue their involvement in the second stage of the process had been certified by way of the foundation's inclusion model. During 2016, technical help was provided by the occupational therapy program from the same foundation within an agreement with the *Colombian Institute of Family Well-being (ICBF-BCC)*. Among the actions implemented was accompaniment and consulting for the ICBF team awareness sessions. Furthermore, they participated in the design and implementation of workshops in five of its national regional branches: Bogota, Meta, Cundinamarca, Valle, and Antioquia, as well as in nine branch openings. Within the framework of this same contract, the *Practical guide for the creation of occupational profiles for the disabled* (Ruiz, 2017) was created. This established the conceptual framework for the creation of occupational profiles, guides for the evaluation of occupational profile competencies and occupational profile instruments. This profile permitted search orientation for work opportunities as well as improvement in PwD success levels for those who had previously participated in the process. Other fundamental contributions to the model consisted of work training offered to PwD with low education levels and scarce educational inclusion and job training opportunities.

The Work Inclusion Experience with an Institution That Serves the Psychosocially Disabled Population

The ECR occupational therapy program offered internships that oriented and supported work inclusion processes in a foundation located in the municipality of Albán, Cundinamarca. It attended to youth and adults with mental and intellectual disabilities, and those who had difficulty

becoming involved in the inclusion processes. The first strategy implemented by the Colombian School of Rehabilitation was to design the workshop titled *Creating Work Competencies*, which has a theoretical practical component applied at the foundation and a practical component which occurs in real job scenarios. In this first stage, seven individuals were trained of which four would move on to the practical phase. In 2018, 48 people were trained, of which 16 passed to the practical phase.

The process was affected by high levels of desertion in the various phases of the process, caused mainly by attitudinal barriers faced by those with mental and intellectual disabilities. These were made evident by the responses from the business partners in Albán and other sectors. This discovery required initiatives for the short, medium, and long term. The initiatives were directed at all social players who promote inclusion to build awareness and guide businesspeople as well as to populations that resisted PwD social and work inclusion.

Monitoring for Physical and Sensorial PwD Work Inclusion Processes

A private, non-profit entity founded in 1986 that works for the benefit of soldiers, policemen wounded in combat, and the families (widows and children) of members of the armed forces who perish in the line of duty also forms part of the Social and Business Defense Group (SBDG) and seeks to complement state efforts to attend to these individuals. The practices implemented in the corporation's employment program contributes along three objectives: the establishment of the *professional profile for corporation users*, considering work histories, physical evaluations, and the suggestion of possible jobs, in accordance with the national SENA classification. The second objective is the evaluation of work competencies, by way of the design of activities related to administrative assistants (merchandise classification, order organization, estimates, provider organization, confirmation, and shipping), and the construction of the professional profiles for 41 users. This permits the third objective, which is to present candidates for available job offers based upon their profiles. In 2018, 100 corporation users were assisted. They were provided job training and education in the necessary abilities for work inclusion. Professional profiles were created for 15 users, and actions related to work competency evaluation were carried out, as were visits to companies, so

as to promote work relationships with corporation users, and training days were spent with mothers, widows, wives, and daughters of soldiers or officers who perished or were wounded in combat.

Conclusions

This chapter shows that despite some level of progress, the socio-occupational inclusion of PwD in Colombia remains a challenge. The rhetoric of PwD rights must be overcome with action, a consolidation of effective initiatives and practices made available to a wider percentage of interested organizations, and a broader effort across all sectors to recognize and respond to the demands of the Colombian work environment must be prioritized and dealt with. These include the state, businesses, families, groups for the disabled, academia, and other training entities, as well as society in general. Only then will it be possible to see true progress for persons with disabilities in the Colombian workplace.

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