



Research on Current Status and Challenges of Initiatives to Improve the Quality of Employment for Persons with Disabilities in Companies

(Research Report No. 184) Summary

[Keywords]

Quality of employment for persons with disabilities
Quality improvement in employment for persons with disabilities
Employment management
Job matching
Skills development
Education and training
Personnel evaluation
Treatment
Career development
Reasonable accommodation

[Abstract]

This research aims to clarify the current status and challenges of initiatives to improve the quality of employment for persons with disabilities in companies and the details of necessary support, as well as to introduce examples of specific corporate initiatives, so that it can contribute to considering policies to improve the quality of employment for persons with disabilities and to supporting companies through support providers such as local vocational centers for persons with disabilities.

As a result of the questionnaire survey of companies, the implementation status of initiatives to improve the quality of employment for persons with disabilities varied depending on such factors as regular/non-regular employees, general companies/special subsidiary companies (In case that an employer establishes a subsidiary company which gives special consideration for employing persons

with disabilities in order to promote and stabilize their employment, and fulfills certain requirements, the workers employed at the subsidiary can be deemed to be employed by the parent company for calculating the employment rate.), company size, and types of disabilities in employment. Companies that employ persons with disabilities provided open-ended comments on ideas and images of “high-quality employment for persons with disabilities in their companies,” which were classified into eight groups.

In addition, through a hearing survey of companies, we obtained case studies on detailed initiatives of companies proactively implementing initiatives to improve the quality of employment for persons with disabilities.

Based on the information obtained through the above survey, we organized the quality of employment for persons with disabilities.

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2 Research period

FY 2024 to 2025

3 Composition of the research report

Chapter 1: Background, purpose, and methods of the research

Chapter 2: Questionnaire survey of companies

Chapter 3: Hearing survey of companies

Chapter 4: Summary

Appendix: Questionnaire survey on initiatives to improve the quality of employment for persons with disabilities (Web survey form)

4 Background and purpose of the research

According to the statistics on employment for persons with disabilities in 2025, the number of persons with disabilities employed by private companies reached a record high for 22 consecutive years, showing steady progress. On the other hand, the 2022 revision of the Act on Employment Promotion etc. of Persons with Disabilities clarifies that the responsibility of employers includes the development and improvement of the abilities of persons with disabilities. The Basic Policy on Employment Measures for Persons with Disabilities for 5 years from FY 2023 also stipulates employers' role of developing vocational abilities for employed persons with disabilities effectively. Thus, employers are required to make efforts to improve the quality of employment for persons with disabilities.

This research was conducted with the aim of clarifying the current status and challenges of initiatives to improve the quality of employment for persons with disabilities in companies and the details of necessary support, as well as to introduce examples of specific corporate initiatives, so that it

can contribute to considering policies to improve the quality of employment for persons with disabilities and to supporting companies through support providers such as local vocational centers for persons with disabilities.

5 Methods

(1) Hearing with experts

Prior to the company questionnaire survey and company hearing survey, two academic experts and one special subsidiary company were interviewed to gather information that would contribute to the examination of the survey content and items.

(2) Questionnaire survey of companies

The survey was conducted from October to November 2024 using the web questionnaire form of the Japan Organization for Employment of the Elderly, Persons with Disabilities and Job Seekers (JEED), aiming to understand the current status, challenges, and necessary support to improve the quality of employment for persons with disabilities in companies. A total of 10,598 companies were surveyed: 10,000 general companies (companies other than special subsidiary companies) and 598 special subsidiary companies.

(3) Hearing survey with companies

For the purpose of identifying examples of specific initiatives and support needed to improve the quality of employment for persons with disabilities in companies, a door-to-door survey or online survey using an online conference system was conducted from February to May 2025. The survey targeted 13 companies (8 general companies and 5 special subsidiary companies) that are proactively implementing initiatives to improve the quality of employment for persons with disabilities, out of companies responding that they could participate in the hearing survey.

6 Summarized results of the study

(1) Results of questionnaire survey of companies

The number of valid responses to the questionnaire survey was 2,100 for general companies and 195 for special subsidiary companies. The valid response rate was 21.1% for general companies and 32.6% for special subsidiary companies. The main findings of the survey are as follows.

A. Respondent companies' employment policies for persons with disabilities

Regarding employment policies for persons with disabilities, the highest proportion of both general companies and special subsidiary companies responded that they “aim to meet the mandatory employment rate.” Only around 10% of general companies selected “Prioritize” on the four items of “Positioning employment for persons with disabilities as one of the management strategies,” “Aiming to make persons with disabilities a workforce,” “Aiming to enable persons with disabilities to contribute to more core company operations,” and “Aiming to develop new field of work and

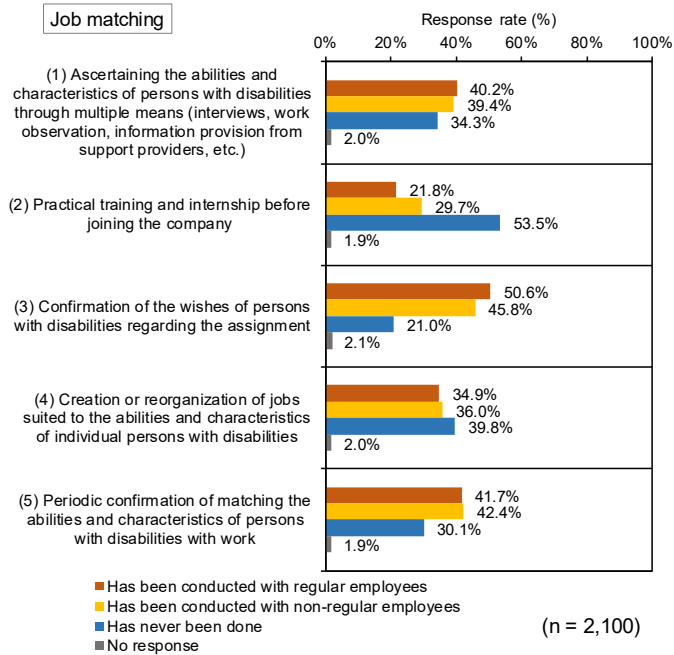
businesses for persons with disabilities.” However, less than 40% to less than 60% of special subsidiary companies selected “Prioritize.”

B. Initiatives for capacity development, evaluation, and treatment

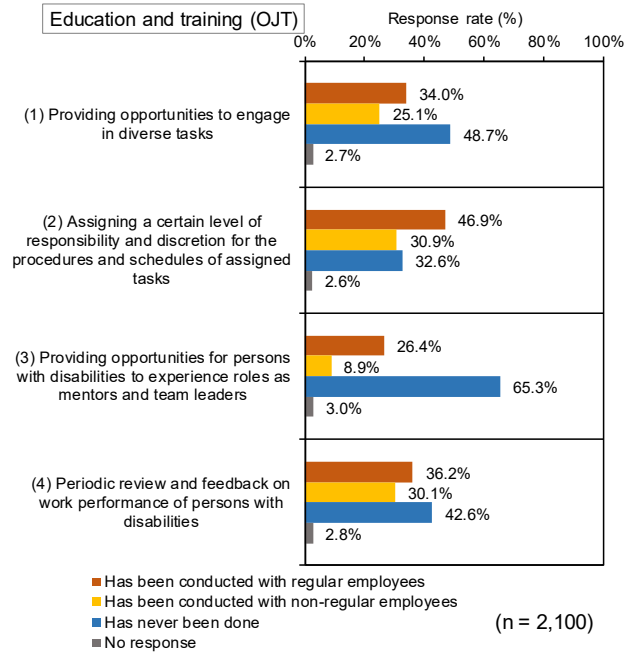
We asked respondent companies about the achievements of implementing “Initiatives for capacity development, evaluation, and treatment” in the employment for persons with disabilities by employment status: regular and non-regular employees (Total of 25 items related to job matching, education and training (OJT), education and training (Off-JT), evaluation and treatment, and medium- to long-term career development). While many of the general companies and special subsidiary companies have implemented some type of initiatives related to the category of “job matching,” nearly 30% of general companies still have implemented “0” initiatives related to the category of “medium- to long-term career development.” It was found that a certain number of companies have yet to implement any specific initiatives. In a comparison of regular employees and non-regular employees, the percentage of respondents who answered that training “Has been conducted with regular employees” was higher than that of respondents who answered “Has been conducted with non-regular employees” for all items in special subsidiary companies and for most items in general companies (Figure).

A comparison of general companies and special subsidiary companies revealed that, except for the two items “Applying common standards for promotion, advancement, bonuses, etc. to employees with and without disabilities” and “Provision of incentives for obtaining qualifications,” special subsidiary companies were more likely than general companies to have conducted such programs for both regular and non-regular employees. A comparison by enterprise size showed that the larger the company size, the higher the proportion of companies implementing such initiatives. A comparison by type of disability in employment (disability categories of persons with disabilities employed as of June 1, 2024) shows that a greater number of measures were implemented in companies employing persons of multiple types of disabilities than in those employing persons with a single type of disability.

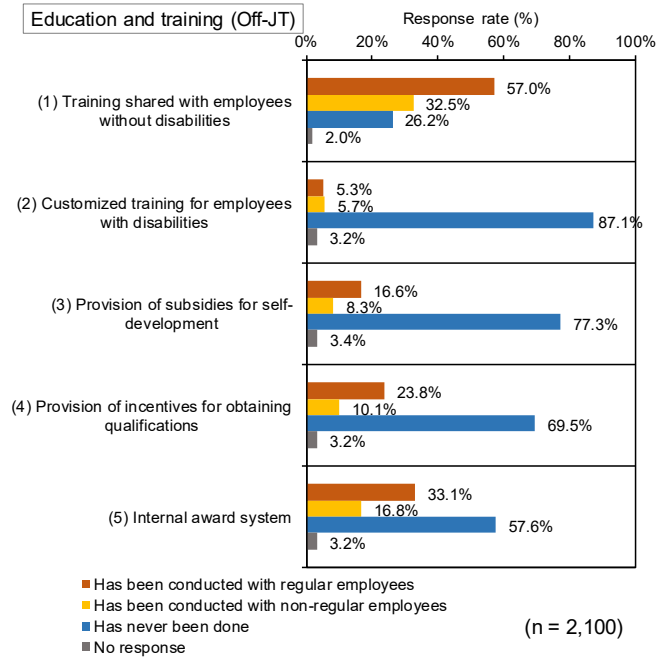
Job matching



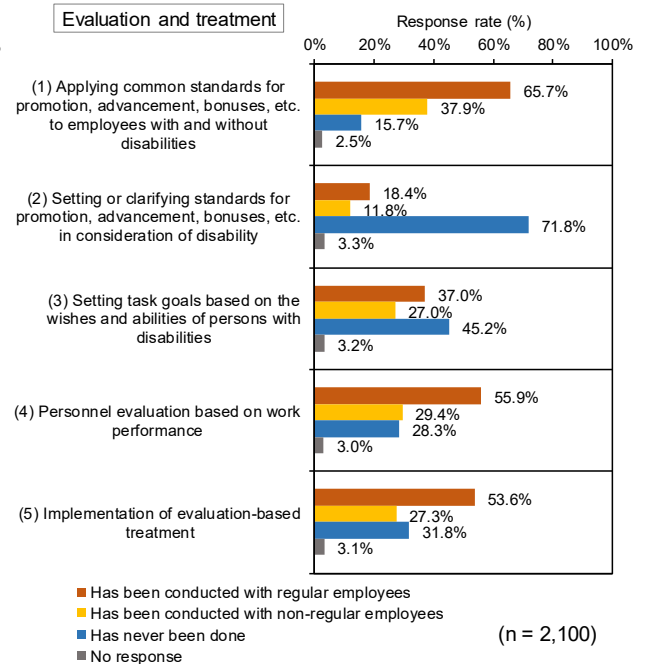
Education and training (OJT)



Education and training (Off-JT)



Evaluation and treatment



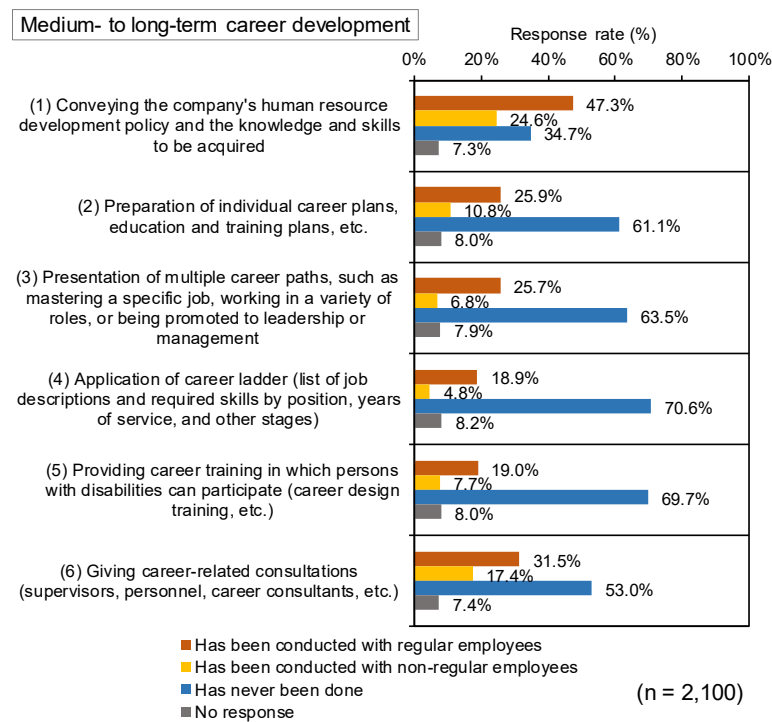


Figure “Initiatives for capacity development, evaluation, and treatment” (general company)

C. Effect of the initiatives

Looking at the 10 items related to the effects of initiatives resulting from “Initiatives for capacity development, evaluation, and treatment,” in terms of the combined percentage of responses choosing “Apply” and “Somewhat apply,” the most common response among general companies was “Opportunities for persons with disabilities to appropriately utilize their existing abilities have increased” at 43.5%, followed by “Satisfaction level of persons with disabilities’ satisfaction with their work and workplace has improved” at 42.3%. Among special subsidiary companies, “Satisfaction level of persons with disabilities with work and workplaces has improved” was the most common response (81.1%), followed by “Vocational ability and skills of persons with disabilities have improved” (78.5%). Among general companies, positive responses about the effects on workplaces and companies as a whole including able-bodied employees accounted for less than 20%. On the other hand, positive responses from special subsidiary companies ranged from 30% to 60%.

D. Reasonable accommodation

With regard to procedures for reasonable accommodation, many companies, both general companies and special subsidiary companies, “Inform employees with disabilities to report any circumstances that cause difficulties in the workplace,” and “Designate the person or department in charge of consultation with employees with disabilities in advance and inform them about that.” More than half of the special subsidiary companies have implemented measures for employees with disabilities such as having interviews to identify the circumstances that cause difficulties in the workplace; informing the

employees with disabilities about how to request for reasonable accommodation; consulting with an external organization about how to address accommodation; and having a supporter attend discussions on reasonable accommodation at the request of employees with disabilities. On the other hand, fewer than half of the general companies have implemented either of these measures.

E. Challenges, necessary systems, and support in improving the quality of employment for persons with disabilities

With regard to challenges related to improving the quality of employment for persons with disabilities, a high proportion of both general companies and special subsidiary companies cited “Lack of supervisors and colleagues to support employees with disabilities at the workplace assigned.” In addition, a high proportion of general companies cited “Lack of know-how to develop an environment for supporting employees with disabilities in the workplace” and “Lack of internal understanding of the abilities of persons with disabilities.” Among special subsidiary companies, a high percentage of responses cited challenges such as “Lack of know-how to maintain and improve the motivation of persons with disabilities” and “Lack of a stable supply of work useful for the ability development and exercise of employees with disabilities.”

Regarding the systems and support necessary to improve the quality of employment for persons with disabilities, it was found that a relatively large number of companies, both in general companies and in special subsidiary companies, cited training for their assigned departments and managers, support for the careers of persons with disabilities themselves, support offered by job coaches, and advice on health management.

F. Ideas and images for “high-quality employment for persons with disabilities”

We conducted text mining on free-response descriptions of ideas and images related to “high-quality employment of persons with disabilities.” It can be interpreted that companies mainly associate “high-quality employment of persons with disabilities” with “Comfortable working environment,” “One’s ability can be demonstrated,” “Rewarding and stable employment,” “Equal treatment and the same working environment as those of able-bodied persons,” “Job assignment tailored to individual disability characteristics,” “Well-established support system,” “Opportunity to contribute to society,” and “Good communicative corporate culture.”

(2) Hearing survey with companies

Thirteen companies (8 general companies and 5 special subsidiary companies) were asked about the following items: “What is associated with the quality of employment,” “Specific initiatives to improve employment quality, triggers for beginning the initiatives, and facilitating factors,” “Measures to understand the hopes and wishes of persons with disabilities,” “Effects of initiatives to improve employment quality,” “Challenges, necessary systems, and support,” etc.

A. Images of the quality of employment for persons with disabilities

In terms of the quality of employment for persons with disabilities, companies saw “Quality of

employment for persons with disabilities,” including a safe working environment, good treatment, and career development, and “Quality of employment for companies,” including the contribution of persons with disabilities to the company’s business performance by getting their duties done.

With regard to the duties of persons with disabilities, there were “Cases in which persons with disabilities perform their own duties” and “Cases in which persons with disabilities perform the same duties regardless of disability.” However, it was also observed that differences in assigned tasks led to two approaches: one focused on supporting employees with disabilities, and another on working together on the same tasks, resulting in variations in what was perceived as “the image of quality employment.”

B. Specific initiatives to improve employment quality

For hard (institutional) efforts to improve the quality of employment, many respondents mentioned expansion of the scope of work, career advancement, pay raises and promotions, and allowance systems. Efforts to improve the quality of employment on the soft side (human interaction and support, etc.) included support, understanding of disabilities, job matching before employment, and task progression.

C. Understanding the wishes and intentions of persons with disabilities

To grasp the wishes and intentions of persons with disabilities, all companies conducted interviews, although the frequency and methods varied case to case. Through interviews, the wishes and intentions of persons with disabilities were understood. Some cases provided an opportunity for communication outside of work.

D. Effects of initiatives to improve employment quality

Examples of the effects of initiatives to improve the quality of employment for persons with disabilities include (1) fostering a sense of initiative and responsibility of persons with disabilities, (2) improving the rate of setting into the workplace of persons with disabilities, (3) improving the treatment of persons with disabilities, and (4) improving the satisfaction of persons with disabilities.

Examples of ripple effects in the workplace as a whole include (1) promoting understanding of persons with disabilities by persons without disabilities, (2) making the workplace accessible through employment of persons with disabilities, and (3) improvement of corporate brand value.

E. Challenges, necessary systems, and support

Regarding challenges and necessary systems and support for improving the quality of employment for persons with disabilities, matters related to support, personnel evaluation system, job creation, and training were raised.

(3) Discussion

A. How employers perceive the quality of employment for persons with disabilities

In the analysis of free-response descriptions of ideas and images related to “high-quality employment of persons with disabilities” in the company questionnaire survey, we classified the words

into eight clusters (groups) based on their similarity. From the hearing survey with companies, the perspectives of “employment quality for persons with disabilities” and “employment quality for companies” were found. Without the perspective of “employment quality for persons with disabilities,” efforts companies make will not be communicated to persons with disabilities and will not encourage persons with disabilities to make efforts on their own. Both viewpoints are necessary to build a win-win relationship between employees with disabilities and companies.

Moreover, with the aim of improving the quality of employment, it is thought that not only improving the abilities, satisfaction, and treatment of persons with disabilities, but also creating workplaces that are easy to work at for persons with and without disabilities from the perspective of diversity will lead to initiatives to improve the quality of employment for both persons with disabilities and companies.

B. Initiatives to improve the quality of employment for persons with disabilities

The questionnaire survey of companies suggested that there are differences in the implementation status of initiatives depending on such factors as regular/non-regular employees, general companies/special subsidiary companies, company size, and employment disability type.

It is considered that hard and soft efforts identified from the hearing survey of companies complement each other to improve the quality of employment for persons with disabilities. Initiatives to improve quality of employment are implemented according to the situation of each company, and thus necessary or effective efforts should also differ from company to company. However, implementing just one approach is not enough, and various approaches will be required to improve the employment quality.

C. Effect of the initiatives

The questionnaire survey of companies suggested that both general companies and special subsidiary companies were relatively likely to feel the effects of their initiatives, such as improvement in the satisfaction with job and workplace for persons with disabilities, and improvement and demonstration of their vocational abilities and skills. The results showed that the number of general companies that felt the ripple effect on the entire workplace was not very large yet. However, through the company hearing survey, we were able to identify cases where the visualization of work at general companies made it easier for all employees to work, and cases where know-how for the employment of persons with disabilities was utilized for the employment of foreigners.

D. Reasonable accommodation and understanding of the wishes and intentions of persons with disabilities

Although many companies responded to the obligation to provide reasonable accommodation, it is considered necessary to designate in advance the person or department in charge of consultation regarding reasonable accommodation and to encourage employees with disabilities to report any situation causing difficulties in the workplace. On that basis, efforts including the establishment of a

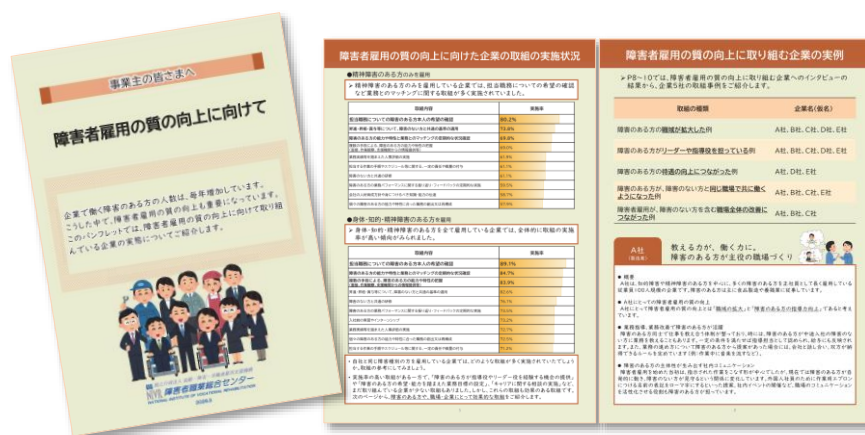
system for interviewing persons with disabilities and collaborating with external support providers whenever necessary, which are not sufficiently advanced in general companies but have been widely promoted in special subsidiary companies, may lead to a further improvement in the quality of employment for persons with disabilities.

E. Significance of the research

The significance of this research is as follows: (1) Comparing the implementation status of initiatives to improve the quality of employment for persons with disabilities by regular/non-regular employees, general companies/special subsidiary companies, company size, and type of employment disability; (2) Verifying statistically the relationship between the policies of employment for persons with disabilities in companies, the implementation of initiatives to improve the quality of employment, and the effects of these initiatives; (3) Classifying and organizing the free-response descriptions of ideas and images prescribed by companies employing persons with disabilities regarding the improvement of the quality of employment for persons with disabilities; (4) Collecting the examples of measures taken by various companies of different sizes and industries and organizing the data to a certain extent; and (5) Systematizing the quality of employment for persons with disabilities based on the information obtained through the above research.

7 Relevant research outputs

- Toward Improving the Quality of Employment for Persons with Disabilities 2026



<https://www.nivr.jeed.go.jp/research/kyouzai/kyouzai86.html>

