

Accommodation Requests: Who Is Asking for What?

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Purpose: Workplace accommodations are central to improving employment outcomes for people with and without disabilities; this study presents national estimates comparing accommodation requests and receipt as reported by individuals with and without disabilities.

Method: Estimates are developed from the May 2012 Current Population Survey Disability Supplement.

Results: The findings highlight variability in accommodation requests by disability type and status. Accommodation request rates are also presented by occupation and industry groups.

Conclusions: As employers voice concerns about the additional burden of employing individuals with disabilities under new regulatory requirements, our findings highlight that 95% of individuals requesting an accommodation were people without disabilities.

The one provision of Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) that sets it apart from most other civil rights laws is the requirement that an employer provide a qualified applicant/employee with a disability with reasonable accommodation as needed. Reasonable accommodations can take many forms, such as job flexibility, assistive equipment, or a change in policy, but the general purpose of providing accommodation is to remove workplace barriers and offer equal employment opportunity to the individual (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2002). The value of accommodation in the workplace has been well documented: Accommodating an employee leads to greater job satisfaction, productivity, and retention of the employee; increased interactions with coworkers; and an increase in overall com-

pany morale (Hartnett, Stuart, Thurman, Loy, & Batiste, 2011; Solovieva, Dowler, & Walls, 2011). Although accommodation is typically thought of in the context of disability, employees in general can benefit from workplace accommodations that allow them to be maximally successful in the workplace.

BARRIERS TO REQUESTING ACCOMMODATIONS FOR EMPLOYEES WITH DISABILITIES

The decision to request an accommodation is not simple, and many barriers exist for employees with disabilities. An accommodation request

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under the ADA often requires the disclosure of a disability. Many employees with disabilities are concerned that disclosure may have serious ramifications at work, such as being treated differently, being denied training or advancement opportunities, or even being fired (von Schrader, Malzer, & Bruyère, 2013). Issues such as coworker and supervisor judgment about fairness and the perceived legitimacy of the request both factor into the decision to request an accommodation (Gold, Oire, Fabian, & Wewiorski, 2012). Perceived imposition or burden on coworkers and supervisors and, to a lesser extent, concerns about monetary costs also make a difference in the decision to request an accommodation, particularly a request for a recurring type of accommodation (Baldrige & Veiga, 2006). Gold et al. (2012) examined the perspectives of employers, employees, and service providers on the accommodation process. They noted that a conflict exists between views of accommodation, particularly between employers' beliefs about the costs of accommodations and employees' opinions that employers focus too much on the cost and legal issues under the ADA.

The perceived willingness of an employer to provide an accommodation can have a significant impact on an individual's decision to request one. Despite the fact that most accommodations are inexpensive or even no-cost (Hendricks et al., 2005; Loy, 2011), many employers continue to believe that accommodations are expensive and potentially difficult to provide (Domzal, Houtenville, & Sharma, 2008; Gold et al., 2012; Hernandez & McDonald, 2007; Houtenville & Kalargyrou, 2011; Kaye, Jans, & Jones, 2011). In other studies, the added cost of accommodations, training, and supervision were seen as less of a barrier than supervisor knowledge of accommodations (Bruyère, Erickson, & VanLooy, 2006; Erickson, von Schrader, Bruyère, & VanLooy, 2013; Hartnett et al., 2011). This points to the need for further training for supervisors to be better equipped to deal with accommodation requests as well as to know where to find

external resources to assist with proper accommodation identification (Bruyère et al., 2006; Erickson et al., 2013).

Supervisors often feel that they lack the authority or information to provide accommodation, which can lead to a longer accommodation process or can prevent an accommodation from occurring (Unger & Kregel, 2003). Frontline managers, who are often first to receive an accommodation request, may lack the knowledge and preparation to handle a request well (Hernandez et al., 2009). When accommodation requests are difficult, not granted in a reasonable time frame, or not granted at all, employees who witness these difficulties are likely to be discouraged from making future requests. Clearly, reasonable accommodation under the ADA is still challenging employers; more than 25% of charges of employment discrimination filed under the ADA cite reasonable accommodation as an issue (Bjelland et al., 2010).

NATIONAL SURVEY DATA ON WORKPLACE ACCOMMODATIONS

Relatively little information about the patterns of accommodation requests is apparent from national survey data, but slightly more information exists on the related topics of accommodation need and use. At least three nationally representative surveys are sources of post-ADA information that include questions about disability accommodation in the workplace. The 1994–1995 National Health Interview Survey Disability Supplement (NHIS-D) includes questions about accommodations needed¹ and received.² In a study from the 1994 to 1995 NHIS-D, about 16% of respondents reported needing at least 1 of 17 possible accommodations listed, and 12% of individuals with disabilities received 1 of the 17 accommodations, with 78% of those who needed an accommodation receiving it. There was some variability in the likelihood of receiving an accommodation, with males,

Southerners, and those with mental health conditions less likely to receive accommodation, and older workers, administrative-support workers, self-employed workers, and full-time workers more likely to receive accommodations (Zwerling et al., 2003).

The National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 is a panel survey of youth receiving special education consisting of five waves, with the final wave in 2009 including questions for youth ages 21–25 years that were out of high school; it contains questions about disclosure and receipt of workplace accommodation (Newman et al., 2011). Among these young adults, 26% had employers who were aware that they had a disability and 7% had received an accommodation. Among those who received an accommodation, the majority were assignment/supervision accommodations (46.7%), human aides (41.2%), scheduling adjustments (38.6%), and materials/technical adaptation (10%). The percentage receiving accommodation varied by disability type, with those with perhaps less visibly obvious disabilities (e.g., learning disabilities, speech and language impairments, emotional disturbances, and traumatic brain injury) less likely to receive accommodation (accommodation receipt ranging from 3.4% to 5.4%) than those with mental retardation, visual impairments, orthopedic impairment, autism, deaf-blindness, or multiple disabilities (accommodation receipt ranging from 22.3% to 50.4%).

The Health and Retirement Survey (HRS) asks about accommodation provision among a sample of individuals ages 50 years and older³; these data track individuals over time and therefore permit the review of job retention. In a study of older workers (51–61 years old) with muscular skeletal conditions, about 18% were accommodated in their job, with health and functional status most strongly related to accommodation receipt. In terms of sociodemographic characteristics, men, white collar workers, and those with higher incomes were more likely to receive certain accommodations. However, accommodation receipt was not positively correlated with employment 2 years later

(Yelin, Sonneborn, & Trupin, 2000). A study using HRS data on newly disabled workers by Hill, Maestas, and Mullen (2014) highlighted that only about 25% were accommodated. Employee characteristics and personality traits, such as neuroticism and agreeableness, were significantly related to accommodation receipt, whereas employer characteristics were not related to accommodation receipt. The authors suggest that targeting policies that increase comfort with disclosure will be most effective in increasing rates of accommodation. This is critical because their findings further suggest that with accommodation workers do remain working longer.

Recent changes in regulations around key disability laws, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), are likely to broaden the number of individuals with disabilities covered under the ADA and increase expectations for employers around hiring and retaining individuals with disabilities. Specifically, the ADAAA restored the original intention of the ADA's definition of disability to offer broad coverage (Bruyère, Golden, & Cebula, 2010). In 2013, there were significant changes to the regulations for Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act, setting a utilization goal for employers with federal contracts that 7% of their workforce be composed of individuals with disabilities (Affirmative Action and Nondiscrimination Obligations of Contractors and Subcontractors Regarding Individuals With Disabilities, 2013). In an environment where only 33.5% of individuals with disabilities are employed compared to 76.3% of their nondisabled peers (Erickson, Lee, von Schrader, 2014), these are important policy changes intended to limit discrimination and improve the employment situation for individuals with disabilities. In turn, there is a concern among employers that more individuals with disabilities in the workforce will increase their burden to provide accommodations (ADA Amendments Act Update, 2010; Bennet & Randolph, 2011; Bradbury & Jacobson, 2013; Elkins, 2009).

To counter this concern, our analyses of national representative survey data demonstrate that most accommodation requests actually come from individuals with no disability. We present national estimates of accommodation requests by individuals with and without disabilities and highlight the variability in the likelihood of requesting accommodation by disability type, occupation, and industry. These results are intended to be highly informative for employers who are interested in expanding recruitment efforts to individuals with disabilities, as they highlight that the perceived burden is lower than many believe. This can also be a useful informational outreach tool for rehabilitation service providers, who are working to facilitate job placement for individuals with disabilities.

METHODOLOGY

Data and Sample

As noted previously, relatively few population-based surveys include questions about disability and accommodation. In this study, we use the recent disability supplement to the May 2012 Current Population Survey (CPS; U.S. Census Bureau, 2012) that was sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy. The CPS is a monthly survey of about 56,000 households. The monthly survey collects national information about the employment of the civilian noninstitutional population. The May 2012 supplement to the monthly survey focused on issues related to employment for people with disabilities, including barriers to employment, prior work experience, career and financial assistance, requested changes to the workplace, and related topics. All persons eligible to respond to the labor force items in the monthly survey were also eligible for the supplement, and many of the questions in the supplement were asked of both people with and without disabilities. More information on the survey and

sampling approach is available in the technical documentation for this data set (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012).

In this article, we focus on the questions related to workplace accommodation requests (see Table 1 for the actual question text for each item used). We used the six-question disability sequence on the CPS Basic Monthly Survey to identify individuals with a disability and to determine the type of disability. It should be noted that it is possible to report multiple disabilities; therefore, the population estimate of individuals with disabilities is less than the sum of individuals with different disability types. Our sample is restricted to the employed civilian labor force ages 16 years and older who answered questions regarding accommodation. Table 2 presents the sample size and mean age of the restricted sample. The sample consists of 54,113 individuals, including 2,092 employed persons with disabilities and 52,021 employed persons without disabilities. The average age of the respondents in the sample is 42 years old.

Analyses

Our analyses are descriptive and use weighting to derive population estimates and related standard errors for the employed civilian noninstitutionalized population of the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). It should be noted that our estimates from the public use data may not exactly match estimates produced by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics but should be within the sampling variability associated with CPS estimates.

RESULTS

Requested Accommodations by Disability Type

According to CPS estimates in May of 2012, just more than 3.5% of employed individuals

TABLE 1. Questions From Current Population Survey Basic Monthly Survey and the May Supplement Used in This Study

Disability Questions ^a (if respondent indicates “yes” to any of the questions, he or she is prompted to respond who in the household has the difficulty)	Hearing: Is anyone deaf or does anyone have serious difficulty hearing? Visual: Is anyone blind or does anyone have serious difficulty seeing even when wearing glasses? Cognitive: Because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition, does anyone have serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions? Ambulatory: Does anyone have serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs? Self-Care: Does anyone have difficulty dressing or bathing? Independent Living: Because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition, does anyone have difficulty doing errands alone such as visiting a doctor’s office or shopping?
Request accommodation	(Have/Has) (you/Name) ever requested any change in (your/his/her) current workplace to help (you/him/her) do (your/his/her) job better? For example, changes in work policies, equipment, or schedules.
Accommodation type	What changes did (you/Name) request? (1) New or modified equipment (2) Physical changes to the workplace (3) Policy changes to the workplace (4) Changes in work tasks, job structure, or schedule (5) Changes in communication or information sharing (6) Changes to comply with religious beliefs (7) Accommodations for family or personal obligations (8) Training (9) Other changes
Accommodation granted	(Was/Were) the (change/changes) granted?

Note. U.S. Census Bureau staff conducted interviews during the period of May 13–19, 2012. It was a proxy response supplement; that is, a single respondent could provide answers for all eligible household members, provided the respondent was a household member 15 years of age or older.

^aThe disability questions are asked on the Current Population Survey Basic Monthly Survey at intake and again after 1 year.

16 years and older have a disability. Although this value is low, it is a reflection of the limited questions asked about disability on the CPS and as well as the survey and sampling methods (other national surveys such as the

American Community Survey and Survey of Income and Program Participation indicate somewhat higher rates; see Brault, 2012; Erickson et al., 2014). The prevalence of the six disability types in the workforce varies, with

TABLE 2. Total Employee Sample (Unweighted) and Average Age (Weighted) by Disability Status in Sample Used From the May 2012 Current Population Survey Supplement

Total Employee Sample	54,113
People with disabilities	2,092
People without disabilities	52,021
Average Employee Age	41.97
People with disabilities	50.59
People without disabilities	41.65

those with hearing (accounting for 1.3% of employed individuals) and ambulatory (1.3%) disabilities more highly represented among workers than those with cognitive (0.8%) and visual (0.5%) disabilities. Persons with a self-care (0.2%) and independent living (0.4%) disabilities account for a somewhat smaller percentage of the workforce.

Not surprisingly, the percentage of workers who request an accommodation also varies by disability type and status. Figure 1 shows the percentage of workers with different types of disabilities who requested accommodations. Persons with hearing and visual disabilities were less likely to have requested accommodations than persons with other types of disabilities. For example, among persons with hearing disabilities, only 9.5% requested accommodations, whereas 15.7% of persons with difficulty in self-care and 17.2% of persons with difficulty in independent living requested accommodations. In particular, the percentage of persons with hearing disabilities requesting accommodations was 5 percentage points lower than that of individuals with other types of disabilities (statistically significant at $p < .01$). Overall, 12.7% of individuals who report a disability requested accommodation, compared to 8.6% of those without a disability, which is a statistically significant difference at $p < .01$.

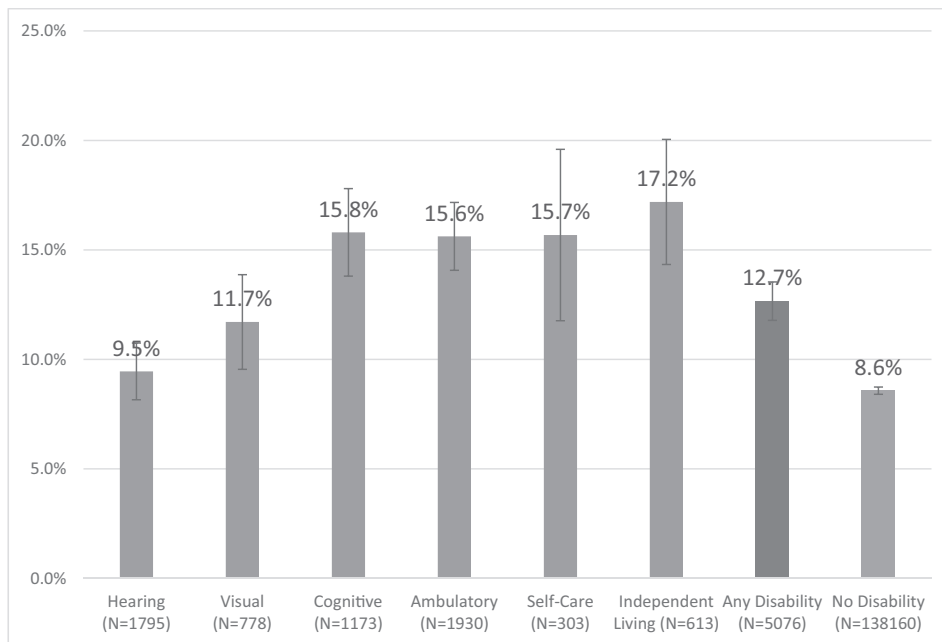


FIGURE 1. Percentage of workers who requested accommodation by disability type (base population presented in thousands). The error bars show one standard error above the estimate and one standard error below the estimate. Data Source: *Current Population Survey, May 2012: Disability Supplement*.

Granted, Not Granted, and Partially Granted Accommodations

Limited information is available about the outcomes of the accommodations requested. Figure 2 shows the percentages of persons who reported having accommodations granted, not granted, and partially granted among workers who requested accommodations by disability type and status. Overall, persons with and without disabilities were equally likely to be granted or partially granted accommodations. As shown in Figure 2, about 81.5% of persons with and without disabilities who requested accommodations were granted or partially granted the accommodations; no statistically significant difference exists ($p = .944$). In addition, although persons with disabilities were 5.3 percentage points more likely to have been fully granted accommodations, the difference is not statistically significant ($p = .140$). Persons with hearing disabilities and visual disabilities were 18.2 percentage points less likely to have been fully

granted accommodations than persons with other four types of disabilities, which is a statistically significant difference at $p = .007$.

Different Kinds of Accommodations Requested, by Disability Type

The May Supplement also included detailed questions asking what specific changes workers requested in their current workplace. The specific changes were (1) new or modified equipment; (2) physical changes to the workplace; (3) policy changes to the workplace; (4) changes in work tasks, job structure, or schedule; (5) changes in communication or information sharing; (6) changes to comply with religious beliefs; (7) accommodations for family or personal obligations; (8) training; and (9) other changes.

Figure 3 shows the percentage of workers who requested different kinds of accommodations by disability type and status. In total,

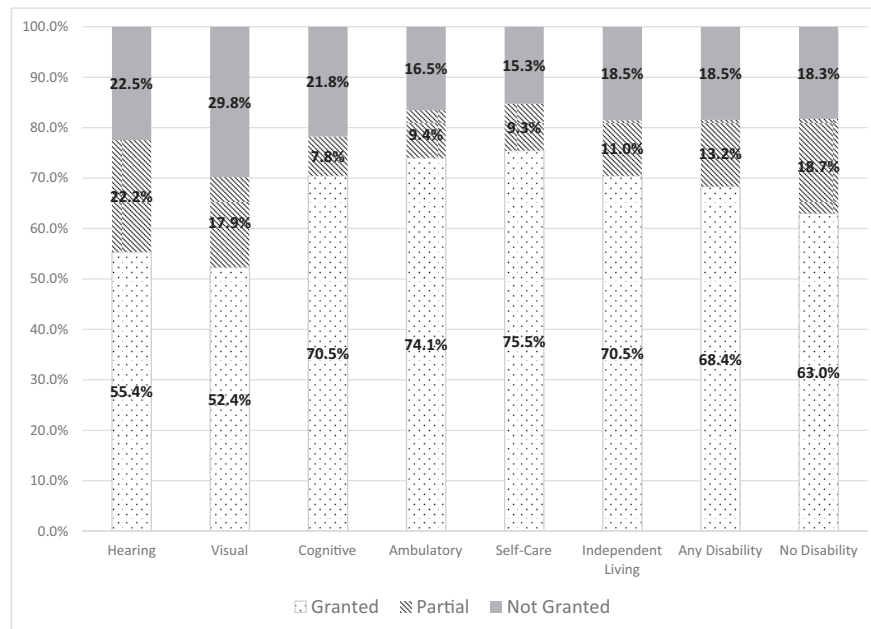


FIGURE 2. Percentage of workers who reported that accommodation requests were granted, not granted, or partially granted, by disability type. Estimates only include individuals who reported requesting an accommodation. Data Source: *Current Population Survey, May 2012: Disability Supplement*.

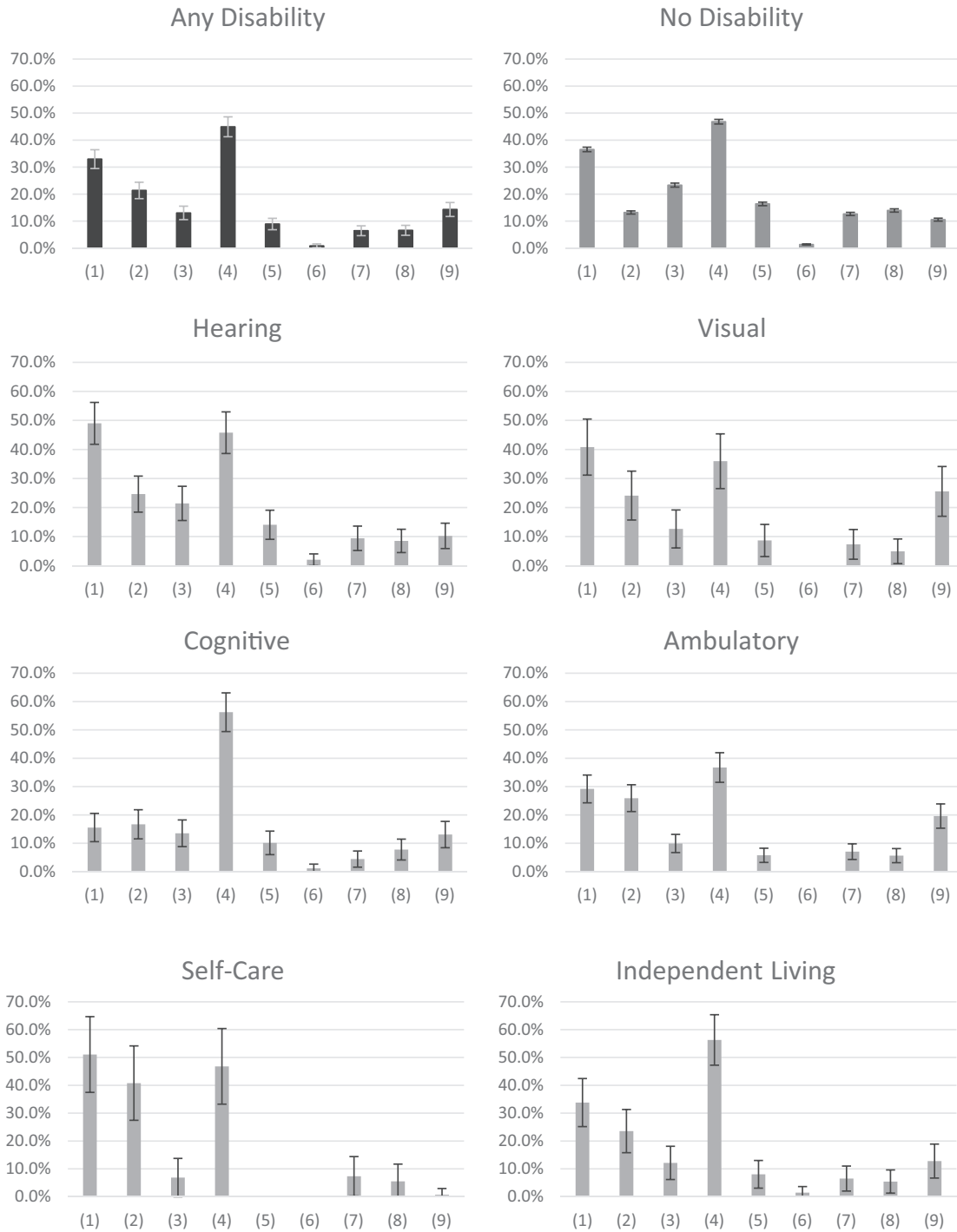


FIGURE 3. Percentage of workers who requested various accommodations by disability types. The error bars show one standard error above the estimate and one standard error below the estimate. 1 = new or modified equipment; 2 = physical changes to the workplace; 3 = policy changes to the workplace; 4 = changes in work tasks, job structure or schedule; 5 = changes in communication or information sharing; 6 = changes to comply with religious beliefs; 7 = accommodations for family or personal obligations; 8 = training; 9 = other changes. Data Source: *Current Population Survey, May 2012: Disability Supplement*.

the most frequently requested accommodations by persons with disabilities were new or modified equipment; physical changes; and changes in work tasks, job structure, or schedule. The profiles of accommodation requests are similar among persons with hearing disabilities, visual disabilities, and ambulatory difficulties. Among workers with these three types of disabilities who requested accommodations, about 30%–50% requested new or modified equipment; about 35%–45% requested changes in work tasks, job structure, or schedule; and about 25% requested physical changes. Persons with cognitive difficulty who requested accommodations were more likely to have requested changes in work tasks, job structure, or schedule (56.2%). Persons with difficulty in self-care were more likely to have requested changes in new or modified equipment (51.1%), physical changes (40.8%), and changes in work tasks (46.8%). Persons with difficulty in independent living, again, have a similar profile of accommodation requests to persons with hearing, visual, and ambulatory disabilities. The difference is that persons with difficulty in independent living were more likely to have requested changes in work tasks than persons with disabilities in those three types (about 56% and 35%–45%, respectively).

As shown by the first two graphs in Figure 3, the profiles of accommodation requests between persons with and without disabilities are very similar. The main difference is the percentage of persons who requested physical changes and policy changes. Persons with disabilities were more likely to have requested physical changes (21.4%) than to have requested policy changes (13%), whereas persons without disabilities were more likely to have requested policy changes (23.3%) than to have requested physical changes (13.2%).

Number of Different Types of Accommodations Requested

Individuals may request more than one type of accommodation out of the nine different types of

accommodations. On average, persons with disabilities request fewer different types of accommodations than persons without disabilities. Among those who requested accommodations, persons with disabilities requested an average of 1.49 types of accommodations, whereas persons without disabilities requested an average of 1.75 types of accommodations. The difference is statistically significant at $p < .01$. This difference may reflect that persons with disabilities have more specific and focused needs for accommodations than persons without disabilities. Note that the number of different types of accommodations is not the number of times that a person requested accommodations. A person may have requested one type of accommodation many times or may have requested several accommodations that fall into the same category; however, it is not possible to explore this using the current data.

Most Accommodation Requests Come From Individuals Without Disabilities

Within the context of their respective subpopulations, employed persons with disabilities have a higher accommodation request rate than those without disabilities (12.7% and 8.6%, respectively). However, given the population base of persons without disabilities in the workplace, numerically, more persons without disabilities requested accommodations. As shown in Figure 4, persons with disabilities only account for 5% of all persons requesting accommodations in the workplace. That is, more than 11.8 million individuals without disabilities had requested accommodations compared to 0.6 million people with disabilities.

Variations in Accommodation Requests by Occupation and Industry

This pattern is consistent across occupational and industry categories—that is, in raw numbers, more people without disabilities request

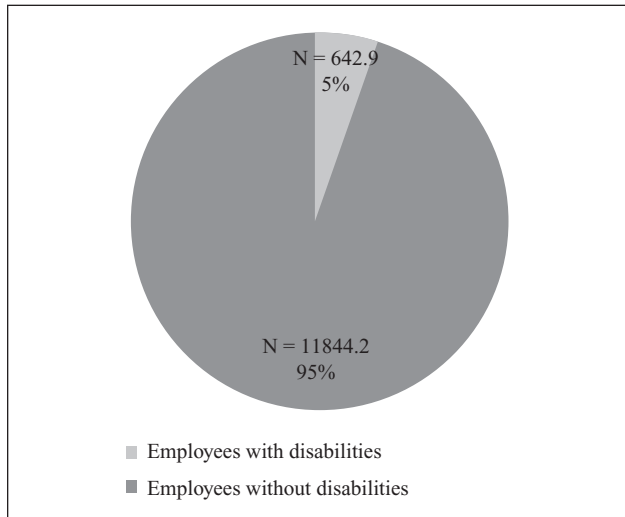


FIGURE 4. The number (in thousand) and percentage of workers who requested accommodations. Data Source: *Current Population Survey, May 2012: Disability Supplement*.

accommodation than people with disabilities (see Table 3). Table 3 also compares the percentage of persons with and without disabilities who have requested accommodations by 9 occupational categories and 13 industry groups. In four of the occupational groups, there was no significant difference between the percentage of people with disabilities and people without disabilities who requested an accommodation. However, in five of the occupational groups, there was a significant difference, with persons with disabilities more likely to have requested accommodations than persons without disabilities, specifically in production, transportation, and material moving occupations; office and administrative support occupations; service occupations; education, legal, community service, arts, media occupations; and health care practitioner and technical occupations. In terms of industry, people with disabilities were more likely to request accommodations than their nondisabled peers in manufacturing; wholesale and retail trade; transportation and utilities; and educational and health services. In the remainder of the industries, there was no significant difference.

DISCUSSION

National survey data can be uniquely helpful in identifying the characteristics underlying accommodation in the workplace. As noted, analyses of other national survey data have focused on specific subpopulations (transition age youth and older workers) and/or have generally focused only on accommodation for people with disabilities. The CPS data have the unique feature of allowing the comparison of accommodation requests between individuals with and without disabilities and covers the full workforce, not a specific segment. Consistent with other research, we found that most individuals with disabilities do not request or receive workplace accommodation. What is unique about these CPS data findings is that, although employees with disabilities request accommodation at a higher rate than individuals without disabilities, in practical terms, the difference is not so great (12.7% of their respective employed subpopulation made requests compared with 8.6%). As employers voice concerns about the additional burden of employing individuals with disabilities under new regulatory requirements, our findings highlight that 95% of individuals requesting an accommodation were people without disabilities. Although individuals with disabilities have a higher rate of requesting an accommodation, we found that among people who requested an accommodation, those with disabilities requested fewer different types of accommodations.

In order for employers to understand if these findings are consistent with their occupations and industries, we present rates for requesting accommodation for each of these categories. In raw numbers, for every occupational and industry group, most accommodation requests are from individuals without disabilities, and there is often no significant difference in the rate at which individuals with and without request accommodations.

Although the results presented are very simple and descriptive, these data have the potential to be very informative both for

TABLE 3. Comparison of Workers Requesting Accommodation by Disability Status Within Occupational Groups and Industries

	Disability Prevalence		Workers With Disabilities		Workers Without Disabilities		Percentage Point Difference Between Workers With and Without Disabilities (90% CI)
	Disabled Workforce (in thousands)	% of Total Employed	No. of Who Requested Accommodations (in thousands)	% of Disabled Workforce	No. Who Requested Accommodations (in thousands)	% of Non-disabled Workforce	
Occupation							
Management, business, and financial occupations	688.6	3.0	77.9	11.3	2,155.3	9.8	1.6 (−2.2, 5.3)
Computer, engineering, and science occupations	237.2	3.0	32.6	13.8	907.0	11.6	2.1 (−4.9, 9.1)
Education, legal, community service, arts, media occupations	544.9	3.4	107.1	19.7	1,595.5	10.4	9.2*** (3.9, 14.5)
Health care practitioner and technical occupations	188.0	2.3	39.7	21.1	910.9	11.6	9.5* (0.2, 18.7)
Service occupations	1,050.7	4.1	110.0	10.5	1,771.9	7.2	3.3* (0.4, 6.3)
Sales and related occupations	491.0	3.3	44.9	9.1	988.9	6.8	2.4 (−1.7, 6.4)
Office and administrative support occupations	631.0	3.6	97.7	15.5	1,463.8	8.6	6.9*** (2.4, 11.4)
Natural resources, construction, maintenance occupations	436.8	3.4	36.2	8.3	864.4	7.0	1.3 (−2.8, 5.5)
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	808.1	4.7	96.8	12.0	1,186.6	7.3	4.7** (1.1, 8.3)

(Continued)

TABLE 3. Comparison of Workers Requesting Accommodation by Disability Status Within Occupational Groups and Industries (Continued)

Industry	Disability Prevalence		Workers With Disabilities		Workers Without Disabilities		Percentage Point Difference Between Workers With and Without Disabilities (90% CI)
	Disabled Workforce (in thousands)	% of Total Employed	No. Who Requested Accommodations (in thousands)	% of Disabled Workforce	No. Who Requested Accommodations (in thousands)	% of Non-disabled Workforce	
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting	162.4	6.8	12.2	7.5	82.2	3.7	3.8 (−2.7, 10.3)
Mining	41.2	3.9	6.7	16.2	68.2	6.7	9.6 (−8.3, 27.5)
Construction	342.0	3.8	10.1	3.0	535.9	6.3	−3.3 (−6.2, −0.4)
Manufacturing	497.8	3.4	76.5	15.4	1,471.1	10.3	5.0* (0.0, 10.1)
Wholesale and retail trade	733.6	3.7	77.8	10.6	1,335.3	7.0	3.6* (0.0, 7.1)
Transportation and utilities	272.5	3.7	51.5	18.9	503.0	7.2	11.7*** (4.4, 19.1)
Information	101.4	3.3	19.0	18.8	378.6	12.6	6.2 (−5.9, 18.3)
Financial activities	265.7	2.8	39.8	15.0	788.4	8.6	6.4 (−0.4, 13.2)
Professional and business services	533.4	3.2	46.8	8.8	1,326.6	8.2	0.6 (−3.2, 4.4)
Educational and health services	1,164.9	3.6	191.3	16.4	3,154.3	10.0	6.4*** (3.0, 9.8)
Leisure and hospitality	404.7	3.0	45.0	11.1	1,066.9	8.1	3.1 (−1.8, 7.9)
Other services	311.4	4.5	31.3	10.1	493.4	7.5	2.6 (−2.8, 7.9)
Public administration	245.1	3.8	34.8	14.2	640.3	10.2	4.0 (−3.0, 11.0)

Note. CI = confidence interval. Data Source: *Current Population Survey, May 2012: Disability Supplement*

* $.05 \leq p < .10$; ** $.01 \leq p < .05$; *** $p < .01$

employers and service providers. Service providers can use the information from these analyses to challenge the idea that accommodation requests are primarily disability related. All employees may benefit from appropriate accommodation in the workplace. These data can also provide some helpful information about the types of accommodation that are most commonly requested by disability type. In addition, they can be used to highlight to employers that individuals with disabilities are currently in their organizations and that most do not request accommodations. The important issue of disclosure remains because there may be individuals with disabilities (and without) who would be more productive and satisfied with their employment if they had an appropriate accommodation but may be afraid to ask. This points to the need for creating an inclusive culture in which individuals are comfortable in requesting accommodation.

As employers who are federal contractors begin to measure their success in hiring and retaining individuals with disabilities to comply with the Section 503 regulations, they will need to count individuals with disabilities in their organization. Collecting and analyzing metrics by disability status and data on accommodations in the workplace can be very helpful in organizational decision making related to disability hiring and retention initiatives. Although many organizations collect and review such data for gender and race/ethnicity, tracking disability is much less common (Erickson et al., 2013), in part because concerns about disability disclosure by both employer and employees. As part of the new 503 regulations, employers must offer regular opportunities for self-identification at both preemployment and regularly upon hire. Some organizations have suggested that examining accommodation requests could be helpful in counting the number of individuals with disabilities, however these results highlight that this may be a misleading practice. Most accommodation requests are made by individuals without disabilities. Likewise, if an organization decided to track accommodations

but only for individuals with disabilities, this would not accurately reflect the many accommodations that are made by individuals without disabilities.

Study Limitations and Further Research

The analyses of this study were limited to basic descriptive analyses of variables related to accommodation requests. The CPS Supplement is a rich data source but the expense of including items on a national survey limits what can be addressed, both in terms of measuring disability and accommodation. There are further analyses with this data source that would be highly informative; for example, exploring individual characteristics of those requesting accommodations and whether there are characteristics that explain the differences in observed rates of accommodations requests (e.g., demographic or occupation/industry characteristics). For a subset of respondents, the May Disability Supplement can be linked to the CPS Basic Monthly Survey and other monthly supplements such as the May Annual Social and Economic Supplement for additional analyses that would allow the examination of employment outcomes such as retention (over a limited time period). Although nationally representative data such as the CPS can address some questions, there continues to be a need for additional research to better understand the accommodation needs, processes, and outcomes of individuals as well as the employer practices and policies that facilitate or pose barriers to accommodations.

Implications for Rehabilitation Research, Education, and Practice

These findings have significant implications for rehabilitation counseling research, education, and practice as well as for the employers to whom we provide services. First, national survey data have been significantly underused historically among rehabilitation counseling researchers. As

indicated in the companion article by Karpur, VanLooy, and Bruyère (2014), these kind of data sources, analyses, and information have been largely untapped by rehabilitation researchers in the past, who more often use survey data that is not nationally representative, with individuals with disabilities, service providers, and less frequently employers as key informants. As illustrated in this article, national survey data can provide needed statistics that affords us a national snapshot of the experience of people with disabilities in their work environment. Further exploration of data sets such as these by rehabilitation researchers can assist in informing the field for practice purposes, but analyses of these data sources can be helpful in adding the rehabilitation counseling practice perspective into public policy formulation, where it has been largely absent to date.

For the longer term, rehabilitation counselor education programs must equip tomorrow's researchers with an inquisitiveness and the technical ability to tap such information sources for their research purposes. As described in the article by Nazarov, Erickson, and Bruyère (2014), rehabilitation counselor education training should include an introduction to the availability, utility, and potential application of such data sets both at the master's and doctoral levels.

Employers subject to the new Section 503 regulations for federal subcontractors are concerned about reaching the disability employment goals set forth. Our data illustrate very clearly that individuals with disabilities already are represented within every occupation and industry, showing employers that they already have valuable experience in this area. It is important that employers and managers are aware that providing workplace accommodations is a part of good human resource practice and good business; understanding the extent to which accommodation is currently occurring in the workplace, as described in this article, may help to reduce employer anxiety about what to expect as they prepare for a greater number of applicants and employees with disabilities.

NOTES

1. "In order to work, would you need any of these special features at your worksite, regardless of whether or not you actually have them?"
2. "Do you have the (feature) at work?"
3. "Did your employer do anything special to help you out so that you could stay at work?"

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