Forum: International Labor Organization (ILO)

Issue: Addressing the Decline in Workplace Inclusivity for Individuals with Disabilities Resulting from the Implementation of AI Technologies

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Introduction

AI technologies eliminate the value and significance of people with disabilities as they have a negative influence on workplace inclusion. Since integrating disabled people into the workforce is already a difficult endeavor, implementing AI technology into the workplace only adds more complications into the workplace environment. After all, disabled persons are frequently assigned straightforward activities that are appropriate for their limitations and help them deal with the workplace; however, AI systems can easily perform these tasks, which jeopardizes the inclusion of these people. Therefore, the purpose of this article is to address the seriousness of this issue and to ascertain the extent to which AI affects the employment of impaired individuals. Correspondingly, tackling this critical problem could lead to equal collaboration from all parties, boosting the economy and enhancing social life. Accordingly, it has always been difficult for disabled people to find a comfortable workplace where they don't feel excluded, but it's even worse now since AI is widely used, which propagates the notion that they're inferior and that AI technology could easily replace them.

Definition of Key Terms

Inclusivity

The act of giving those who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized equitable access to opportunities and resources.

Implement

Put into effect or execute.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The process by which machines, particularly computer systems, simulate human intelligence.

Prejudice

Damage or injury that arises or might arise from a decision or judgment / bias

Disabled People

People that suffer from a physical or mental handicap that significantly and permanently impairs their capacity to perform daily tasks.

Background Information

Recently, many aspects of life, particularly the business, involve Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology. Because AI systems are now used to monitor the worker's performance, determine pay or promotions, and establish terms and conditions of employment—all of which may discriminate against job applicants and employees with disabilities—the widespread use of AI technology may actually make it more difficult for disabled people to be included in workforces. As a result, AI systems might not recognize disabled people and fail to take their needs into account, which could leave a negative impression on the employer leading to decreasing their inclusivity. Thereby, employers will not take the time to look into the needs of

special needs individuals over ignoring their weaknesses causing these individuals disqualification from their current jobs. Consequently, if this problem is not adequately handled, it may worsen, putting the jobs of many disabled people in danger or increasing prejudice and diminishing their inclusion in the workplace.

Major Parties Involved

The United States of America

- One example of the laws that the United States have actively implemented to address people with disabilities is The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which forbids discrimination against people with impairments in the workplace, among other settings;
- The United States demonstrated its position on employers' usage of AI systems by The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), which issued a Technical Assistance in May 2022 that addressed adherence to agency policy and the ADA's standards when using algorithms, AI, and other software for hiring and evaluating workers.

Canada

- Canada’s Digital Charter underlines that AI shall not perpetuate discrimination, including in hiring and employment. This charter provides a guideline for the development of ethical AI, particularly in being fair towards marginal groups of people, which would include people with disabilities;
- The Algorithmic Impact Assessment (AIA) assists organizations in assessing how AI systems might affect human rights, particularly those of individuals with handicaps; ● The Accessible Canada Act (ACA) requires organizations subject to federal regulation to make

spaces more accessible and inclusive for people with disabilities. In order to guarantee accessibility in all contexts, including the workplace, the ACA specifies guidelines and regulations. It pushes businesses to proactively remove obstacles from their procedures, which might include using AI tools responsibly for hiring and workplace assessments.

Japan

- Japan's first aim regarding implementing and using AI was to make the best out of it, with the goal of maximizing its positive impact on society, rather than suppressing it out of overestimated risks including the enhancement of workplace inclusivity;
- Following the adoption of AI, Japan's primary focus and AI regulations are founded on human social principles. For instance, the Japanese government released the Social Principles of Human-Centric AI in 2019, which emphasized three fundamental ideas: sustainability, diversity and inclusion, and human dignity.

Timeline of Key Events

Date	Description of Event

1940s - 1950s	At this time, scientists were increasingly interested in creating machines that could make decisions much like people. What had only been a fantasy before now had actual promise thanks to the creation of the ENIAC, the first electronic general-purpose digital computer. Scientists were also hopeful. John McCarthy convened some of the most prominent scientists of the day to debate

	the potential for sentient machines at the Dartmouth Conference in 1956. McCarthy originally used the term "Artificial Intelligence" here.

1980s	Expert systems, the first genuinely effective type of AI software in the workplace, began to proliferate in the 1980s. As the name implies, an expert system is a computer program that uses either conclusions if conditions reasoning or rule-based if then logic to try to simulate a human expert's decision-making process. However, the ultimate downfall of expert systems was caused by internal political conflicts and a failure to fulfill the promise of complete automation.
1990s	The field of statistical computation was reorganized as machine learning in the late 1990s, and when combined with new advancements in neural networks and the increasing memory and computational power of computers, it exploded into the field we know today, despite having been overshadowed by

	rule-based systems for the latter half of the 20th century. The subject of artificial intelligence really took off once researchers discovered a fresh approach to an old issue after fifty years of concentrating on rule-based systems. The fundamental goal of AI is still to solve human-centric problems, even as generative AI technologies based on large language models multiply and tools that use predictive analytics inform decision-making. Leaders can only successfully navigate the choppy waters of the AI revolution by staying focused on the human concerns that underlie business challenges and aspirations as organizations look for direction and answers on deploying new technologies.

2000s	The earliest beginnings of development with AI systems started in the early 2000s, furthering into the more refined technologies today. For instance, AI-enabled hiring tools, accessibility technologies, and learning platforms flooded the workplaces in the 2010s and 2020s and therefore shaped workplace inclusion accordingly.

Previous Attempts To Resolve This Issue

Even though there were numerous attempts to address this worldwide issue, three significant solutions stood out:

1. **Inclusive AI Governance**

   States must make sure that AI governors should include provisions against discrimination and upholding human rights. This calls for the creation of human rights-compliant and disability-inclusive public procurement norms as well as the involvement of people with disabilities and their organizations in tracking the effects of AI systems;

2. **Rights-Based AI Advocacy**

   It is recommended that national human rights groups expand their involvement and capabilities in AI policy discussions and incorporate the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) into their stances;

3. **Inclusive AI Development**

Companies and the private sector are urged to communicate with groups of people with disabilities to obtain the required viewpoint and to employ AI developers who have personal experience with disabilities.

Possible Solutions To Resolve This Issue

1. Enhance AI tools

Improve AI technologies by expanding their data sets so that they can identify employees with disabilities and adjust their treatment accordingly;

2. Certification for AI inclusivity

To motivate businesses to give fair practices a priority, make AI tools that adhere to strict guidelines for inclusion and accessibility for individuals with impairments certified; **3.**

Involve disabled people in AI Developers

Involve persons with disabilities in the creation and testing of AI tools, and make sure that some AI developers are aware of and trained in accessibility and disability issues. This would improve design choices and increase awareness.

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