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Understanding Requirements and Unmet Needs for Accommodations for Non-Senior Adults with Disabilities through a Social-Cultural Lens

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Agenda

- I. Data
- II. Increasing participation has meant more unmet need for accommodation
- III. Identifying disability related to significance of activities; cultural change
- IV. Unmet need for aids, devices and supports is related to life-cycle roles, perceptions
- V. French/English Variations in self-identification of disability
- VI. In Sum: Insights in using a social/cultural perspective

I. Data

- Data come primarily from the 2001 and 2006 Participation and Activity Limitations Surveys (PALS)
 - Covers adults (aged 15-69) with health and activity limitations
- Supplementary materials from the 2001-2007 Surveys of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID)
 - Covers adults (aged 16-69) with health and activity limitations
- In both cases referred to as “working age people with disabilities”

II. Increasing participation has meant more unmet need for accommodation

Background:* Increased Employment and Post Secondary Schooling Participation

- Recent years have seen unprecedented increases in the # and % of working aged people with disabilities employed and youth with disabilities attending post secondary schooling**
 - proportion with at least some work annually--rose from 52.1% in 1999 to over 60.2% in 2007
 - For those working, both average # of weeks and hours worked increased
 - The proportion of youth who had attended school in the past five years increased by 27% and post-secondary accreditation rose by 10 percentage points during this same period

*Source SLID

** The impact of the recent recession on employment levels for people with disabilities is not yet known

Concurrent accommodation trends

Overall:

- In 2006, 64% of working aged people with disabilities indicated that they required an assistive aid or device in order to undertake some everyday activities, up from 53% in 2001
- Between 2001 and 2006 the proportion requiring these who indicated that they had an unmet need doubled—increasing from 21% to 42%

Concurrent Trends (continued)

At work:

- 424,000 required some type of accommodation at work in 2006 compared with 305,000 in 2001
 - Wholly related to higher levels of employment (37% required aids and devices in both years)
- The number with job-related accommodation needs which were not fully met rose from 68,000 in 2001 to 146,000 in 2006 and the % with unmet need increased from 22% to 34%

At school:

- Requirements for aids and devices increased by 77% and the number of those with an unmet need rose in tandem

Similar increases in accommodation requirements in intra-regional travel

Understanding the Change

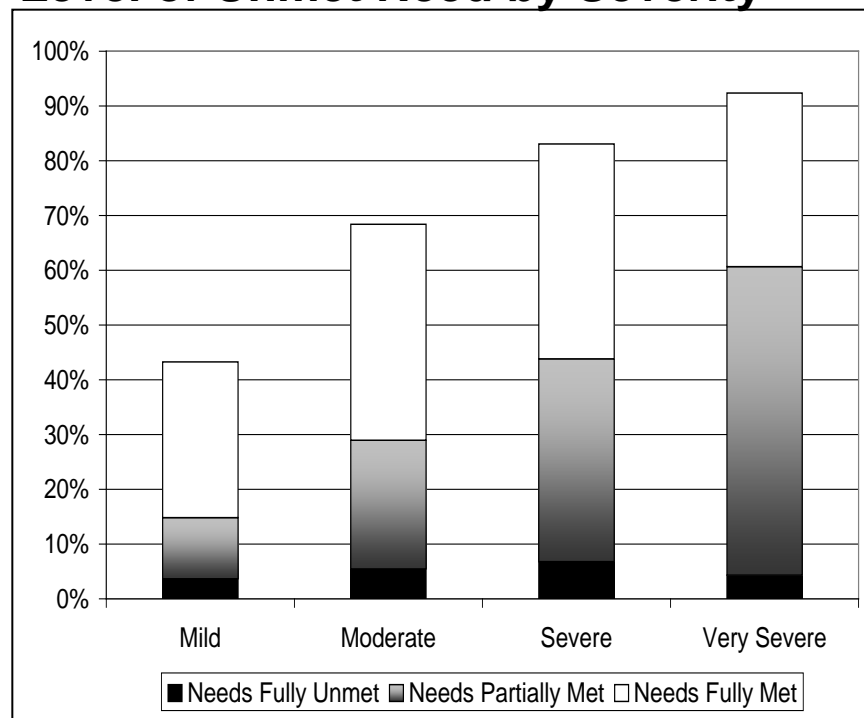
Increase in requirements and unmet need correlated with:

- Increased demand coming with increased participation by people with disabilities in society
 - Marked jump in labour force participation; attendance/successful completion of post-secondary schooling
- New technologies, greater awareness of available aids and devices
 - Example: PALS indicated large growth in requirements/unmet needs for special chairs/and back supports at work
 - In line with societal adoption of ergonomic concepts in office design
- Affordability less commonly an issue
 - Percentage indicating cost as a reason for unmet need for aids and devices fell from 72% in 2001 to 53% in 2006
 - In contrast, those indicating inadequate awareness of options/where to find these up from 18% to 21%
 - **Linked to increasing labour force participation which meant substantial increases in average income, insurance coverage**

Greater inclusion of people with more severe disabilities magnified trends

- Higher proportion need aids and devices in undertaking activities of daily living
- % employment change 2001-06 highest among those with severe/very severe disabilities
 - 1 % point for those with mild disability; between 3-4 % points for those with severe, very severe condition
 - 56% of total growth in requirements/unmet need at work in this population
 - Overall, just over 20% of employed

Proportion of Adults with Disabilities Requiring Aids and Devices showing Level of Unmet Need by Severity



III. Identifying disability related to significance of activities; cultural change

Background: Self-identification of those with learning disabilities has sky-rocketed

Between 2001 and 2006 the proportion of people identifying as having a learning disability increased by 36%

- Particularly marked: 54% increase among those 15-24
- More than double the overall increase in the disability rate
 - Much of the overall increase in disability rate tied to population aging
 - The increase in learning disabilities largely driven by changes among young adults

Understanding the Change

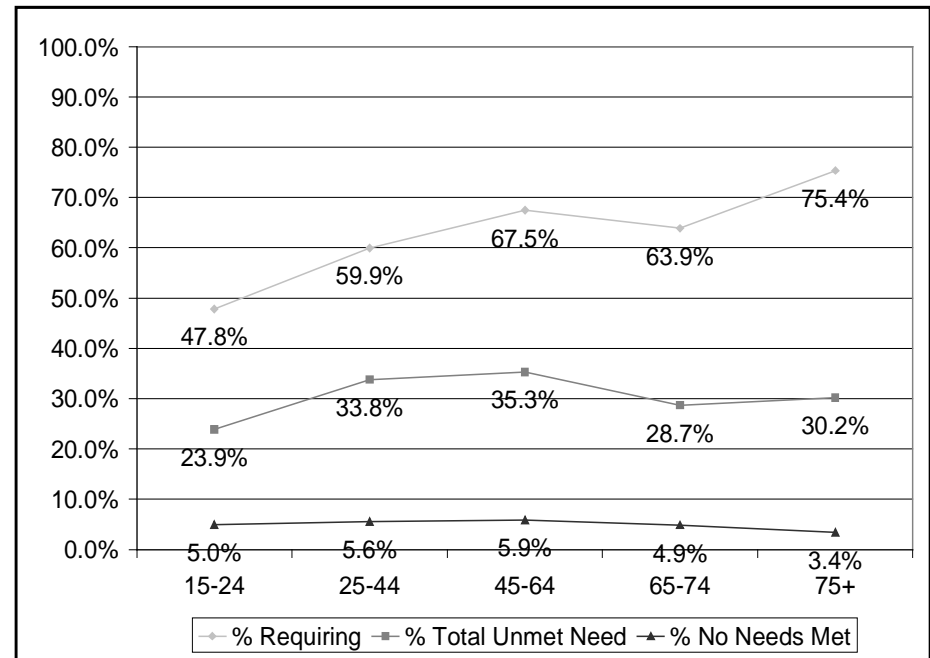
- Culture based Hypotheses:
 - Reduced stigma?
 - Increased identification/naming of conditions as learning disabilities?
 - Increased reliance on capacity to learn in the new economy?
- Second hypothesis is in line with another generality:
Learning disability predominates among children; minor among older people with disabilities
 - 70% of children with disabilities indicate a learning disability in contrast to 17% overall
 - Reflects importance of varying significance of formal learning activities at different stages of life
 - i.e. central role of schooling in childhood/youth

IV. Unmet need for aids, devices and supports related to life-cycle roles, perceptions

Background: Requirements for aids/devices/supports increases with age but the likelihood needs are unmet peaks at middle age

- More than half of adults 25-64 have unmet needs for aids/devices peaking at just under 60% for those 45-54 in contrast to just over 40% for seniors
- Similar trend for help with activities of daily life

Proportion of Adults with Disabilities Requiring Aids and Devices showing Level of Unmet Need by Age



Among whom does need peak?

- For those 35-54: Peaks in unmet need for help with housework; meal preparation; requirements for aids/devices supports at work; local transportation (primarily related to private automobile use)
- For those 25-44: Peak in unmet need in childcare

Understanding the middle-aged peak in unmet need

- Requirements for aids/devices/supports generally increase with increases in age-related impairments
- Domains/intensity of functioning peak at mid-life
 - Simultaneously raising a family; holding employment (often with increasing responsibility); caring for parents
 - Referred to in some life-cycle literature as the period of maximum self-sufficiency; maximum stress
- Unmet need pattern is more significantly influenced by second factor
 - At age 65 significant age-related supports fall into place
 - Reduction in job-related and, for many, family-related pressures
 - Note: often replaced by spousal care requirements
- Accentuated by financial burden which also peak at mid-life
 - Pressures of mortgage; financing post-secondary schooling etc.
 - Those 35-54 most likely to indicate that money/lack of insurance coverage reason why needs unmet

V. French/English Variations in self-identification of disability

Background: Quebec self-assessed disability rate consistently below the overall, Canadian rate

- While gap is narrowing; English-speaking Canadians more likely to identify themselves as having a disability than French are in identifying themselves as “*handicapée*”
 - Gap widest in Quebec, where least interaction with English culture
- Threshold varies with type of condition/impairment
 - More similar for developmental, seeing, memory and speaking limitations
 - Wider gap for more common mobility/agility and pain

Disability Rates: Canada and Quebec, 2001 and 2006

	2001	2006
Canada	12.4%	14.2%
Quebec	8.4%	10.4%

Understanding linguistic/cultural difference

- Work by Statistics Canada indicates that among francophones (especially in Quebec):
 - Threshold for linking condition/impairment to the term used tends to be higher
 - Also weaker link to acknowledgement of underlying condition as disability
- Differences also occur internationally
 - Stronger variation by type of disability
 - Often tied to stigmatizing nature of disability in society
 - For example leading to lower disability rates in India among women

VI. In Sum:

Insights in using a social/cultural perspective

1. Participation and inclusion—working, continuing in school, raising a family, becoming more active in the community, all generate new requirements for accommodation and result in new unmet need
 - Increases in unmet need for aids, devices and supports are, at least partially, reflections of increasing inclusion of people with disabilities in society
 - With increasing levels of employment/access to the money necessary to obtain supports, some pressure shifts from affordability to understanding and finding what's out there

In sum (continued)

2. Identifying disability related to significance of activities; cultural change
 - Focus on education peaks in early life
 - So too does self-identification of learning disabilities
 - Life cycle pressures/stresses tend to peak at middle age
 - So too do unmet needs for aids/devices/supports
3. Acknowledgement of condition or condition as disability related to broad conceptual/language differences
 - Still significant French/English differences
 - International differences extend to the likelihood of acknowledging condition