

Having a Disability Reduces Chances of Employment for all Racial/Ethnic Groups

Jennifer D. Brooks

Having a disability is related to lower employment rates for all racial/ethnic groups. The figure below illustrates a clear race/ethnicity and disability employment hierarchy for U.S. born adults ages 21 to 65. In 2017, 79% of whites without disabilities were employed, placing them on the top rung of the employment ladder. Hispanics without disabilities fell in the middle with an employment rate of 76%, followed by African Americans without disabilities at 69%. Regardless of race, adults with disabilities are far less likely to be employed than those without disabilities. Employment among individuals with disabilities, however, also varies by race-ethnicity. Over a third of whites (36%) and 34% of Hispanics with disabilities are employed. Less than one-quarter of African Americans with disabilities (23%) are employed, making African Americans with disabilities the most disadvantaged group.

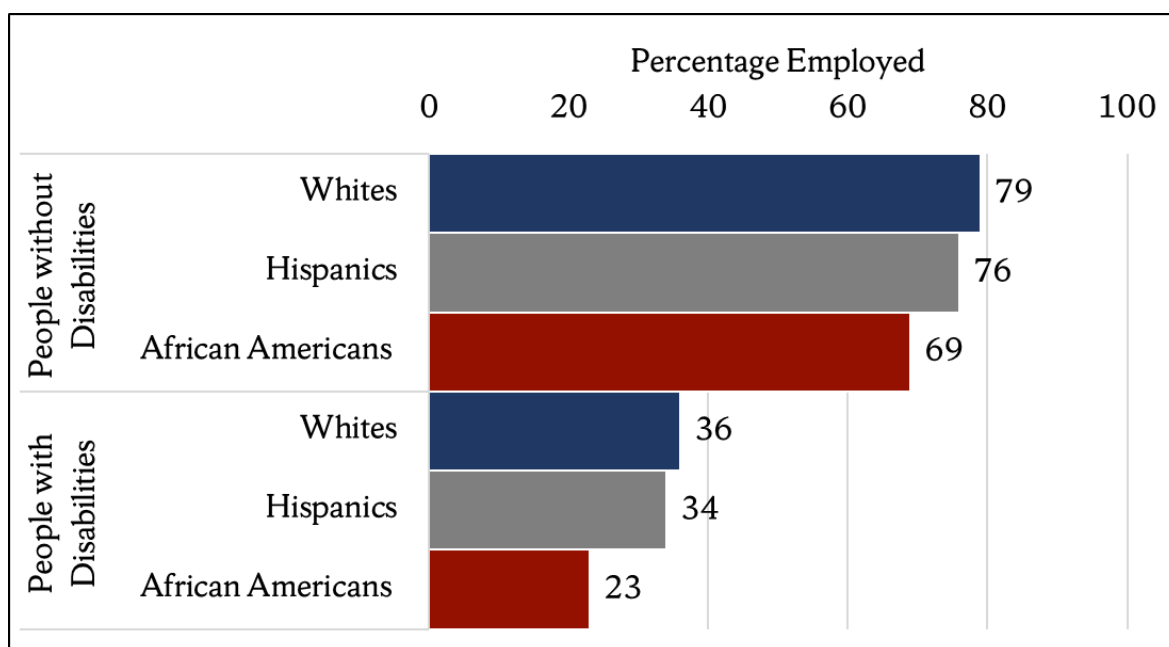


Figure 1. African Americans with Disabilities have a Lower Employment Rate Compared to other Racial/Ethnic Groups with or without a Disability

Data Source: 2017 American Community Survey (ACS). Figures include individuals ages 21 to 65 who were born in the United States; Disability includes: difficulties with hearing, vision, mobility, thinking/remembering, dressing/bathing, and running errands. Chart: Jennifer D. Brooks

About the Author

Jennifer Brooks is a PhD student and STEM fellow in the Department of Sociology at Syracuse University. jdbro100@syr.edu

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