

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE PERSPECTIVES OF RESIDENT DIRECTORS ON DISABILITY
FROM A GROUNDED THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE: THE INTERACTIONS BETWEEN
HIGHER EDUCATION HOUSING PROFESSIONALS AND INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

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ABSTRACT

Examining the opinions of resident directors on disability helps this study to better understand how housing professionals respond to college students with disabilities. This research employs a grounded theoretical approach to identify the institutional elements, attitudes, and beliefs influencing inclusive events on university. Through an analysis of resident directors' ideas and behaviour, this study fills in a major knowledge vacuum on higher education. Building inclusive and welcoming communities falls to the resident directors. Using semi-structured interviews, this study investigated the different points of view on disability held by resident directors from different institutions. From these vantage points, we will examine support systems and communication strategies as well as policies impacting students with disabilities. The research also revealed other institutional mediators influencing the actual application of ideas. The predominance of administrative help and training initiatives offers one likely reason. Research shows that staff members in the housing sector who have a positive and well-informed perspective of persons with disabilities are more likely to be accommodating, proactive, and understanding. Still, accommodations aren't always sufficient or consistent depending on institutional knowledge and support. Finally, the writers advocate that resident life leadership should mostly focus on disability awareness. They support their claims with recommendations for legal changes and professional skill development. This study helps us to better grasp the interactions among organisational norms, theories of leadership, and the lived experiences of disabled college students. Establishing the framework for next studies and practical solutions helps to support diversity and inclusion in higher education.

Keywords: Resident directors, disability perspectives, higher education housing, inclusive practices, institutional support, professional development.

INTRODUCTION

In the recently fought for inclusion and equality in higher education, accessibility for students with disabilities has become a critical issue. The attitudes and

behaviour of housing professionals, particularly resident directors, greatly affect the social and academic life of students in universities. Serving on the front lines of domestic life, student directors directly influence the nature of daily contacts and the implementation of adaptations for students with physical, cognitive, or psychological issues. The definition and availability of accommodations in university housing still vary greatly even if disability rights and inclusion are growingly well-known. Since most of the current research relies on institutional policy or student experiences, very little is known about the opinions of resident directors, who are charged with following these guidelines. Ideas, knowledge, and opinions on disability greatly affect the degree of inclusion or exclusion used by university residential communities. This study aims to apply a grounded theory approach to investigate, using resident directors' disabilities, how housing professionals' behaviour and decisions are affected. By means of an analysis of the interactions among personal beliefs, organisational standards, and student needs, this study seeks to expose the enabling and restricting aspects influencing inclusive housing policies. The paper also looks at the roles of training, leadership, and resources as institutional support systems helping to moderate the process of changing points of view into fair results. Developing policies and training courses guiding public and housing staff on how to interact politely and effectively with disabled students depends on an awareness of these interactions. The results of this study could direct the design of more easily available university environments by stressing the ways in which attitudes of leaders could either improve or jeopardise accessibility. A strong methodological framework for investigating how professionals who work in Reasonable Adjustments view and interact with disabilities is provided by grounded theory (Lehrer-Stein, 2023).

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

New studies on disability rights in four Asian nations suggest that those with disabilities still face physical, social, and cultural barriers. The study revealed that structural changes are required to support inclusion even in educational environments (Chou et al., 2024). China offers a special viewpoint on the availability of higher education for people with disabilities. Confucian standards, government-led reforms, and fast modernism all help to define China's higher education scene of disability. Laws on the Education of Persons with Disabilities and more general Confucian ideas stressing social harmony have helped initiatives to include students with disabilities into regular education. Still, sometimes the emphasis on academic success and society stigmas causes students with disabilities—especially in residential life—to be marginalised.

The study claims that when it comes to giving enough support for students with disabilities in higher education, rural areas are still not performing as well as cities. Human Rights Watch discovered in 2013 that regular discrimination against disabled children and youth in China occurs in educational environments including denial of suitable accommodations and exclusion from mainstream schools. Early educational

experiences of a student could influence their college residential life as well as the general institutional approach towards disability. Though cultural attitudes towards disability clearly affect RDs' practices, research on RDs in China and other Asian countries is quite lacking. According to research, the greater emphasis on community well-being inherent in collectivist governments like China could either help or harm attempts to assist persons with disabilities (Zhang et al., 2023).

Further complexity is introduced by the ways in which disability interacts with other dimensions of identity, such as gender, colour, and socioeconomic class, necessitating more nuanced approaches (Crenshaw, 2022). Transferring to a four-year university is notoriously tough for students with impairments. While RDs' work is valuable, empirical studies on their viewpoints and conception of disability in relation to their job are rare. Among these systematic problems are under educated housekeepers, insufficient resources, and either obsolete or non-existent infrastructure. People with disabilities suffer from unconscious prejudices and cultural attitudes that affect them especially in Asian surroundings where disability is sometimes interpreted as a cause of shame or misfortune. Children with disabilities are further isolated in Chinese residential schools under the focus on academic success and collectivism (Wang, 2025).

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

This study aims to find how professional practices of view on disability affect housing professionals working in higher education. This research aims to better understand how views of resident directors about disability influence the implementation of inclusive policies, accommodations, and interactions with impaired students in residential situations. This research particularly aims to find their points of view, ideas, and approaches of handling handicap. Our goal in doing this research is to identify the factors supporting and hindering as well as the ones making campus living circumstances more accessible and useful.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Due to a dearth of activity, advocacy groups, and legal knowledge, the early implementation of disability rights was slow, even if these legislative landmarks were passed. The Department of Health Education and Welfare (HEW) delayed the release of Section 504 rules until 1978 due to litigation and protests by disability rights groups. Despite the lack of immediate impact from these early legislative changes, higher education became more accessible in the decades that followed due to stronger enforcement, improved awareness, and activism. As a result of these advancements, more disabled students are able to participate fully in the academic life, which will better equip them to make societal contributions rather than rely on government assistance. These days, universities and colleges are required by law to provide reasonable adjustments in order to create a more inclusive learning

environment. Recent successes in the fight against handicap discrimination and for equal educational opportunities for all students highlight the importance of these struggles. These analyses suggest that there are a number of good strategies, regulations, and projects that might improve the availability of accessible housing. Examples of these that may greatly enhance the quality of life for people with disabilities include smart home technology integration, experimental gadgets, mobile apps, and house modifications. In addition to physically accessible housing, these interventions improve the overall quality of life for people with impairments, allowing them to live independently (Lindsay et al., 2024).

College enrolment among students with impairments is on the rise. Study has mostly overlooked students' overall experiences in favour of classroom modifications. There has been a lack of research on the accessibility and inclusion of campus housing, despite its critical role in fostering social and intellectual engagement. Institutions have a responsibility to provide decent housing that can meet a variety of demands. In order to fill a knowledge vacuum and contribute to the growing body of literature on disability inclusion outside academic contexts, this study used constructivist grounded theory to examine the perspectives of RD on disability on college campuses (Toutain, 2022).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

How do the attitudes of resident directors towards disability influence the practices of higher education housing professionals?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH DESIGN

Using SPSS version 25, the quantitative data analysis was carried out. A 95% confidence interval and odds ratio were used to determine the direction and intensity of the statistical association. At $p < 0.05$, the researchers established a criterion that was considered statistically significant. To identify the most important aspects of the data, a descriptive analysis was carried out. Data changed by computing tools for statistical analysis and data gathered from surveys, polls, and questionnaires are often evaluated using quantitative methodologies.

SAMPLING

After piloting the survey with 20 Chinese individuals, researchers utilised a final sample of 620 consumers to draw conclusions. A total of 800 questionnaires were sent to individuals chosen at random. For this study, the researcher did not include 180 questionnaires since they were not filled out.

DATA AND MEASUREMENT

The research mostly used a questionnaire survey to collect data. The first part of the survey asked for basic demographic information, while the second part asked respondents to rate various aspects of the online and offline channels on a 5-point Likert scale. Many sources, largely online databases, provided the secondary data.

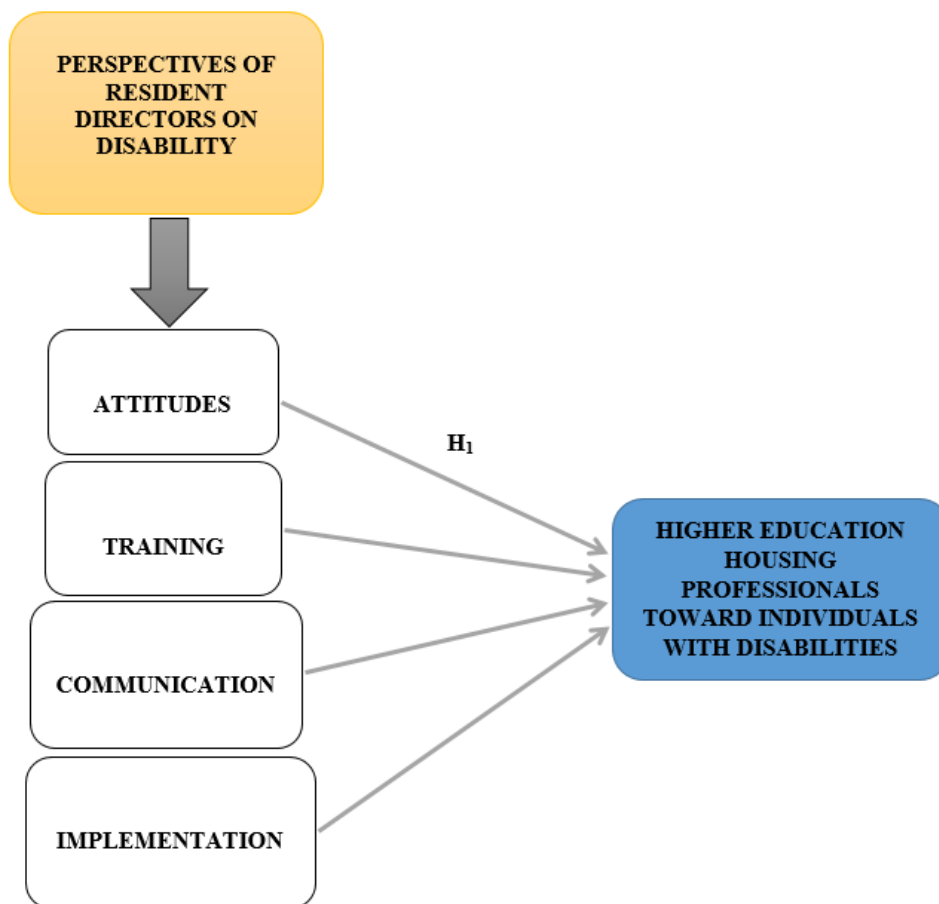
STATISTICAL SOFTWARE

The statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS 25 and MS-Excel.

STATISTICAL TOOLS

To grasp the fundamental character of the data, descriptive analysis was used. The researcher is required to analyse the data using ANOVA.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



RESULT

Factor Analysis (FA) finds widespread usage in the process of confirming the underlying component structure of a collection of item measurements. It is thought that elements that cannot be seen directly impact the scores of the variables that have been examined. One such method is the model-based accuracy analysis (FA) procedure. The main focus of this research is on establishing relationships between

visible events, their hidden causes, and measurement errors. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Method may be used to determine whether the data is suitable for factor analysis. It evaluates the overall models and each individual variable's sampling adequacy. The statistical analysis measures how much common variation there may be among several variables. Factor analysis is often more appropriate for data sets with smaller percentages. For integers between 0 and 1, KMO delivers a value. If the KMO value is between 0.8 and 1, then the sampling is considered sufficient.

If the KMO is less than 0.6, it means that the sample was insufficient and corrective action is needed. The range is 0.5 to 0.6, so you may use your best judgement; nonetheless, some writers take 0.5 as this. The partial correlations are high in comparison to the overall correlations if the KMO is near to 0. I repeat: big correlations are a huge roadblock for component analysis. The following are the acceptance criteria set by Kaiser: From a pitiful 0.050 to 0.059.

Deficient by 0.60 to 0.69 standard deviations

Common range for middle school students: from 0.70 to 0.79.

Ranging from a quality point value of 0.80 to 0.89. I am astounded at the range of 0.90 to 1.00.

Table 1: KMO and Bartlett's Test.

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.935
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3252.968
	df	190
	Sig.	.000

Applying Bartlett's Test of Sphericity provided further confirmation of the correlation matrices' overall significance. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin sample adequacy is shown as 0.935. The researchers discovered a p-value of 0.00 by using Bartlett's sphericity test. The correlation matrix was shown to not be a correlation matrix by a significant test result from Bartlett's sphericity test.

TEST FOR HYPOTHESIS

INDIPENDENT VARIABLE

Perspectives of resident directors on disability: These are the points of view of resident directors on disability—including their ideas, sentiments, knowledge of persons who suffer from cognitive, sensory, or physical disabilities as well as mental

disorders. These points of view represent factors combining human experience, cultural background, professional training, and institutional ideals. The way resident directors of colleges handle disabled students, decide on accommodations, and handle disability laws is much influenced by these points of view. While an educated and positive point of view might lead to proactive inclusion, empathy, and helpful behaviour, a limited or biased point of view could cause unintended discrimination, exclusion, or neglect. In residential life, resident directors are fairly important as they help the community to be readily available to everyone and friendly. Understanding their points of view enables one to enhance campus housing rules, raise awareness of disabilities, and provide all students—from all background's equitable opportunities (Abes & Wallace, 2020).

MEDIATING VARIABLE

Attitudes: Attitudes then are the mental models' humans employ to comprehend and respond to their environment. Within the context of this study, the opinions of the resident directors mirror mostly their impressions of the intellectual and emotional potential of students with disabilities. In academic settings, attitudes—positive, neutral, negative—have a big influence on relationships, choices, and conduct. Upstream, cultural norms, formal education, and whatever official training one has had may all help to influence their mentality. Their impact on the neat and pleasant administration of residences as well as the use of disability restrictions by resident directors might be really outstanding. Positive attitudes generally generate empathy, advocacy, and support; negative or ignorant ideas could lead to exclusion or inadequate compromises. Investigating attitudes enables one to identify barriers to inclusion and to build effective efforts for professional development and training, thereby increasing disability awareness and responsiveness (Attakor et al., 2024).

DEPENEDENT VARIABLE

Responses of higher education housing professionals toward individuals with disabilities: Higher education housing professionals generally respond to individuals with disabilities by way of the actions, decisions, and behaviours of residential staff members engaged in campus life. Experts' forms of communication, easily available homes, inclusive laws' application, and building of supportive living surroundings help to contribute to these solutions. Such emotions are shaped by a variety of factors including personal attitudes, professional education, institutional policies, and student expected standards. Positive attributes include proactive problem-solvers, sympathetic conduct, fast help, and effective communication; negative traits include neglect, misunderstanding, or incapacity to make reasonable compromises. These interactions influence children's impairment as well as their quality of life, sense of belonging, and academic success. Evaluating the success of current housing policies and guiding projects aimed at justice, inclusiveness, and

accessibility in university housing communities depends on an awareness of these responses (Biggs & Rossi, 2021).

Relationship between Attitudes and Responses of higher education housing professionals toward individuals with disabilities: Higher educated housing professionals, especially resident directors, see and treat persons with disabilities in fairly different ways based on their own perspectives. Real-world professionals find great influence in their attitudes as they reflect their fundamental principles, viewpoint, and emotional predisposition. By their inclusive and motivating behaviour, the resident directors raise the level of knowledge, compassion, and optimism for people with disabilities. Some examples of this sort of assistance include advocacy for more conveniently accessible facilities, a welcoming living environment for all students, attentive attention to student needs, and quick implementation of required improvements. Children with impairments may therefore accidentally come across exclusion, delayed help, or insufficient needs fulfilment, depending on prejudice or erroneous information. Lack of knowledge, discomfort, or training will let housekeepers ignore their responsibilities or follow poor standards. Educating housing specialists, training them, and getting institutional support can help them to behave fairly, with respect, and professionally to children with impairments (Woolf & de, 2022).

On the basis of the above discussion, the researcher formulated the following hypothesis, which was analyse the relationship between attitudes and responses of higher education housing professionals toward individuals with disabilities.

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between attitudes and responses of higher education housing professionals toward individuals with disabilities.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between attitudes and responses of higher education housing professionals toward individuals with disabilities.

Table 2: H1 ANOVA Test.

ANOVA					
Sum					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	39588.620	223	5239.512	978.25	.000
Within Groups	492.770	396	5.356		
Total	40081.390	619			

In this study, the result is significant. The value of F is 978.25, which reaches significance with a p-value of .000 (which is less than the .05 alpha level). This means the “**H₁: There is a significant relationship between attitudes and responses of higher education housing professionals toward individuals with disabilities.**” is accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected.

DISCUSSION

The major goal of this study was to investigate the relationship between housing professionals in higher education and resident directors' views and actions about disability and the treatment of students with disabilities. The findings show that the quality of answers in residential life is much influenced by the personal ideas and attitudes of resident directors continuously and dramatically. One's experience, education, and employment served to shape qualities of proactive, sympathetic, inclusive conduct. Children with disabilities, on the other hand, sometimes got inconsistent, slow, or non-existent support; this was generally accompanied by ignorance or hostility. Apart from other things, the data expose that opinions of view are not isolated. The degree of administrative support, the availability of disability-oriented training, and the institutional culture greatly influence their impact. Safety and disability management skills became better for resident directors engaged in continuous professional development. Therefore, the development of healthy attitudes relies on possibilities for structured education and lifelong learning, which in turn produce more suitable and inspiring responses. Results also showed that resident directors' perspectives on disability might greatly influence their degree of conformance even in circumstances where institutional policies are followed. Those with a more open and sympathetic frame of view saw opportunity for laws to motivate and empower young people. Only few participated as most people saw it as a necessary evil. According to the researchers, communication is largely responsible for how thoughts turn into deeds. Apart from striving to be friendlier, positive professionals maintained frequent touch with students with disabilities. This assured each student of special care and helped to increase confidence. The findings suggest that institutions should create a culture driven by values and compassion, therefore giving resident life high priority instead of focussing solely on regulations and compliance. In this sense, tools in this subject might help companies to foster inclusive, fair, handicapped-aware leadership. The findings support the hypothesis that one's attitude might influence their professional conduct. Targeted initiatives aiming at raising awareness and changing the attitudes of resident directors might significantly improve the living conditions for university accommodation's disabled students.

CONCLUSION

This research sought to find resident directors' perspectives on disability and how such points of view influence the behaviour of housing staff members tending to college students with impairments. The results showed that their opinions were much connected with the degree of inclusive, consistent, and competent professional behaviour of university housing directors. Anchored in optimism, experience, and empathy, responses mainly helpful, responsive, and student-cantered formed. Conversely, negative or ignorant attitudes can led to inadequate assistance or poor interaction for children with disabilities. This study underlines

how institutional factors like business culture, policy interpretation, and training affect attitudes and conduct. Although the current policies are important, appropriate inclusion mostly rests on the attitudes of the people assigned to apply them on both personal and professional level. Residential directors should be given varied and inclusive points of view high importance by colleges. One may contribute to this by means of inclusive campus environment design, comprehensive disability awareness training, and ongoing professional development. This research underlines the importance of modifying the structural and interpersonal features of on-campus life to improve the experiences of students with disabilities. Institutions might be able to build more equitable and welcoming residential communities if they give attitudes top attention.

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