

DISABILITIES AND EMPLOYMENT: AN ANALYSIS OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN MAJOR INDUSTRIES IN THE PROVINCE OF CAVITE

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<https://doi.org/10.37602/IJREHC.2023.4308>

ABSTRACT

The study focused on determining the employment opportunities for persons with disabilities in major industries in the Province of Cavite. Specifically, this study aimed to identify the type of disabilities that are accepted for employment in different industries, identify the PWD's demographic characteristics accepted by the participants in terms of age, sex, and educational attainment, the employability of persons with disabilities in terms of soft skills and hard skills, and the significant difference on the employment acceptability of PWDs in different industries based on the type of disability. It employed a descriptive research design using an online survey questionnaire administered using Google Forms. The study utilized a descriptive method of research using a quantitative approach to describe the variables under study. It employed a purposive sampling technique to consider 60 companies belonging to the major industries within the Province of Cavite. Data were tabulated and analyzed using SPSS. As a result, the majority of the participants have a moderate consideration for all types of disability. Additionally, the majority of the participants moderately prefer hiring the specified age groups of PWDs and do not have any preference in terms of gender in hiring PWDs and possibly accepts both male and female in their respective companies. Also, results revealed that the majority of employers highly prefer PWDs who hold at least one postsecondary diploma. Furthermore, findings show that the majority of the participants highly require all types of soft skills and they also highly require hard skills such as computer application skills, data analysis skills, working linguistics skills, planning skills, and mathematical skills in hiring PWDs. In regards to significant differences on the employment acceptability of different industries based on the type of disability, it is revealed that PWDs are accepted by the specified industries regardless of their disability type. With the exception of the construction industry, in which there is a significant difference on the acceptability of PWDs depending on their disability type.

Keywords: employment opportunity, persons with disabilities, soft skills, hard skills

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) continue to face social exclusion and lack of accessibility despite being the world's largest minority. Stigma about people with disabilities has sparked prejudices that put them in a disadvantageous position compared to those people without disabilities. They are at particular risk of violence, exploitation, and abuse, as well as

discrimination. As defined by Philippine Magna Carta for Persons with Disability (2013), disabled persons are those people affected by one or more types of impairment, ranging from those affecting a person's vision, movement, learning capacities, communicating, hearing, mental state, and social relationships. The past decade has seen an increase in the number of laws intended to integrate persons with disabilities into the economy, many of them aiming to remove barriers caused by prejudice. Republic Act no. 10524 is a law that gives protection and employment opportunities to PWDs in the Philippines. However, although this law gives rights and privileges in terms of employment to PWDs, some of them are still experiencing deprivation of getting equal chances for proper employment. Disabled persons are an underutilized labor pool. There is a general lack of awareness of their potential economic contribution to society.

Employment outcomes for people with disabilities have been historically dismal (Bonaccio, Connelly, Gellatly, Jetha, & Martin Ginis, 2019). However, a growing awareness of the benefits of inclusive workplaces and a concomitant appreciation for the capabilities of people with disabilities who apply to work at those workplaces has led to more opportunities in the workplace. Which includes human rights that enable disabled people to overcome societal obstacles.

According to the survey conducted by De Luna-Narido and Tacadao (2016), out of the 150 employed PWDs-participants covering the regions of NCR, Regions III, and IV, half (51%) are visually impaired, 12 percent are hearing and speech impaired, and 37 percent are physically impaired. Among their occupations, half of PWDs respondents are technicians or associate professionals. These workers perform most of their work in conjunction with daily activities that are related to research, scientific or artistic concepts, and operational methods. Those occupations include massage therapists and technical support (Business Process Outsourcing or BPO). Twenty-three percent are elementary occupations which include hand packer and packing machine operators. Interestingly, eight percent of the respondents belong to administrative and commercial managers. Usually, they are managers of organizational units that provide services across organizations. They are operations managers, field supervisors, and officers of the cooperative. There are also clerical support workers (14%) which include data entry clerks, general office clerks, and numerical clerks (payroll clerks, bookkeeping clerks); and services and sales workers (3%) which include janitors. The visually-impaired group is composed mainly (88%) of masseurs.

This study attempted to determine the employment opportunities for PWDs in selected companies in the Province of Cavite. It also aimed to determine the skills, educational attainment, age and sex, and type of disability that significantly affects the hiring decision of the different companies belonged to the major industries in the province of Cavite.

In view of the preceding statements, this study was conducted to:

1. Identify the type of disabilities that are accepted in employment;
2. Identify the PWD's demographic characteristics accepted by the participants in terms of:
 1. age;
 2. sex; and
 3. educational attainment;

- 2 based on the company requirement, determine the employability of persons with disabilities in terms of:
 1. soft skills; and
 2. hard skills
3. Determine the significant difference on the employment acceptability of PWDs in different industries based on the type of disability.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

The study utilized descriptive method of research using quantitative approach to describe the variables under study. It was used to describe the type of disabilities accepted in the company, skill preference, and the preferred demographic characteristics of PWDs. This study used purposive sampling technique in selecting 60 companies belonged to the major industries within the Province of Cavite. The participants were either employers (owners, managers) or human resource practitioners. A self-administered survey questionnaire was devised in order to analyze the employment opportunities for PWDs in selected companies from major industries in Cavite.

After the data were gathered and tallied, different statistical tools and techniques were used.

1. Weighted mean was applied to determine the acceptability of type of disabilities for employment (Problem number 1), the demographic characteristic accepted for employment (Problem number 2), and employability of PWDs according to soft skills and hard skills (Problem number 3). A five-point Likert scale was used in the questionnaire. The scale had the following pattern:

Table 1. Conversion scale for interpretation of ratings in terms of the accepted type of disability

WEIGHTED MEAN	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
4.21-5.00	Highly Accepted
3.41-4.20	Moderately Accepted
2.61-3.40	Slightly Accepted
1.81-2.60	Less Accepted
1.00-1.80	Not Accepted

Table 2. Conversion scale for interpretation of ratings in terms of demographic preference

WEIGHTED MEAN	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
4.21-5.00	Highly Preferred
3.41-4.20	Moderately Preferred
2.61-3.40	Slightly Preferred
1.81-2.60	Less Preferred
1.00-1.80	Not Preferred

Table 3. Conversion scale for interpretation of ratings in terms of required skill

WEIGHTED MEAN	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
4.21-5.00	Highly Required

3.41-4.20	Moderately Required
2.61-3.40	Slightly Required
1.81-2.60	Less Required
1.00-1.80	Not Required

2. F-test and P-test were used in problem 4 to test the significant difference on the employment acceptability of different industries based on the type of disability.

3.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Types of disabilities accepted in employment

Table 4 presents the type of disabilities that are accepted in employment. It can be seen from the data demonstrated that the participants moderately accept hearing impairment, motor disability, and learning disability. On the other hand, they slightly accept applicants with visual impairment. Overall, the findings revealed that the majority of the participants moderately accept (3.48) all types of disabilities. This indicates that all industries has a moderate consideration in hiring disabled applicants regardless of the type disability.

This reinforces the study of Jimenez and Cabaluna (2021), all respondents in their study were willing to employ those with motor and physical disabilities and those with work experience. Meanwhile, respondents were less likely to consider applicants with visual impairments or learning disabilities for employment. Similarly, Boman, Kjellberg, Danermark, and Boman (2015) found that the relationship between disability types and hiring practices is influenced by other factors but that it plays a limited role in determining the potential for employment. The highest probability of being hired is for those with impaired hearing.

Table 4. Mean assessment on the types of disabilities accepted in employment

TYPE OF DISABILITY	MEAN	SD	INTERPRETATION
1. Visual Impairment	3.35	1.20	Slightly accepted
2. Hearing Impairment	3.55	1.16	Moderately accepted
3. Motor Disability	3.43	1.16	Moderately accepted
4. Learning Disability	3.58	1.23	Moderately accepted
OVER-ALL	3.48	1.17	MODERATELY ACCEPTED

3.2 Employability of PWDs according to Demographic Characteristics

Table 5 shows the PWD's demographic characteristics accepted by selected companies from major industries within the Province of Cavite in terms of age. The highest weighted mean of 4.45, which was interpreted as highly accepted was registered at the measure of age 18-27; and the lowest weighted mean of 2.85, which was interpreted as slightly accepted, was registered at the measure of age 58 and above. As a result, the study revealed that the companies moderately prefer hiring the specified age groups of PWDs.

Results of a study by Boman, Kjellberg, Danermark, and Boman (2015) about the employment opportunities for persons with different types of disability contradicts this finding, which they showed that fewer respondents in the age group 20–29 years were employed compared with the other age groups. The most employed PWDs were found to be those aged 40–49 years.

Table 5. Mean assessment on the employability of PWDs according to age

AGE	MEAN	SD	INTERPRETATION
1. 18-27	4.45	0.93	Highly preferred
2. Between 28-37	4.25	0.86	Highly preferred
3. Between 38-47	3.75	1.00	Moderately preferred
4. Between 48-57	3.17	1.25	Slightly preferred
5. 58 and above	2.85	1.30	Slightly preferred
OVER-ALL	3.69	1.07	MODERATELY PREFERRED

Table 6 shows the employability of PWDs according to sex. It could be seen from that data that the participants highly accept both female and male PWDs with a weighted mean of 4.38 and 4.48 respectively. This implies that companies do not have any preference in terms of sex in hiring PWDs and possibly accepts both male and female in their respective companies.

Although the present study suggests that both men and female receive high consideration in employment, men with disabilities are more likely to be employed than women with disabilities. A study conducted by Pettinicchio and Maroto (2017) revealed that women with impairments had the lowest employment and earnings rates, especially those with multiple disabilities. Impairments, on the other hand, tended to have bigger impacts on males, resulting in higher differences between men with and without disabilities, as well as a narrowing of the gender wage gap among disabled employees.

Table 6. Mean assessment on the employability of PWDs according to sex

SEX	MEAN	SD	INTERPRETATION
1. Male	4.38	1.08	Highly preferred
2. Female	4.48	0.98	Highly preferred
OVER-ALL	4.43	1.03	HIGHLY PREFERRED

Table 7 presents the participants' preference in hiring PWDs based on educational attainment. It can be seen from the data presented in table 8 that selected companies from major industries within the province of Cavite highly accepts vocational graduate, college undergraduate, college graduate and post graduate PWDs with a weighted mean of 4.42, 4.47, 4.65, and 4.28 respectively. This implies that majority of the employers highly prefer PWDs who hold at least one postsecondary diploma.

This result confirms findings that educational attainment was inversely related to employment for persons with disabilities. Among 25- to 64-year-olds with disabilities, the percentage employed was lower for those who had not completed high school or had completed only high school than those who had completed some college, an associate's degree, or a bachelor's or higher degree. The employment gap between those with and without disabilities was smaller

for those with a bachelor's or higher degree than for those with an associate's degree, those with a high school credential, and those who had not completed high school (Spotlights, 2017).

Table 7. Mean assessment on the employability of PWDs according to educational attainment

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	MEAN	SD	INTERPRETATION
1. Elementary Graduate	3.03	1.43	Slightly preferred
2. High School Graduate	4.20	1.19	Moderately preferred
3. Senior High School Graduate	4.20	1.04	Moderately preferred
4. Vocational Graduate	4.42	0.85	Highly preferred
5. College Undergraduate	4.47	0.91	Highly preferred
6. College Graduate	4.65	0.68	Highly preferred
7. Post Graduate	4.28	1.01	Highly preferred
OVER-ALL	4.18	1.02	MODERATELY PREFERRED

3.3 Employability of PWDs according to Soft Skills and Hard Skills

Table 8 presents the employability of PWDs according to soft skills. From the overall result, it is evident that companies highly requires soft skills such as communication skills, decision making skills, leadership skills, collaboration skills, and problem solving skills in hiring PWDs with a weighted mean of 4.51 which was registered as highly required. This finding implies that companies highly require all types of soft skills in hiring PWDs.

Soft skills have become one of the most fundamental requirements in today's world, as well as the most important skill in industry for both common and disabled workers. Based on NACE's Job Outlook 2020 survey, employers value problem-solving abilities and the ability to operate as part of a team above everything else. More than 91 percent of employers want proof of the former in the people they hire, while more than 86 percent want indication of the latter

Table 8. Mean assessment on the employability of PWDs according to soft skills

SOFT SKILLS	MEAN	SD	INTERPRETATION
1. Communication Skills	4.62	0.67	Highly Required
2. Decision Making Skills	4.42	0.77	Highly Required
3. Leadership Skills	4.50	0.72	Highly Required
4. Collaboration Skills	4.52	0.70	Highly Required
5. Problem Solving Skills	4.48	0.70	Highly Required
OVER-ALL	4.51	0.72	HIGHLY REQUIRED

Table 9 presents the employability of PWDs according to hard skills. It shows that companies highly requires hard skills such as computer application skills, working linguistics skills, and planning skills in hiring PWDs. On the other hand, both data analysis skills and mathematical skills of PWDs are moderately required by the companies.

Alson, Espela, and Urbina (2019) reinforced the result of the study that employers generally prefer PWD's with variety of hard skills. The result of their study indicated that hard skills especially ability to draft plans, data analysis and computer applications are considered priority requirements for PWD's by human resource officers, managers and supervisors.

Table 9. Mean assessment on the employability of PWDs according to hard skills

AGE	MEAN	SD	INTERPRETATION
1. Computer Application Skills	4.32	0.91	Highly Required
2. Data Analysis Skills	4.15	0.99	Moderately Required
3. Working Linguistics Skills	4.37	0.84	Highly Required
6. Planning Skills	4.52	0.70	Highly Required
7. Mathematical Skills	4.15	0.99	Moderately Required
OVER-ALL	4.30	0.89	HIGHLY REQUIRED

3.4 Significant difference on the employment acceptability of PWDs in different industries based on the type of disability

Table 10 presents the acceptability of type of disability per industry type. Upon examining how the type of disability influence the acceptability in regards to employment of PWDs in selected companies from major industries within the Province of Cavite, it was found out that there is no significance difference, which implies that PWDs are accepted by the specified industries regardless of their disability type. With the exception of the construction industry, in which there is a significant difference on the acceptability of PWDs depending on their disability type.

There is a lack of data on the employment of disabled individuals in the Philippines' construction industry. In fact, the most recent official estimate available on the number of PWDs in the country's construction industry is from 2009. According to Reyes and Tabuga (2009), the percentage of PWDs employed in the construction industry is second to the lowest, at 15 percent. While visually impaired people who work as masseurs make about 65 percent of the workforce with disabilities.

Table 10. Significant difference on the employment acceptability of PWDs in different industries based on the type of disability

INDUSTRY	TYPE OF DISABILITY			
	VISUAL IMPAIRMENT	HEARING IMPAIRMENT	MOTOR DISABILITY	LEARNING DISABILITY
Food or Restaurant	3.87	3.87	3.93	4.00
Manufacturing	3.31	4.00	3.38	3.75
Hospitality and Tourism	3.20	3.40	3.40	3.40
Business Process Outsourcing	2.63	2.50	3.00	3.13
Healthcare	3.67	3.33	3.67	3.33
Financial Services	3.00	2.00	2.00	1.0
Entertainment	1.00	1.00	1.00	3.0
Construction	4.00	5.00	4.00	4.50

Logistics and Warehousing	2.60	3.20	3.40	3.40
Retail	4.25	3.75	3.25	3.25
F-Value	1.826	3.009	1.400	1.078
P-Value	0.087	0.006	0.214	0.395
REMARKS	NO SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE	SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE (CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY)	NO SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE	NO SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE

4.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study determined the employment opportunities for persons with disabilities in major industries in the Province of Cavite. Specifically, this study aimed to identify the type of disabilities that are accepted for employment in different industries, identify the PWD's demographic characteristics accepted by the participants in terms of age, sex, and educational attainment, the employability of persons with disabilities in terms of soft skills and hard skills, and the significant difference on the employment acceptability of PWDs in different industries based on the type of disability. Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. There are no restrictions in hiring PWD's: hearing impairment, motor disability, learning disability are considered employable, while visual impairment is slightly considered for employment.
2. Majority of the participants highly preferred hiring male or female PWDs in the age range of 18-27. While vocational graduate, college undergraduate college graduate, and post graduate person with disability has high employability.
3. Soft skills such as communication skills, decision making skills, leadership skills, collaboration skills, and problem-solving skills are highly required by major industries for employment. While hard skills such as computer application skills, data analysis skills, working linguistics skills, planning skills, and mathematical skills are highly required by companies in hiring PWDs.
4. Persons with disabilities are accepted by the specified industries regardless of their disability type; with the exception of the construction industry, in which there is a significant difference on the acceptability of PWDs depending on their disability type.

Based on the above conclusions, the following recommendations are made:

1. Future researchers may use the study as a reference in studying the employment opportunities of PWDs, taking into account factors such as skills, educational attainment, age and sex, and kind of disability.
2. Local government or any institution may use the study as a reference for implementation of policies related to employment of PWD, and may also encourage other industries to give employment opportunities and consideration to PWDS.
3. A more effective monitoring system must be in place to ensure that all companies – government and private, fully comply with all applicable provisions of the Republic Act No. 7277, or the Magna Carta for Disabled Persons.

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