

An Action Research on Employability Assessment, Challenges, and Coping Mechanism of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in Applying for a Job

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DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.807068>

Received: 08 June 2024; Accepted: 25 June 2024; Published: 02 August 2024

ABSTRACT

This research aimed to describe the self-perceived employability and lived experiences of persons with disabilities (PWDs) who are unemployed and face discrimination within the employment market. The results were gathered through mixed-method and action research approaches. There were forty-two respondents coming from three barangays in Koronadal City, South Cotabato, and their demographic profiles were further identified by their age, educational attainment, gender, and type of disability. Then, their self-perceived employability was measured, and from the findings, PWDs have moderate employability in communication skills but have challenges in expressive writing, showing low employability. They also have employable collaboration skills but may need help with individual projects. Professional development skills show employability in self-management skills but areas for improvement in technology-related tasks and preparedness because of low employability scores. From the thematic analysis, recurring themes reveal that PWDs face challenges such as social stigma, disproportionate requirements, and poor accommodation from employers, which hinder them from successful employment, and the coping mechanisms in response to those are persistent job hunting, acceptance of one's disability, presentable appearance, spiritual reliance, alternative working and seeking assistance. The findings from the research then suggest an intervention program that aims to develop basic employment literacy skills among PWDs to raise the chances of PWDs being accepted in the labor force, which contributes to the sustainable development goals of reducing inequalities and promoting decent work for all.

Keywords: Employability, Workforce Inclusion, Action Research, Labor Market, Persons with Disability

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Persons with disabilities have historically experienced exclusion in society, particularly in the workplace. In present years, PWDs remain a heavily marginalized group, the majority of which are incapable of landing a place in the job market due to limited access to education, unequal opportunities, and social stigma. The International Labor Organization presented that the unemployment rates of PWDs within the Asia-Pacific region are twice that of the general population, which often exceeds 80% (Ambiong, 2021). It suggests that PWDs are at a disadvantage because of their physical status, which impacts their employment outcomes. As a result, they refrain from participating in the labor market (International Labor Organization, 2022). The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2022) mentioned that people with long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments are considered PWDs. The term "disability" comprises three sections, as per the International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health (ICF); these are impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions. Roughly 80% of PWDs worldwide reside in low-income nations, most of whom are unemployed and reliant on government assistance. Furthermore, the official unemployment rate for PWDs of working age is at least twice that for those who have no disability (United Nations, 2021). This shows that PWDs are often discriminated against and neglected in the work market because of preconceived notions

that they are handicapped and incapable of doing work tasks.

As of 2023, the population of people living with disabilities are estimated at around 1.3 billion, which is 16% of the world's population, and around 785 million men and women with disabilities, or 80 percent, are of working age, according to the World Health Organization (2023). The International Labour Organization (2022) reported that unemployment rates in countries differ depending on the type of disability, with those suffering from mental illnesses experiencing the highest rates. In the United Kingdom, from July to September 2021, 53.5% of PWDs, aged 16 to 64, are employed with severe learning difficulties, autism, and mental illness having the lowest employment rates when compared to non-disabled people (Cook et al., 2022). In Australia, working-age people with disabilities are more likely to be unemployed for a longer period of time than those without (People With Disability in Australia, Unemployment, 2022). PWDs all around the world find it difficult to get employed because of discrimination. Based on 2008-2014 American Community Survey data, Kruse et al. (2017) stated that "disability pay gaps generally remain after accounting for job requirements, indicating that people with disabilities receive lower pay even when their specific impairments should not limit their productivity in an occupation." They concluded that "discrimination is likely to remain an influence on the pay of many workers with disabilities." It affects PWDs who do have a source of income and are in the workforce but are not receiving the adequate pay grade that they should have. A study conducted in India by Gupta and Priyadarshi (2020) found that PWDs believed affirmative action had a negative impact because it led to positive discrimination, reducing their confidence and development. Positive discrimination is the automatic favoritism of underrepresented minority groups over individuals from majority groups without regard for merit (Davidson-Morris Solicitors, 2022). Put simply, groups are given preferential treatment because they possess protected characteristics that are under the Equality Act of 2010, which applies in England, Scotland, and Wales, and one of these characteristics is disability (Protected Characteristics | Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), 2021).

Within the national context, persons with disabilities all around the Philippines still struggle to join the Philippine workforce. Even before they can find work, people with disabilities encounter various types of barriers, like using public transportation, inaccessible job postings, attitudinal barriers such as being pitied rather than treated equally, and limited access to general and skill education (Ines, 2023). Even with a law, RA 7277, or the "Magna Carta for Disabled Persons," that grants the rights and privileges of disabled persons, peers are still dissuading them, and families are hesitant to support them in their pursuit of a job. Around June 2020, PWD workers contributed a minimal share of 0.3 percent to the 2019/2020 Integrated Survey on Labor and Employment (2022). Furthermore, Avila et al. (2023) revealed that employees with disabilities frequently face career challenges. They also reported feeling left behind and unable to participate in activities due to their disabilities. The lack of support from local executives and the lack of local government also contributed to these challenges. Moreover, a study about PWDs working in local government offices by Imbong and Pielago (2021) claims that "PWDs in Mandaue City believed that when there is a positive attitude that promotes social acceptance and empowerment, PWDs can compete better in the workplace."

Moreover, the province of South Cotabato reports that 12,300 individuals, or 1.5% of the 825,816 household population, were identified as having a disability with the population of South Cotabato Recorded at 830 Thousand (Results From the 2010 Census of Population and Housing) | Philippine Statistics Authority | Republic of the Philippines, 2013). In 2000, the province had 689,663 households, or 1.2% of the total population, who were individuals with disabilities (PWDs). In the same year, there were about 8,200 PWDs (Population and Housing, Philippine Statistics Authority, Republic of the Philippines, 2013). The majority of PWDs in the province are financially struggling and are overly dependent on the support of their local government. As of 2023, it was reported by the Philippine Registry for Persons with Disabilities that 1,416 PWDs are registered in Koronadal City, and out of the aforementioned number, there are 1,088 who are unemployed. As the employment rate in the province surged to 2.74 million, or 97.7%, last year, the rate of employment for PWDs continued to stagnate and go unnoticed (MindaNews, 2016).

This study focused on the gap regarding the complex barriers that impact the employment opportunities and experiences of persons with disabilities (PWDs). As recommended by Noor et. al. (2021), to thoroughly understand the issues faced by PWDs, there is a need to do more in-depth studies. Existing literature predominantly focuses on general diversity and inclusion, often overlooking the unique aspects of disability

inclusion. This study targeted two of the Sustainable Development Goals. SDG number 10, which is reducing inequalities, intends to contribute valuable insights that can inform policymakers, employers, and advocacy groups on effective approaches to enhancing workforce inclusivity for PWDs. Then SDG 8, decent work and economic growth, focusing on the inclusivity of persons with disabilities in the Philippine employment system, identifying barriers and facilitators that impact their access to decent work, fostering a more inclusive and equitable job market, promoting their economic participation, and contributing to the overall goal of decent work.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to measure the level of self-perceived employability of unemployed PWDs and explore their challenges and coping mechanisms in applying for a job. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions: What is the demographic profile of persons with disabilities in Barangay Zone II, Zone III, and GPS in terms of their: age, educational attainment, gender and, type of disability? (1); What is the level of self-perceived employability of persons with disabilities? (2); What are the challenges of persons with disabilities in applying for a job? (3); What are the coping mechanisms of persons with disabilities in applying for a job? (4); Based on the results, what intervention program can be developed for the employment of persons with disabilities? (5).

Significance of the Study

The following entities will greatly benefit from the results of the study:

PWDs Organizations: Organizations that empower and support PWDs will find the results of this study significant. They are working towards eliminating challenges experienced by PWDs in the job market through the implementation of capacity-building programs and skills-training programs. It is their principle to create inclusive opportunities and better workplaces for PWDs. By doing so, these organizations promote equal practices and collaborate with authorized policymakers to strengthen policies that protect the rights of PWDs and empower them to participate in the economy.

Government Agencies: This study is beneficial to government agencies because of the data collected. The results will allow these agencies to oversee and understand the extent of the problem faced by PWDs. Their involvement in policy-making authorizes them to enforce laws and implement regulations that address the gaps found in the study. Moreover, they are equipped with sufficient resources that can fund PWD organizations and support/non-profit groups that promote employment opportunities for PWDs.

Support Groups: This study is beneficial to most support/non-profit groups because of the following points: Firstly, their direct access to communities and remote areas allows minorities to be represented and included. Often, individuals residing in secluded areas have unique and unheard perspectives and struggles that differ from others and also need to be investigated. Secondly, their capacity to provide timely statistics. The population size of PWDs living in remote areas is needed to allocate adequate resources and services.

Communities: The findings of the study are significant to communities because they highlight the difficulties PWDs encounter in the job market. It intends to increase attention and awareness regarding unemployment among PWDs, which is often overlooked. Communities are also important factors in reducing discrimination and biases towards these people in need. Additionally, the results can promote the greater empathy all PWDs need.

PWDs: This study is significant to PWDs since they are the targeted subjects of this study because they experience challenges in applying for jobs firsthand. Their involvement provides invaluable insights and responses that offer a comprehensive understanding of their situation, along with the barriers they continue to face.

By contributing crucial data, they provide policymakers and organizations with an idea of what particular intervention programs can be developed that accommodate and support PWDs in all aspects of employment, such as hiring, work hours, and the like.

Families: This study intends to inform families of the challenges and needs of their family members. Families are recognized as the basic support systems of PWDs; they are to provide mental, emotional, and physical support that is essential for PWD's general well-being. As primary caretakers, they are capable of influencing their attitudes towards employment. Families also possess the potential to combat all forms of discrimination and workplace inequalities by raising awareness. At the same time, families are vital for restoring the confidence level of PWDs.

Educators: This study is intended to shed light on unemployment matters that concern PWDs and how educators can also play a crucial role in supporting and providing assistance to these people in need. Educators help PWDs in ways such as connecting them with employers looking for people with disabilities, openly educating and debunking myths and stereotypes that surround PWDs, and advocating for and publishing further research about them.

Future Researchers: The study is beneficial for future researchers as it will serve as a blueprint and guide. Analyzing people with disabilities' willingness to work can provide insights into the economic impact of their labor force participation. Future researchers can investigate how employing PWDs can increase economic growth, reduce dependence on social welfare programs, and encourage financial independence.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study utilized both mixed-methods and action research. Specifically, the type of mixed method utilized was embedded research design, since it involves concentrating on gathering one type of data, such as numbers or surveys, while incorporating another, like interviews or observations, to offer deeper context and meaning to the main findings (Dovetail Editorial Team 2023).

The quantitative method is used in a survey that measures the level of self-perceived employability of PWDs. While the qualitative method, which is a face-to-face, one-on-one interview, is used after the researchers have gathered the data from the survey, and in that way, the qualitative data can add more substance to the quantitative data gathered in the survey. Action research is defined by Iowa State University (2023) as “a type of research approach that works toward change and aims to solve everyday issues and concerns that affect a group of people or a community.” Specifically, the researchers conducted participatory action research. Furthermore, the researchers conducted an intervention that was aligned to address the initial gathering of data, particularly the survey results about PWDs level of self-perceived employability, and had the objective of changing these results if ever a concerning result was shown..

Locale of the Study

The study was carried out in three barangays in Koronadal City, South Cotabato: Barangay Zone II, Barangay Zone III, and Barangay GPS. Out of the 27 barangays, the researchers selected the three barangays because they are among the top 10 highest populations of PWDS. According to the data from the Philippine Registry for Persons with Disability (2023), Barangay GPS has the highest PWD population in Koronadal City, with 154 people. Barangay Zone III has the third-highest PWD population with 124 people, and Zone II has the seventh-highest PWD population with 64 people. Furthermore, the locations are easily accessible and available to the researchers, which guarantees a seamless and practical data-gathering process.

Respondents of the Study

The primary respondents of the study were unemployed PWDs. Forty-two identified PWDs were asked to partake in a survey. These respondents were selected from three different locales. The researchers gathered at least fourteen respondents from each aforementioned locale. Afterward, seven out of forty-two respondents were chosen to participate in a semi-structured interview.

Sampling Technique

There were two sampling techniques for this study. Firstly, total population sampling was applied in the quantitative method because this technique is often utilized when the whole population is examined (Glen, 2018). Some PWDs require different accommodations and support that this paper may not be able to cater to. It is just as important to realize the limitations of this project. The specific criteria are as follows: the respondent should at least be 18 years of age or older. Secondly, they should fall into either of these categories: a) visual impairment; b) auditory impairment; c) physical impairment; and d) speech impairment. Lastly, they should be willing to partake in the conduct of the study.

Moreover, for the qualitative method, purposive sampling was applied. This type of technique is recognized as non-probability sampling, which involves the careful selection of participants based on a criterion. This sampling technique helped the researchers identify seven participants out of forty-two respondents who took part in the one-on-one, semi-structured interview. As for its inclusion criteria, it had the same criteria as the total population sampling.

Research Instrument

The research tools employed to collect the data were survey questionnaires and interview questions. For the quantitative part, an adapted questionnaire from Natalie J. Ciarocco and David B. Strohmetz's (2017) study entitled "The Employable Skills Self-Efficacy Survey: An Assessment of and Resource for Fostering Skill Development" was used. In this survey, there were a total of 28 items assessing persons with disabilities's self-perceived employable skills, which are divided into three general types: communication, collaboration, and professional developmental skills. The Chronbach's alpha scores of this survey questionnaire range from .67 to .87, which means the questions are valid and credible to answer.

For the qualitative part of the study, the researchers utilized a semi-structured interview and created self-made interview questions that encompassed a set of 11 interview items. The formulated questions underwent thorough validation by professionals and consultants, ensuring robustness and reliability. To safeguard participants' confidentiality, codes were employed to protect their identities throughout the research process.

Table 1: 5-point Likert Scale

Scale	Intervals	Descriptive Rating
5	5.00-4.21	Highly Agree
4	4.20-3.21	Agree
3	3.20-2.61	Moderately Agree
2	2.60-1.81	Disagree
1	1.80-1.00	Highly Disagree

Note: Icban (2019)

Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers started by creating a letter seeking permission that clearly states the study's purpose and the request for obtaining consent to conduct the study. It was sent to the school administration for approval. Once the approval was received, the researchers proceeded to schedule a time for participants to participate in the data gathering. Participants were provided with a letter of invitation, an informed consent form, and the survey questionnaire. Once the survey questionnaire was answered completely, the researchers collected it, and the data was inputted, organized, and analyzed. A follow-up, face-to-face, one-on-one interview was also requested from specific participants. The researchers transcribed the responses obtained from these interviews and conducted a thorough analysis to extract underlying themes.

Ethical Consideration

The researchers conducted this study in complete accordance with established research protocols. The researchers ensured that the respondents approved the informed consent form. The participants were informed that their participation is indeed voluntary, private, and confidential, meaning their identities will remain anonymous. Additionally, participants were informed that the data gathered was solely for academic purposes and was kept with the utmost confidentiality.

Trustworthiness of the Study

In this section, the study employed a mixed approach in analyzing the data. Though this study required validity and reliability of the gathered data, the trustworthiness of the data gathered were based on the thematic analysis, triangulation method, and peer debriefing. In the thematic analysis, data were analyzed highlighting annotation, clustering, identification of themes, and writing the emergent themes. Secondly, the triangulation method guaranteed the validity of the responses of the participants in the study. Finally, the peer debriefing phase required the researcher to seek help for panel of experts to analyze the accuracy of the thematic approach in the study.

Dependability

It was highlighted through defenses in order to establish the reliability of the data which emphasized the specificity of the data only applied to the participant and not beyond its means.

Transferability

In the study, the transferability of data gathered from the participant most likely present an indefinite outcome for future researchers since it depended on the context of the study such as the characteristics of the participant.

Confirmability

The confirmability of the research can be expounded on the ability of other researchers to replicate this study with respect to the original author. Researchers should establish boundaries that sets the limit of the replicability of the data.

Data Analysis

The researchers analyzed the data using two different tools since the nature of the study is mixed-method, employing both quantitative and qualitative data. The data acquired was treated according to its nature. For the quantitative data, the researchers utilized descriptive statistics to get the weighted mean.

Using this tool provided a more accurate estimation of the population mean, which was the basis for the interpretation of the entire population. Additionally, the use of frequency distribution was utilized to present the demographic characteristics of the PWD respondents.

For the qualitative data, this study used thematic analysis to analyze the data. In line with Creswell (2014), the systematic method of categorizing data using thematic analysis involves analyzing and grouping particular statements into themes that best capture the phenomenon of interest. For this stage, all of the research questions were answered, and there are key findings that aid in the understanding of the experiences of PWDs, the subject of this study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presented the key findings, implications, and insights of the study.

Demographic Characteristics of Persons with Disability

The first statement of the problem intends to identify the demographic characteristics of the respondents of the study through a survey. Frequency Distribution was used to present the findings of the survey.

Table 2.1: Age of the Respondents

Age Group	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
18-28	5	12%
29-39	5	12%
40-50	9	21%
51-60	15	36%
60+	8	19%
Overall	42	100%

Table 2.1 revealed that there were five (12%) respondents between the ages of 18 and 25, five (12%) between the ages of 26 and 35, nine (21%) between the ages of 36 and 45, fifteen (36%) with the bulk of responses between the ages of 46 and 55, and eight (19%) more who are around 56 years of age or older. The age profile results of the respondents clearly show that persons with disabilities are typically classified as middle-aged, falling within the 46 to 55-year-old age group. In the same survey by Marella et al. (2016), it was found that middle-aged individuals with disability in Quezon City are the most prevalent age group with disability, followed by old age, with an age group of 56 and above. The findings from the survey suggest that age is interrelated with one's disability; as more persons with disabilities are 46 years old and older, the rates of disability increase, partially due to biological changes and some age restrictions (Barlow, 2015).

Table 2.2: Educational Attainment of the Respondents

Educational Attainment	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
College Graduate	6	14%
High School Graduate	34	80%
Elementary Graduate	4	6%
Overall	42	100%

Table 2.2 indicated that 6 (14%) of the respondents are able to attain a college-level education, while 34 (80%), which is the majority of the PWD, are able to attain a high school-level education, and 4 (6%) are able to attain an elementary-level education. Recorded by the National Center for Education Statistics (2017), within the group of individuals with and without disabilities, the rate of employment was lower for those who had not finished high school (62%) or had only completed high school (73%), compared to those with some college education. Which greatly affects the employment rate of the PWDs themselves.

The research of Durian and Perena (2022) revealed that because of the lack in facilities, policies, and student support services within Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to address the needs of students with disabilities. This has turned into a significant challenges for students with disabilities. Another barrier faced by PWDs within school are the continuous negative attitudes of other people and stereotypes in the education system (Persons with Disabilities, 2018).

Table 2.3: Gender of the Respondents

Gender	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Male	21	50%
Female	21	50%
Overall	42	100%

In Table 2.3, out of the total 42 respondents, it was also found that 21 are female (50%) and 21 are male (50%) respondents. The gender result of PWDs shows that PWDs are classified into two categories: male and female. According to UNESCO, around 1 billion men and women are living with disabilities. In the study of Biswas et al., (2022), both men and women can have different injuries and disabilities. Every individual of any gender can experience different injury and disabilities, regardless of their gender. Disability experiences vary widely among individuals, regardless of gender.

Table 2.4: Type of Disability of the Respondents

Type of Disability	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Auditory	4	9%
Physical	27	64%
Speech	6	14%
Visual	5	12%
Overall	42	100%

Table 2.4 revealed that respondents are further categorized according to their disabilities: among them, five (12%) have vision impairment, four (9%) have hearing impairment, twenty-seven (64%) have orthopedic/physical impairment, and six (14%) have speech impairment. According to data released by the Department of Health (DOH) in August 2023, physical disabilities are common (461,044 cases) and frequently the consequence of illnesses or accidents that occur during working age, with stroke being the leading cause. Birth abnormalities caused by congenital disorders are extremely significant, impacting millions of people annually, particularly in the Philippines.

3.2 Level of Self-perceived Employability of PDWs in terms of Communication Skills, Collaboration Skills, and Professional Development Skills

Table 3.1: Level of Employability based on their Communication Skills

Indicator	Mean	Interpretation
1. People easily understand what I mean when I am talking to them.	4.29	Highly Employable
2. Writing is a strong skill for me.	2.9	Moderately Employable
3. I can persuasively present my ideas through my writing.	3.17	Moderately Employable
4. I can manage to speak in front of a group of people.	3.38	Moderately Employable
5. People often understand my point when reading my writing.	2.69	Moderately Employable

6. I typically remember all information I read.	3.19	Moderately Employable
7. I can easily follow when someone is verbally telling me what needs to be done.	3.36	Moderately Employable
8. It is easy for me to follow written directions.	3.93	Employable
9. I find it easy to verbally express my thoughts to others.	3.29	Moderately Employable
10. It is easy for me to follow verbal directions.	3.86	Employable
General Weighted Mean	3.4	Moderately Employable

Note: 4.21-5.00 = Highly Employable

3.41-4.20 = Employable

2.61-3.40=Moderately Employable

1.81-2.60= Less Employable

1.00-1.80= Not Employable

The table above presents the communication skills of people with disabilities in Barangay Zone II, Zone III, and GPS. The general weighted mean of 3.40 shows that PWDs in the area are moderately employable with their skills in communication. Item No. 1 has the highest mean score of 4.29 in the communication table, which is interpreted as highly employable. For the reason that they perceive people to understand them well. The results also show a high ability to understand written information in item No. 8 (3.93), meaning it is easier for them to follow written instructions than their ability to understand verbal instructions, which scored 3.86 in item No. 10. They also have shown struggles in making a straight and convincing point when they write, as shown in item no. 5 with a mean score of 2.69. This is because writing is not a skill they have as something good based on the score mean of 2.90 in item no. 2. The skill of copywriting, according to the research of Vicencio (2023), is one of the required skills with a mean score of 3.08 that PWDs must possess in order to be hired, according to employers in Bulacan, Philippines. This means the PWDs needs to enhance their writing skills in order for them to have higher chances in acquiring employment. In summary, persons with disabilities' communication skills vary with different PWDs. Some may have difficulty expressing themselves in writing or speaking in front of groups, and others have strong written and verbal communication skills.

Table 3.2: Level of Employability based on their Collaboration Skills

Indicator	Mean	Interpretation
11. I feel comfortable working in group settings.	4.17	Employable
12. I can easily fit into any group work setting.	4.17	Employable
13. I prefer to work with people on jobs.	3.17	Employable
14. I am good at working in groups successfully.	3.79	Employable
15. I think I do some of my best work in group settings.	4	Employable
General Weighted Mean	3.85	Employable

Note: 4.21-5.00 = Highly Employable

3.41-4.20 = Employable

2.61-3.40= Moderately Employable

1.81-2.60= Less Employable

1.00-1.80= Not Employable

The table shows the results of the collaboration skills conducted on PWDs in three barangays: Brgy. Zone II, Zone III, and Barangay GPS. Based on the results, the respondents are employable based on their responses to each question. For items No. 11 and 12, the respondents scored above 4 points, indicating that PWDs are employable in working within a group setting, which suggests that they have high adaptability. In line with Vicencio (2023), the skill of adaptability goes under the category of highly required job skills, with a mean score of 4.55 indicating that employers highly consider PWDs who have strong adaptability when working in a group setting. In items No. 13 and 14, the respondents garnered above 3 points, signifying their employability and teamwork in working with other people on projects. In the same research from Vicencio (2023), teamwork plays a vital role in PWDs chances of hiring, as this skill falls under highly required by employers with a mean score of 4.32. As for item No. 15, it scored 4 points, suggesting that the respondents are employable in giving their best performance in group settings. The overall mean is 3.85, which signifies that PWDs are employable in terms of their collaboration skills. The findings prove that PWDs are capable and meet the requirements needed when it comes to their collaboration skills.

Table 3.3: Level of Employability based on their Professional Developmental Skills

Indicator	Mean	Interpretation
16. I find it easy to manipulate numbers in a spreadsheet.	1.5	Less Employable
17. I do not volunteer for more than I have to already do.	2.36	Less Employable
18. I feel comfortable in professional settings.	2.77	Moderately Employable
19. I find it easy to finish work from start to finish.	3.9	Employable
20. I can easily use software to create tables and graphs to effectively display information.	1.71	Less Employable
21. I am eager to learn new information.	4.28	Highly Employable
22. When I have multiple tasks, I can easily set priorities.	4.21	Highly Employable
23. It is easy for me to find the information that I need using search engines such as Google.	2.67	Moderately Employable
24. I am comfortable learning to use new technology when working.	2.71	Moderately Employable
25. I am sure what it means to dress “professionally.”	2.76	Moderately Employable
26. I don’t struggle to manage my time.	3.29	Employable
27. I rarely procrastinate when working.	3.33	Employable
28. I don’t struggle with being self-motivated in my work.	4.02	Employable
General Weighted Mean	3.02	Moderately Employable

Note: 4.21-5.00 = Highly Employable

3.41-4.20 = Employable

2.61-3.40= Moderately Employable

1.81-2.60= Less Employable

1.00-1.80= Not Employable

The table above shows the results of the level of self-perceived professional developmental skills of PWDs from Barangays Zone II, Zone III, and GPS. Items no. 21, 22, 26, and 27 obtained a rating of 3 to 4 points with a mean of 3.78, which is targeted towards the respondents' self management skills. This implies that PWDs are, in fact, employable because they are eager and determined to work. In relation to the study of Vicencio (2023), self-management with a mean score of 4.17 is a required skill that employers are seeking from PWDs who want to join the work market. This result shows that PWDs meet the requirements for their self management skills. Additionally, according to another study by Adhikari (2017), PWDs claimed that they were motivated to participate because of the following reasons; they wanted a job, they needed a job, they had free time, relatives advised them to have a job, the training was free, they were personally interested, and they really wanted to do something. Besides that, PWDs are also systematic individuals because they are capable of setting their priorities straight.

Moreover, items no. 18, 19, 25, and 28 received a 2 to 4 point rating, while item no. 17 received a low rating of 2.36 but overall attained a mean of 3.11, which signifies that PWDs' professional skills are moderately employable. The result suggests that PWDs are capable of working in a professional setting. They can feel comfortable in public spaces, accomplish work efficiently, and do not struggle with self-motivation. Despite the generally positive findings, item no. 17 can still be further improved in terms of volunteerism in a professional setting. Manaf's (2018) study concludes that fostering a comfortable workplace includes the need to address societal beliefs and organizational values to create an inclusive environment and a diverse workforce.

Furthermore, the overall mean for items no. 16, 20, 23, and 24 is 2.14, which indicates that PWDs are less employable due to their technological skills. The results revealed that PWDs find it challenging to use software programs, manipulate digital graphs, and use tables. PWDs, especially those with physical impairments, have encountered challenges in using technology, primarily related to physically operating the device (Boucher et al., 2021.).

Table 3.4: Level of Self-Perceived Employability of PWDs

Employment Skill	Mean	Interpretation
Communication Skill	3.4	Moderately Employable
Collaboration Skill	3.85	Employable
Professional Development Skill	3.02	Moderately Employable
Overall	42	100%

Based on the table, persons with disabilities perceive themselves as moderately employable, with a general weighted mean score of 3.43. Their ability to work well with others is high, scoring 3.85, indicating that they are really good at collaborating with people; however, their professional developmental skills received a lower rating of 3.02, indicating potential areas for improvement in terms of career growth and advancement. Communication skills were rated at 3.40, indicating a moderate level of proficiency in conveying ideas and information. Overall, the data suggests that PWDs possess strong collaborative skills but may need further development in professional skills and communication skills to enhance their employability.

Experienced Challenges of PWDs in Applying for a Job

To better describe the experienced challenges of PWDs in applying for a job, the researchers analyzed the participants' statements. From the analysis done, the researchers found that the experience challenges in applying for a job are Social Stigma, Poor Accommodation from Employers, Discrimination from the Labor Force, and Incapable to Comply with Requirements.

Social Stigma

A common theme in the experienced challenges of PWDs in applying for a job is social stigma. It is a growing

concern as individuals with disabilities become more aware of their rights and seek work within assigned quotas, however those around them still attempt to undermine their integrity and create barriers because of the competitive environment (Ahmad and Saeed, 2024). Persons with disabilities were frequently viewed as unable to make significant contributions to society, and many did not believe they could perform the majority of jobs or hold positions that required them to assist and support others (Barbareschi et al., 2021).

This is further observed in the statements made by the participants. Participant 1 stated that: “50/50 kung matanggap ka o hindi kay tungod sa kapansanan mo. Wala ko nahadlok mag apply ako nalang mismo nag panubo sa sarili ko kay kung mag apply ko 50/50 ko kung maka sulod ko trabaho tungod sa kapansanan ko.” [It’s 50/50 if you get accepted or not because of your disability. I wasn’t afraid to apply; I just told myself that if I apply, it’s 50/50 if I can get a job because of my disability.] PWDs are aware that applying for a job is an open opportunity, but the high possibility of being rejected hinders them. They are seen as unable to contribute to society, and it becomes an internalized struggle for them because that notion causes them to develop low self-esteem and confidence in themselves. According to Trani et al. (2020), “both unemployment and low education are more common among persons with disabilities, aggravating the disability, depression, and poor self-esteem nexus.”

Disability can actually be a valuable asset because persons with disabilities offer unique perspectives and skills. However, they’re often viewed as burdens on teams, which can be disheartening (Ryan, 2020). This was very evident as participant 2 stated, “Abi nila hindi mo kaya, instead nga sa company asset ka sa ila na group pananaw nila sa imo is liability” [They believe you can’t do it, so they often think that you are a liability in a company instead of an asset], which creates a significant barrier in workplaces as it can create misunderstanding and tension (Cogno, 2024). This not only hinders a PWD’s ability to showcase their skills but also fosters feelings of isolation and unfair treatment. Instead of valuing the unique contributions a PWD can bring to the team, this narrow-minded perspective creates an environment where they struggle to feel included and respected (Carney, 2023).

Poor Accommodation from Employers

Inconsiderate employers tend to make job applications a hassle for PWDs (Ramachandra et. al., 2017). Olsen (2022) revealed that their inability to cater to necessary employment adjustments is heavily rooted in ableism, which leads to a low probability of a successful job application among PWDs. “Wala man ganon na naranasan, hindi po kami binibigyan ng accommodation,” [I have no particular experience with that, we are not given any accommodation.] participant 7 shared.

Participant 7’s response relates to Olsen’s (2022) study, in which it was concluded that employers are unwilling to provide any sort of support in terms of PWDs’ employment. This statement is supported by what Ramachandra et. al. (2017) have claimed, employers’ attitudes toward disabled persons do vary for the reason that other countries may not promote PWDs as qualified workers due to incorrect stereotypes and personal biases. For instance, according to the European Disability Forum (Felix, 2023), despite implementing equal employment in certain European Union states, disabled applicants remain unaccommodated due to insufferable employers and limited funds.

Evidently, the lack of reasonable accommodation is primarily caused by reluctant employers that refuse to be educated, by this PWDs remain insignificant workers due to exclusionary corporate cultures (Olsen, 2022). An individual may be qualified to work; however, due to their disability, the chances of being hired are low. Even so, PWDs with jobs are still denied by their employers of their workplace policy rights, receive lower salary compared to other workers, and endure hostile work environments and constant bullying (Felix, 2023).

Disproportionate Requirements

The theme tells about the struggles of PWDs in complying with the requirements needed for a job. According to participant 4, “Ako lang ang nag apply sa akon. Bali ako- ako ang nag apply sa city nga ako lang isa. Ako nag himo sang data, ako naghimo sang, tung ano bala, applicant letter. Daw resume. Ngaa kis a nabudlayan ko sa proseso.” [I’m the only one who applied for my job. I applied to the city, and I’m the only one who did it. I

prepared the data, I prepared the, whatever, applicant letter. Like a resume. I find the process of providing the requirements difficult.]

Based on Participant 4's response as they are alone in complying with the requirements there can be a multitude of reasons as to why they encounter these challenges. One can be the numerous buildings in the Philippines lacking accessibility for individuals using wheelchairs, making it nearly impossible for them to apply for jobs or attend interviews (Impact, 2021).

Participant 4 also added, "Challenge din po sa amin ang napakaraming requirement naipapasa. Gaya nalang ang pag-I.ID nahihirapan kaming magpicture na ganyan pag pa photocopy gastos po yan lahat. Transportation gastuhin." [The multitude of requirements we need to submit is also a challenge for us. For instance, obtaining an ID poses difficulty as we struggle to take a picture that meets the standards, and photocopying entails additional expenses. Transportation costs also add up.]

According to Shen et al. (2023), travelers with disabilities face multiple barriers in every mode of travel, although we lack good data by severity of impairment, income, automobile ownership, and a range of socioeconomic characteristics. Furthermore, the increasing rate of the Philippines' public transportation system, which urgently requires modernization of outdated equipment, financial instability among operators, and insufficient backing for advancement (Samson, 2023).

Coping Mechanisms of PWDs in Applying for a Job

To better describe the coping mechanisms of PWDs in applying for a job, the researchers analyzed the participants' statements. From the analysis done, the researchers found that the experience challenges in applying for a job are Persistent Job-hunting, Acceptance of One's Disability, Presentable Appearance, Spiritual Reliance, Alternative Choice of Work, and Assistance Seeking.

Persistent Job-hunting

Persistent job hunting, as defined by Sellevoll (2016), refers to the unwavering determination and continuous effort of persons with disabilities (PWDS) in seeking employment opportunities.. This persistence is characterized by a mindset focused on resilience and the pursuit of employment goals, regardless of the limitations imposed by disabilities. This is evident from the statement of participant 2 where they said "Ang imo nalang is determination, courage na magpadayon nalang, Hindi pag eh mind mag focus ka nalang sa pagpsngita trabaho". [You just need to have determination and courage to keep on going. I think you have to avoid thinking of negative things and focus on finding for a job] The statement highlights the importance of developing a persevering mindset that encompasses challenges.

Another statement comes from participant 4, where they stressed, "Naga sigi-sigi lang gyapon ko apply para-sigi-sigi lang ko apply asta hindi ma dawat- asta hindi ma- na waay pa ko may makita na ubra bala haw. Ga sigi-sigi lang gyapon ko apply. Baskin diin lang." [I apply and apply until I get accepted, so that- I try and try until I'm not accepted anymore- Until I can't find a job anymore, I just try and try to apply. Anywhere I can, I apply.]

According to Sundar et al. (2017), this statement reflects the persistent approach of PWDs in continuously applying for jobs, which suggests that their first step in seeking employment is continuous application and job hunting, where they regard the importance of work very highly because they believe that entering the work market will boost their confidence and participation not only in the field of employment, but also their social participation. Through employment, misconceptions about them will gradually disappear, proving themselves that their disability is not a hindrance to being perceived as normal (Amin et. al., 2019).

Acceptance of One's Disabilities

Acceptance is having an open attitude toward one's emotions, thoughts, or external events, which helps in regulating oneself from negativity and mental stress (Wojnaroska et al., 2022). In addition, self-acceptance as per Gupta (2020), is the ability of a person to openly accept their strengths and weaknesses without judgment.

This means that acceptance as a coping strategy for PWDs enables them to accept their flaws and become more vocal about the things they lack. The application of acceptance among PWDs is highlighted by the statement coming from Participant 1, where they said, “Nakulangan sila sa akon trabaho abi ti gina prangka ko na kung ano pa ang kulang kay para madugangan pa ang akon trabaho.” [They are not satisfied with my work, so I asked them straightforwardly of the things I need to improve.]

PWD’s have certain restrictions which make it hard for them to do things just like a normal person (Ebuenyi et al., 2019). Participant 1 expressed that by accepting their flaws as someone who has lost one arm, they constantly try to make up for the things that they lack in order to improve by accepting their flaws. As claimed by Kaur and Leong (2018), acceptance of disability is connected to better adjustment of disability and uniting it into their lifestyle to improve their quality of life. Another response that shows self- acceptance comes from Participant 2, where they said, “Well, kung ang work is not for you, kung hindi para sa imo, just take it as it is. Kay masilin sila ay hindi ni pwede kay amu ni. Wala lang hindi ka lang ma hurt na lain” [Well, if the work is not for you, if it's not meant for you, just take it as it is. If they insist that you are not capable, just don't get hurt.]

Presentable Appearance

Being presentable, appearance-wise, is among the ways PWDs cope when job application challenges arise. Participant 4 answered, “Kung hindi ka naka formal, waay ka na balan– dasun hindi ka limpyo, hindi ka pagtanggapon...” [If one is not formal enough, unknowledgeable–dirty, surely you won't get accepted.] They expressed that the way they dress and carry themselves is an important factor when applying for a job; a lack of this aspect may result in getting rejected. A study reports that clothing gradually builds PWDs’ self-confidence and boosts their self-efficacy in such a way that their desire to participate in the labor market heightens (McBee-Black & Ha-Brookshire, 2018). Moreover, wearing an outfit that mirrors one’s personality, yet presents themselves professionally has positive impacts on their mindset and job application outcomes. Showing up in interviews and job applications with well-put-together attire speaks volume about the person that they are. It can signify dedication, strong work ethics, and professionalism, which can possibly increase their chances of landing the job.

Similarly, as for participant 7’s response, “kasi kung medyo marumi ang kasuotan natin, hindi maayos parang nandidiri din ang mga tao para sa atin. Lalong lao na yung ano paghindi tayo mabango isa na yan sa mga magdodown sa aming pagkatao.” [Because if one is not clean in terms of clothing, not neat enough, people appear to be disgusted. Especially if we do not smell great, it opens an opportunity for people to shame us.] This statement recognized the importance of self-grooming. Needless to say, basic personal hygiene is universal and vital to everyone. As simple as taking a daily bath, it is already an essential practice that benefits both physical and mental aspects, which improves self-image and productivity. Unfortunately, PWDs of today still face the challenges of societal standards and expectations. And that it seems more than just a need to appear more presentable and acceptable to make up for their impairment. Its implications cause pressure to fit in, which can result in damaged self-esteem. Regardless, PWDs see it as a coping mechanism that will lessen the likelihood of being shamed.

Spiritual Reliance

Unemployed PWDs are more inclined to turn to praying and participating in religious activities to cope with their unemployed status. As Park and Kim (2021) state, “Individuals in the low economic group were more religious than those in the high economic one.” It’s evident that religious activities give PWDs hope and strength to go through their day as participant 7 expresses, “Naga pangamuyo nalang ko, ma’am. Para wala namang ibang mga tao ang makakatulong sa atin, sa pinaka last nating sandigan kasi oh hinihingan natin ng tulong ay ang ating Panginoon.” [I just pray, ma’am. It feels like no other people can help me, my last support is asking for help from our Lord.]

Participant 6 also mentioned that “Tsaka syempre prayer din kumbaga sa buhay nyo kase syempre mga nangyayari kailangan talaga rooted ka sa mga pagdarasal hindi lang para sakin syempre para sa pamilya mo.” [Besides, of course, there is prayer in your life because, of course, things are happening; you really need to be

rooted in prayers, not just for me, of course, for your family]. Persons with disabilities are more focused on praying and doing what God asks of them in order to live a better life (Franssen et al., 2020).

Furthermore, Franssen et al. (2020) expounded that persons with disabilities believed that God gave them disabilities as a challenge or for a greater purpose that they would discover later in life. Participant 2 conveyed, “Ang first gid ang Ginoo. Pray, pray, pray. Although may ara gabulig financially, materially, pero naga pati ko ya na amu na sila gin himo sang Ginoo para man paagi man mangin mapagun ka, maging blessing ka man sa iban.” [Always put the Lord first. Pray, pray, pray. Although there are people who are helping you financially and materially, I believe that’s how the Lord made them to strengthen you, and you also become a blessing to others.]

Alternative Choice of Work

PWD’s carry burdens within themselves, affecting their mental and emotional stability as they see themselves as different from others. Another coping mechanism they have to divert themselves from the negative thoughts is the presence of alternative work choices. Doing household chores is one that they use to cope with, because engaging in cleaning activities can have mental health benefits. It allows individuals to feel a sense of mastery over their surroundings and involves repetitive tasks that can induce a calming effect on the mind (Gordon, 2023). They also do this as a multitask to provide for their family. This is also stated by participant 6, “Sa ngayon para may libangan ngayon gumagawa nga ako ng assignment, e yun lang libang tsaka syempre yung mga trabahong bahay.” [I help with the chores of washing dishes, cooking rice, and sweeping in exchange for our meal.]

Participant 6 also mentioned that he takes entertainment while doing his assignment and learning. This idea of coping is supported, as stated by Chen Zang et. al. (2018), “learning new knowledge improves both skills and understanding.” This develops a sense of competence and progression throughout, which gives confidence to the person and relieves stress with the idea.

In another scope, participants 3 and 7 also said, “Nag kakanin vendor ako, 10 years nga lakad sa dalan.” [I am a street food vendor, with 10 years of experience walking the streets.] (P3) “Bukod sa pagmamasage marami din po akong alam. Marunong din ako gumawa ng mga lamesa, mga katre, mga kabinet kahit hindi ako makakita.” [Besides massaging, I also have a lot of other skills. I know how to make tables, beds, and cabinets, even though I cannot see.] (P7). They either substitute work with self-employment to achieve their initial goals or adopt new goals. According to Trezzini et al. (2022), some PWDs also pursue different career strategies when faced with challenges directly linked to their disability or dissatisfaction with their job or work environment.

Seeking Assistance

According to Stretton et. al. (2018), assistance seeking is where someone asks for help; it may be from formal sources, informal sources, or online sources. Majority of the participants have stated pertaining to the fact that they have people who help and assist them. Participant 1 mentioned, “...Ga bulig sakon pakaon tung bata ko nga isa nga babae amo to ga bakal bugas tung isa ko naman ka bata nga babae amo to ga bakal sud an.” [My daughter is helping me to feed and she is the one who is buying rice, and my other daughter is the one who is buying the dish.] Family members are primary and are unpaid, a source of people with disabilities that assist with their living (Grossman, 2016). Participant 1 is being provided by their family when it comes to daily living. Family members with individuals with disabilities provide assistance in physical, emotional, and financial support to support their family members for a stable life. Families of PWDs do not receive any compensation for their service because they have the dedication to take care of the well being of their loved one’s.

“Family tsaka syempre family ko—mga anak ko asawa ko—yun ang suporta ko” [Family, and of course, my family—my children and my spouse—are my support.]

Family support holds significance in family relationships in providing essential support. Family members serve as moral support, comfort, and empathy in the life of PWDs; this also plays a pivotal role in providing support and care for their family. According to Carli Friedman (2019), families hold a unique position in that they may

incorporate and reinforce ableism and work to fight it through empowerment to bring out an understanding of disability and its attitude.

Determining the Intervention Program

Based on the data provided, Table 3.3 obtained an overall mean of 3.02, which indicated that PWDs' level of professional developmental skills is moderately employable. Compared to the respondents' communication skills and collaboration skills, their professional developmental skills gained the lowest general weighted mean. Apparently, respondents fall flat in items no. 16, and 18 targeted towards their technological skills, while items no. 20, 24, and 25 are professional skills focused. PWDs can hardly operate online software applications, create graphs, and make use of digital tables; at the same time, they are not as well-versed in how to dress appropriately and be comfortable in a professional setting. Despite negative outcomes in these areas, items no. 26, 27, and 28 highlighted that PWDs are diligent. Ratings spanning from 3 to 4 points imply that PWDs maintain motivation while working, and are also capable of prioritizing tasks even in adverse situations. These skills are deemed prevalent to have as an employed citizen since they enable individuals to function accordingly in a variety of jobs (Cruz et al., 2020). From the results presented, it is concluded that PWDs are capable of having employable skills that can make them qualified for a job. This entails that the intervention should be centered on providing PWDs with basic employment literacy, such as the writing of a resume, how to do job interviews, and how to dress professionally in such activities. In addition, PWDs are also called to be empowered and provided with a realistic yet ideal list of job opportunities in accordance with their professional development skills.

A Seminar-Workshop for Workforce Inclusivity: Employment Literacy, Empowerment, and Job Opportunities was implemented on March 16, 2024, at Brgy. GPS Gymnasium. To aid the remaining development of skills the PWDs need for employability. With this intervention program, it aims to enhance their employment literacy, empower PWDs, and increase their knowledge of the presented list of job opportunities that is aligned with the type of disability they are categorized in. The workshop would only open them to opportunities; the decision to grab the opportunity will still lie with the participating PWDs.

Table 3.5: Evaluation of the Participants on the Intervention Program

Indicator	Mean	Interpretation
Objectives	4.52	Highly effective
Planning and implementation	4.61	Highly effective
Content	4.39	Highly effective
Facilities/arrangements	4.22	Highly effective
Speakers	4.48	Highly effective
General Weighted Mean	4.44	Highly Effective

Note. 4.21-5.00 = Highly Effective

3.41-4.20 = Effective

2.61-3.40 = Moderately Effective

1.81-2.60 = Less Effective

1.00-1.80 = Not Effective

The "Workforce Inclusivity: Employment Literacy, Empowerment, and Job Opportunities" seminar workshop received an exceptional evaluation, garnering a highly effective rating of 4.44. Specifically tailored for individuals with disabilities encountering challenges in securing meaningful employment, the program excelled

across various metrics. Its meticulous planning and seamless implementation stood out as the strongest attributes, earning commendable scores of 4.61. Moreover, the workshop's objectives, speakers, and content were lauded, all surpassing a rating of 4.39. While facilities and arrangements received a slightly lower score of 4.22, indicating room for enhancement in the workshop space, overall feedback underscores the workshop's significant impact in empowering individuals with disabilities to navigate the workforce successfully.

CONCLUSION

Statistical analysis revealed that PWDs self-perceived communication skills and collaborative skills are both employable. It is an indication of their effective transmission of verbal ideas and immense value for teamwork. Undeniably, PWDs lacking technological skills make them unfit for computer-based tasks, but that does not make them any less employable when it comes to other physical work. Additionally, it has been proven that their dedication and desire make them more than capable of being a part of the job market.

Moreover, the challenges of PWDs' in applying for jobs were explored. Similar answers were derived from each individual, participants within Barangays Zone II, Zone III, and GPS identified social stigma as one of their challenges. According to what has been stated, employers tend to be reluctant when an applicant is disabled, they plainly conclude that PWDs are incompetent workers. In addition to that, they give the impression that there is a chance for PWDs to work, unbeknownst to these job seekers that by this time employers have already selected someone unimpaired to be a part of the corporate. Secondly, poor accommodation, which PWDs recognize as a barrier to the advancement of their careers since unaccommodating employers are more likely to make job application processes difficult. Next, PWDs' constant experience with discrimination from the labor force denies them their career opportunities and growth, and encourages an open space for bullying. Finally, PWDs' are unable to comply with necessary requirements because there are simply too many. These requirements are often designed without consideration of limitations and needs. PWDs do not have the funds or luxury of time to accomplish what is expected of them, unlike able-bodied individuals.

With these aforementioned challenges it is countered by coping strategies identified by Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) which reflect their resilience and adaptability in navigating challenges in both life and employment. Through persistent job-hunting, acceptance of their disability, and maintaining a presentable appearance, PWDs demonstrate determination and professionalism in pursuing employment opportunities. Additionally, spiritual reliance provides them with inner strength and hope, while exploring alternative career paths allows them to leverage their skills and interests effectively. Seeking assistance from various sources, including family, friends, and community organizations, underscores their resourcefulness and ability to access valuable support networks. Together, these coping mechanisms empower PWDs to overcome obstacles, assert their capabilities, and pursue fulfilling and meaningful careers despite the barriers they may face in the job market.

IMPLICATION

Based on the results, the following implications have been formulated to address the significant entities mentioned in the study:

PWD Organizations: Organizations and groups supporting PWDs should earnestly work harder with employers and officials to ensure fair hiring with equal opportunities for PWDs. In addition, with help and collaborations with authorized policymakers, they can further empower PWD workers by providing tailored support and resources (e.g., accessible accommodations), allowing them to overcome barriers, thrive in their roles, and make meaningful contributions to the workforce.

Government Agencies: Agencies of government should adapt and develop an active role in ensuring that policy-making authorities enforce laws and implement regulations for the fair hiring of PWDs who are willing to work. Furthermore, government agencies ought to allocate more resources to PWD organizations and non-profit groups that promote PWD employment opportunities, workplaces, public buildings, transportation systems, and infrastructure that address the needs of PWDs.

Support Group: Support and non-profit groups should prioritize outreach to remote communities, ensure minorities' representation and inclusion, and provide timely statistics to advocate for resource allocation and tailored services for people with disabilities in these areas. This can help to bridge gaps in access to support and resources, promote inclusivity, and improve outcomes for people with disabilities living in remote and underserved communities.

Employers: Employers should focus on fair hiring practices for PWDs and providing adequate training and accommodations since this will lead to a more inclusive workplace environment that benefits employees, employers, and the organization as a whole. A more inclusive workplace benefits everyone, including employees (i.e., PWD employees) who are properly trained and supported.

Communities: Communities have an important role in addressing PWD unemployment, reducing discrimination and biases, and increasing empathy for persons with disabilities. Meaning that communities should help ensure that persons with disabilities have the support and resources they require to fully participate in society and the workplace by working together to create inclusive environments and advocating for equal opportunities.

PWDs: PWDs should be involved in providing essential insights that can drive positive change in employment policies and practices. Moreover, PWDs should consider sharing their stories and experiences, as this can help rally support for policy changes and initiatives that promote equal opportunities and access to employment for everyone.

Families: Families that provide support and encouragement can increase feelings of confidence, self-worth, and independence in individuals with disabilities. Through advocacy, educational support, emotional encouragement, and raising awareness, families should be empowered to help create more inclusive and supportive environments in which persons with disabilities can thrive and reach their full potential in the workplace.

Educators: In order to help PWDs overcome obstacles to employment, educators should collaborate closely with employers to provide PWD students with reliable training and opportunities for on-the-job training because this lowers barriers to employment and assists PWDs in becoming ready for the workforce. Educators are also empowered to advocate for more publication of research about PWDs.

Future Researchers: Future research should further explore the factors that prevent persons with disabilities from finding employment and develop innovative solutions, better policies, and procedures for persons with disabilities in the workforce. In addition, future research should involve collaboration among stakeholders such as persons with disabilities, employers, policymakers, advocacy groups, and service providers. That is because various stakeholders allow researchers to gain valuable insights into the experiences and perspectives of those who are directly affected by employment policies and practices.

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