

# Employer's Evaluation on People with Disability (PWD) Employees in the hospitality Industry: Basis for PWD recruitment and hiring policy

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## Abstract

This research looks at what employers think about the benefits and challenges of hiring People with Disability (PWD) as employees.

The study found that employers generally agreed that PWD employees are good at interacting with customers. They particularly appreciated how sensitive PWD employees are to customers' needs. However, some employers were concerned about delays in service caused by PWD employees. When it came to satisfaction, employers were very happy with the professionalism of PWD employees. In terms of loyalty, employers believed that hiring PWD employees helps build long-term loyalty to the company and they were more likely to rehire PWD employees because of their commitment. Employers also felt that employing PWDs had a positive impact on team morale. Regarding the performance of PWD employees, most employers thought they were active in team activities, but they did not see them contributing much to new ideas or innovations.

The most common benefits of hiring PWD employees were promoting social responsibility and attracting loyal customers. On the other hand, encouraging innovation and adaptability was the least mentioned benefit. As for the challenges, the biggest concerns were technological barriers that limited how effectively PWD employees could assist customers and delays in service. Negative attitudes from PWD employees were the least mentioned challenge.

**Keywords:** Customer Service; Employer Feedback; Hospitality Industry; PWD Employees; PWD Hiring Policy

## 1. Introduction

Nowadays, people are more open to discussing topics regarding inclusivity – gender, race, disabilities, and more. Included here is the acceptance of People with Disabilities (PWD), even in the workplace. The hospitality industry has an important role in creating workplaces where everyone can be included and valued. As more people recognize how important diversity is, businesses are beginning to see the advantages of having a more diverse group of employees.

According to Avecilla et al. (2024), Persons with Disabilities have been fighting for their rights in the workforce for a long time in the Philippines. Despite all the efforts of the government and advocacies of the private sector, employment among PWDs has been difficult and rigorous. People with Disabilities (PWDs) still face different kinds of discrimination even though there are many local and international laws supporting their inclusion in regular jobs.

Still, Pedron (2024) believes that PWDs, like any other individuals, could perform their work-related tasks. Some people with disabilities even perform better than those without disabilities. Because of this, hiring PWDs benefits both organizations and the country. Even though years have passed since the creation of R.A. No. 7277, the Magna Carta for

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Persons with Disabilities, PWDs still struggle to find jobs that can improve their quality of life. The challenges include finding the right jobs, not enough opportunities in private companies, and difficulties in returning to the workforce.

There are laws that protect the rights of PWD workers and explain the responsibilities of employers towards their PWD employees. They support equal treatment for PWDs at work. Unfortunately, many people with disabilities in the Philippines can't benefit from these laws because they don't know about them. This is why there is a huge effort to promote equality in the workplace – educating both employees and employers about the laws that support PWDs (Pagsolingan, 2022).

In a recent social media video, the researcher viewed a vlog regarding a fast food restaurant employing a person with disabilities (PWD) who enthusiastically packed utensils into takeout bags. This inspiring representation of inclusivity prompted the researcher to consider this kind of topic. If this particular fast-food restaurant can successfully integrate a PWD into its workforce, why don't other businesses from the hospitality industry embrace this kind of hiring practices?

In Cabanatuan City, hiring PWD in the hospitality sector not only shows social responsibility but could also positively affect the positive cycle of growth for both the business and its workforce. By actively promoting fairness and inclusion and offering jobs to people who have a harder time finding work, these businesses not only do the right thing but also make a more diverse and friendly place for everyone.

This inclusive approach can also improve the turnover rates of these businesses. PWD employees tend to show high levels of loyalty because they often appreciate workplaces that provide inclusivity. When they feel valued and supported, they're more likely to stay with the company.

This study focuses on understanding how employers in the hospitality sector view hiring PWDs in Cabanatuan City. This research looks at what employers think about the benefits and challenges of inclusive practices and how they affect their experiences, satisfaction, loyalty, and performance towards PWD employees. The findings will help hospitality businesses make smarter choices about hiring people with disabilities and understand how this could impact their customers. By gathering these insights, the study can provide recommendations to optimize PWD employment in the hospitality industry in Cabanatuan City.

Although many studies have been conducted on the importance of diversity at work, there is still a gap in how hiring PWD directly influences an employer's evaluation. The hospitality industry is a field where customer experience matters, which is why this study shows how employers' perceptions of hiring PWD are measured in terms of experience, satisfaction, loyalty, and performance, as well as the benefits and challenges of employing PWD. Hiring a diverse workforce – specifically, PWD can improve the performance of hospitality businesses. The findings will not only benefit hospitality industry in Cabanatuan City but also other regions and will inspire them to adopt more inclusive practices.

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## 2. Materials and Methods

The quantitative method was used to support this study, specifically the Descriptive research design. Sreekumar (2023) stated that Quantitative research methods are used to observe events that affect a particular group of individuals, which is the sample population. In this kind of research, different kinds of numbers are gathered using various methods and then analyzed using statistics.

This study focused on hospitality businesses in Cabanatuan City, such as restaurants, event companies, and hotels that employ People with Disabilities (PWD). These employers are affected by the inclusive hiring practices of these businesses. Their opinions are important for understanding how successful these practices are. It also looked at how having PWD employees affects employers' experiences, satisfaction, loyalty, and performance in hiring PWDs. It utilized purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a way of identifying and selecting cases that use limited research resources effectively (Campbell, 2020).

This study utilized the Questionnaire as the Survey Instrument. The questionnaire was researcher-made, specifically designed to gather data aligned with this study's objectives.

The instrument was validated by the experts and the reliability was established using Cronbach's alpha. The data gathered were computed using frequency, percentage and weighted mean.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1. Employer's perception in hiring PWD

**Table 1** Experience

Experience	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
I feel comfortable interacting with PWD employees.	3.68	Strongly Agree
Displays professionalism in their interaction.	3.70	Strongly Agree
Attentive and courteous service.	3.71	Strongly Agree
PWD employees handle customers' requests and concerns effectively.	3.87	Strongly Agree
PWD employees treat me with consideration.	3.67	Strongly Agree
Shows knowledge and is often responsive to customer requests.	3.72	Strongly Agree
Interactions with PWD employees were handled with sensitivity to our customers' needs.	3.76	Strongly Agree
The PWD employees were well-integrated into their roles.	3.65	Strongly Agree
PWD employees support the team during challenging times.	3.71	Strongly Agree
PWD employees treat everyone with respect.	3.74	Strongly Agree
OWM	3.72	Strongly Agree

Legend: 4.00 to 3.26 – Strongly Agree; 3.25 to 2.51 – Agree; 2.50 to 1.76 – Disagree; 1.75 to 1.00 – Strongly Disagree

The results presented in Table 1, show the level of the employer's agreement in terms of their experience/encounter with PWD employees. The Overall Weighted Mean is 3.72 with a verbal interpretation of "*strongly agree*". The employers perceived their experience with PWD employees in the statement "PWD employees handle customers' requests and concerns effectively." as *strongly agree*, with the highest mean score of 3.87. Meanwhile, the statement "The PWD employees were well-integrated into their roles." was verbally interpreted as *strongly agree*, with the lowest mean of 3.65. These findings suggest that employers generally have positive experiences with PWD employees, especially in how well they interact with customers. However, they might need more help to fit into their roles better.

This result is consistent with the findings in Baniya (2020), which discusses how disabled employees can excel in frontline positions and effectively handle customer concerns when given the right support.

**Table 2** Satisfaction

Satisfaction	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
The professionalism of PWD employees.	3.78	Strongly Satisfied
The PWD employees' ability to address specific needs and concerns.	3.76	Strongly Satisfied
The PWD employees respond efficiently to customers' needs.	3.69	Strongly Satisfied
The accuracy of PWD employees in providing service.	3.72	Strongly Satisfied
There are no delays caused by PWD employees in providing service.	3.69	Strongly Satisfied
The communication skills showed by PWD employees during the customers' stay/visit.	3.71	Strongly Satisfied
The friendly and approachable demeanor of PWD employees.	3.74	Strongly Satisfied
The overall contribution of PWD employees.	3.71	Strongly Satisfied
The good quality of customer service from PWD employees.	3.57	Strongly Satisfied
The positive contribution of PWD employees to team morale.	3.69	Strongly Satisfied
OWM	3.71	Strongly Satisfied

Legend: 4.00 to 3.26 – Strongly Agree; 3.25 to 2.51 – Agree; 2.50 to 1.76 – Disagree; 1.75 to 1.00 – Strongly Disagree

Table 2 presents the level of the employer's agreement in terms of their satisfaction with PWD employees. The Overall Weighted Mean is 3.71 with a verbal interpretation of "*strongly satisfied*". The statement "The professionalism of PWD employees" had a verbal interpretation of *strongly satisfied*, with the highest mean score of 3.78. Meanwhile, the statement with the lowest mean score of 3.57 is verbally interpreted as *strongly satisfied*, with the statement "The good quality of customer service from PWD employees." Overall, while employers recognize and appreciate the professionalism of PWD employees, there are concerns regarding the quality of customer service.

Baniya (2017)'s study suggests that customers generally respond positively to the professionalism of disabled employees, which in turn can lead to greater satisfaction from both customers and employers. While, Krzak (2023) explores how providing the right support, training, and tools for PWD employees can help improve customer service.

**Table 3** Loyalty

Loyalty	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Employing PWDs creates long-term loyalty to our company.	3.76	Strongly Agree
PWD employees tend to stay longer with the company.	3.71	Strongly Agree
Employing PWDs contributes to creating a more loyal and dedicated workforce.	3.74	Strongly Agree
Rehiring PWD employees can be prioritized due to their commitment to the company.	3.76	Strongly Agree
PWD employees demonstrate dedication and reliability in their roles.	3.80	Strongly Agree
PWD employees tend to stay with the organization longer than non-PWD employees.	3.26	Strongly Agree
Employing PWDs has positively impacted overall team loyalty and morale	3.85	Strongly Agree
I am more confident that hiring PWDs leads to a more stable and long-term workforce.	3.73	Strongly Agree
I am willing to adjust our hiring practices for PWD employees.	3.54	Strongly Agree
I am motivated to encourage other employers in the industry to hire PWDs.	3.68	Strongly Agree
OWM	3.68	Strongly Agree

Legend: 4.00 to 3.26 – Strongly Agree; 3.25 to 2.51 – Agree; 2.50 to 1.76 – Disagree; 1.75 to 1.00 – Strongly Disagree

Table 3 shows the level of the employer's agreement in terms of their loyalty to employing PWD. The Overall Weighted Mean is 3.68 with a verbal interpretation of "*strongly agree*". The respondents perceived their loyalty in employing PWD in the statement "Employing PWDs has positively impacted overall team loyalty and morale" as *strongly agree*, with the highest mean score of 3.85. On the other hand, "PWD employees tend to stay with the organization longer than non-PWD employees." had a verbal interpretation of *strongly agree*, with the lowest mean score of 3.26. These findings suggest that employers believe employing PWD employees contributes positively to company loyalty and morale.

Imperial (2017)'s article discusses the positive benefits companies experience when hiring people with disabilities, including increased loyalty and morale. The article highlights how PWD employees often display a high level of dedication, which leads to increased company loyalty.

The results shown in Table 4 indicate the level of the employer's agreement in terms of the performance of their PWD employee. The Overall Weighted Mean is 3.69 with a verbal interpretation of "*strongly agree*". The statement "Never fail to contribute to innovative ideas." had the highest mean score of 3.80, verbally interpreted as *strongly agree*. Meanwhile, the statement "PWD employees participate actively in team activities and social events." had the lowest mean score of 3.40, verbally interpreted as *strongly agree*. These findings suggest that employers recognize the active involvement of PWD employees in their contribution to innovation, while there is little concern about their participation in team activities.

**Ambiong (2021)**, discusses the benefits of hiring PWDs in various sectors, including how their creativity can contribute significantly to workplace dynamics. However, participation in social and team activities had a slightly lower score of

3.40. This could indicate some challenges in fully integrating PWD employees in team-based activities, despite their recognized strengths in other areas. Similar themes are addressed in **Avecilla et al. (2024)**, which explores how the Philippine hospitality industry has made strides in breaking down employment barriers but still faces challenges in fostering full inclusion for PWDs, particularly in more social or team-oriented settings.

**Table 4** Performance

Performance	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Excellent customer service.	3.78	Strongly Agree
Handle the demands effectively.	3.73	Strongly Agree
Able to meet the performance standards required.	3.74	Strongly Agree
Demonstrates strong teamwork and collaboration skills.	3.67	Strongly Agree
Have no difficulty adjusting to changes in the work environment.	3.66	Strongly Agree
Never fail to contribute to innovative ideas.	3.80	Strongly Agree
Finds it easy to work under pressure.	3.74	Strongly Agree
Effectively manage their time and responsibilities.	3.71	Strongly Agree
Always on time.	3.67	Strongly Agree
PWD employees participate actively in team activities and social events.	3.40	Strongly Agree
OWM	3.69	Strongly Agree

Legend: 4.00 to 3.26 – Strongly Agree; 3.25 to 2.51 – Agree; 2.50 to 1.76 – Disagree; 1.75 to 1.00 – Strongly Disagree

### 3.2. Benefits and Challenges of Employing PWD as perceived by the respondents

This part presents the results of the benefits and challenges of Employing PWD as perceived by the respondents.

Table 5 highlights the benefits of employing PWD, showing both the frequency and ranking of each benefit. The most frequently cited benefit was “Promotes social responsibility”, with a frequency of 92; followed closely by “Attracting customers to remain loyal to the business” with a frequency of 86, which suggests these are the top perceived advantages of hiring PWD employees. At the lower end of the ranking, “Encourage innovation and adaptability” was the least frequently mentioned with 70, indicating that while it may be valued by some employers, it is not as widely recognized as a key advantage. This analysis provides a balanced view of the perceived benefits of PWD employment, from the most to least acknowledged aspects.

**Table 5** Benefits of Employing PWD

Benefits of employing PWD (Multiple Response)	Frequency	Rank
High-quality service in the hospitality industry.	81	5
Promotes inclusivity and diversity in the workforce.	85	3
Demonstrate care and attentiveness toward customers.	78	
Attracting customers to remain loyal to the business.	86	2
Shows commitment to diversity and inclusion.	78	
Enhances the public image of hospitality businesses.	76	
Positively affects the overall morale and teamwork among all staff.	84	4
Encourage innovation and adaptability.	70	
Bring unique insights that can enhance creativity and problem-solving.	68	
Promotes social responsibility.	92	1

### 3.3. Multiple Responses

According to San Pedro (2021), PWD employees are contributing to the F&B industry in more ways than one, continuously bringing to the table the kind of workmanship the professional world demands. As an incentive, the Magna Carta provides a tax deduction on private companies that employ disabled persons equal to a quarter of the aggregate wage received by the PWD employees ("Service beyond Disability", 2023).

**Table 6** Challenges of Employing PWD

Challenges encountered towards PWD employees (Multiple Response)	Frequency	Rank
Negative attitudes from our PWD employees.	15	
Communication barriers with our PWD employees – make it challenging to understand their responses.	21	
Struggle with multitasking during busy periods, affecting the efficiency of the services our customers receive.	29	4
Difficulty handling high-pressure situations, which can affect the quality of their service.	32	3
Unsure of how to handle specific customer requests.	23	
Technological or system barriers seem to limit how effectively PWD employees can communicate and assist customers.	36	1
Inconsistency in service quality from our PWD employees.	18	
Difficulty getting timely assistance.	25	5
Overwhelmed by their workload, affecting the quality of their interactions.	19	
Experience delays or disruptions in service from our PWD employees.	34	2

### 3.4. Multiple Responses

Table 6, outlines the challenges associated with employing PWD, organized by frequency and ranking. The most frequently cited challenge was "Technological or system barriers seem to limit how effectively PWD employees can communicate and assist customers" with a frequency of 36, indicating that this is the primary concern among employers. This was followed by "Experience delays or disruptions in service from our PWD employees", which also ranked highly at 34, reflecting a significant level of attention among respondents. The lowest-ranked challenge, "Negative attitudes from our PWD employees" was mentioned the least with a frequency of 15, indicating it is of lesser concern to most employers. This analysis provides a clear picture of the range and significance of challenges perceived in employing PWD.

Krzak (2023) discusses several challenges faced by PWD employees, including technological barriers and system inefficiencies. This article talks about the challenges that make it hard for employers who work with people with disabilities to fully use the technology. These barriers hold them back from connecting with and supporting their customers as effectively as they can.

## 4. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

- Employers generally had positive views on the experience and loyalty of PWD employees. Those who had hired more PWDs noticed these qualities even more, suggesting that the more employers work with PWDs, the more they recognize their strengths.
- Employers were very satisfied with PWD employees, especially with their professionalism and attentiveness to customers. This highlights the valuable role PWDs play in providing good customer service and supporting business operations.
- While there are clear benefits to hiring PWDs, employers noted some challenges, especially with communication and technology, which can affect job performance. Working on these areas could help PWD employees be even more effective.

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## Compliance with ethical standards

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### *Disclosure of conflict of interest*

The author hereby declares that she has no conflict of interest related to this research and that no financial or personal relationships could influence the outcomes of this study.

### *Statement of informed consent*

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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