

RESEARCH ARTICLE

# A Productivity Assessment of PWD Employees in a Philippine Company

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This study assessed and compared the work capability of persons with disabilities (PWDs) and their able counterparts that covered the following aspects of work: (a) time on task, (b) work attitude, and (c) task compatibility. It was hypothesized that PWD workers are competent and productive in the workplace if the right task is given to them. Four employees with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) working either as administrative or store clerk in a drugstore chain participated in the study. Productivity comparison was made using time study and work sampling over two days. Supervisors were also interviewed regarding attitudes and capabilities. The overall result of the work assessment done showed that the productivity of PWDs is comparable with other employees. The main challenge encountered is the occasional lack of focus and poor job matching. The disability of PWDs does not affect performance if the task assignment is carefully considered.

**Keywords:** autism spectrum disorder, disability, Philippines, productivity, time study

**JEL Classifications:**

In 2010, 1.23% of the Philippine population had a disability (Philippine Statistical Authority, 2010). The actual labor participation rate of PWDs in the Philippines is uncertain. However, a survey conducted in 2008 in Metro Manila revealed that 58.3% of PWDs are employed and out of the employed ones, 24.3% are wage/salary workers (Mina, 2013). This is much lower compared to other countries like the United States, where the employment rate in companies is 35% (Ameri et al., 2017) and Europe, 47% (Powers, 2008). In order to provide employment opportunities to PWDs, the Magna Carta for Persons with Disabilities

(2012) was passed to reserve a specific percentage of positions in government and private firms for PWDs. A number of bills are on the way that will impose stiff penalties on violators and provide incentives to those who comply (Pillas, 2017).

Employers have mixed reactions in hiring PWDs. Gatchalian et al. (2014) showed that some companies in the Philippines are willing to hire PWDs to help improve their lives, which is the same in Canada (Annett, 2017). Employment of PWDs increase the talent pool of companies and allow them to receive incentives from the government (Henry, Petkauskos,

Stanislawzyk, & Vogt, 2014; Pillas, 2017). However, the positive attitude of employers is contingent on previous good experience in employing PWDs (Pañares, 2018). In the absence of previous experience, companies require more information about the condition of their disability (Shankar et al., 2014). A systematic review of literature on the benefits of hiring PWDs showed that it could have positive benefits for companies, including profitability and competitive advantage (Lindsay, Cagliostro, Albarico, Mortaji, & Karon, 2018).

Despite the positive experiences of employers in hiring PWDs, Ameri et al. (2017) revealed that applications from experienced PWDs received less attention from employers, although the job is not affected by their disabilities. Such a trend was attributed to employers' perceived risks, such as giving them tenure and higher pay that may not be beneficial in the long run. There are also concerns about potential absenteeism, productivity, and health (Ameri et al., 2017). In Sweden, employers are only willing to hire PWDs because of wage subsidies that are meant to compensate for reduced productivity (Gustafsson, Peralta, & Danermark, 2014).

Although productivity is of utmost concern among employers of PWDs, only a few studies ventured to measure the productivity of PWDs and compare it with abled employees. Hindle, Gibson, and David (2010) measured productivity of disability and non-disability call center workers in Australia through attendance, task engagement, and capability to upgrade and make new sales. Results showed that there was no significant difference between the two sets of workers in terms of the variables measured, negating the belief that PWDs are less productive. PWD workers' productivity was assessed by Javier, Demeterio, Habaradas, Jabar, and Resurreccion (2014) in the Philippines and compared to co-workers. However, the basis of comparison did not involve actual measurement. Similarly, Graffam, Smith, Shinkfield, and Polzin (2002) considered

productivity in their comparison of PWDs and "average employee," but measurement was limited to a rating scale. The assessment was limited to opinions provided by supervisors and co-workers. Thus, there is a need to conduct more studies to validate the findings of Hindle, Noble, and Phillips (1999) and educate potential employers about the capabilities and limitations of PWDs.

This study aims to assess and compare the work capability of PWDs and their able counterparts. The assessment covered the following aspects of work: (a) time on task, (b) work attitude, and (c) task compatibility. This paper proposes that given the right task, the productivity and competence of PWDs are comparable to abled people.

## Research Method

### *Participants*

Participants either work as a pharmacy assistant in a drugstore or office clerk in the head office of a drugstore chain. Four employees participated: two clerks and two pharmacy assistants. All participants have been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The profile of the participants is shown in Table 1.

### *Work Measurement Technique*

There are two work measurement techniques used: time study and work sampling. Time study is a work measurement method where the task is broken down into elements and then timed. Given that the study does not seek to establish work standards, the observed time was not normalized, and allowances were not applied. The two sets of employees of each company were observed after they got used to the job they are doing. The minimum experience was set to six months. In the conduct of the time study, workers were videotaped while doing their jobs. The video was used for determining actual time spent on a particular task.

**Table 1. Profile of Study Participants**

Name	Months on the job	Job Title
Lady	12	Pharmacy Assistant
Princess	6	Pharmacy Assistant
Oliver	12	Inventory Data Processing Clerk
Roger	12	HR Clerk

Work sampling was used to determine the amount of time that a worker is idle for the day. Idleness is counted as an instance when the worker is not doing anything while on the job. This includes waiting or chatting unnecessarily with co-workers. This technique is mainly used to determine the productivity of workers if comparable tasks are limited.

### ***Tasks Observed***

Task analysis was done by first interviewing the supervisors to identify specific tasks being done and identify the appropriate work measurement method to use. If the task of the PWD is done by another abled worker, a comparison can be made by doing a time study. However, if the PWD does the job alone, then work sampling was used. Work sampling shows the “busy-ness” of the workers. It is assumed that idle time is unproductive and should be minimized.

Table 2 shows the tasks done by PWD employees. The last column indicates the task that enabled comparison between PWD and abled employees.

### ***Statistical Analysis***

Several statistical analyses were conducted to prove the hypothesis that the performance of PWDs is not different from other employees in terms of time. Statistical comparisons were made using a test of means and proportions at a 5% level of significance. The mean performance times of PWDs and co-workers and their percentage busyness were compared.

The research was subject to several limitations, which are: availability of comparable tasks and the number of PWD workers in the company. There are only a few tasks that can be directly compared with able employees because there are tasks that are solely assigned to PWDs. Moreover, each drug store employs only one PWD worker except for the administrative office.

## **Results of the Study**

### ***Office Work Assessment***

Two office workers were observed: Oliver and Roger. Oliver’s main task is encoding invoices, which takes up around 80% of his time. This task is also done by other employees in the office. All employees assigned to this task has a target of 100 invoices daily. The task involves encoding invoice data from a source document and typing these data into the computer.

Data obtained from the company on Oliver’s performance showed that for the months of November to December 2017, he worked 39 days with an average output of 92 invoices daily, which does not meet the target. These 39 days did not include half-days or when he is not doing encoding jobs. His output was compared to another encoder in the office. Their outputs were compared for 26 days. Summary data used for comparison can be seen in Table 3. As can be seen, the co-worker is more productive than Oliver. It can also be seen that Oliver’s output is more consistent

**Table 2. Tasks of Study Participants**

Name	Job Title	Tasks Done	Task observed
Oliver	Inventory Data Processing Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>filing invoices</li> <li>separating invoices</li> <li>encoding invoices</li> <li>tagging</li> </ul>	encoding invoices
Roger	HR Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sorting of payslip</li> <li>filing of notice to explain</li> </ul>	sorting of payslip
Lady	Pharmacy Assistant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>entertaining customers</li> <li>dispensing drugs</li> <li>refilling stocks</li> </ul>	refilling stocks entertaining customers
Princess	Pharmacy Assistant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>counting coins</li> <li>sweeping</li> <li>assisting in e-load</li> <li>dusting</li> <li>arranging stocks</li> <li>bagging</li> </ul>	counting coins arranging stocks bagging

**Table 3. Invoicing Task Comparison**

	Average (min)	Standard Deviation (min)
Oliver	92.5	27.9
Co-worker	113.3	39.4

**Table 4. Productivity Comparison in Sorting Task**

Statistics (Minutes)	Roger	Co-Worker
Mean	1.37	1.51
Standard Deviation	0.79	1.04

than his counterpart based on the low value of standard deviation. The mean productivity of Oliver and his co-worker were statistically compared, and there is a difference at 0.05 level of significance. Thus, it cannot be concluded that they have the same level of productivity.

Oliver and one of his co-workers were observed for two days to determine the proportion of time that they are busy with work. They were videotaped while doing their tasks, and the analysis was done from the video taken. Detailed results of Oliver and his co-worker showed that they are busy 84% and 91% of the time, respectively. The two percentages were compared using a test of proportions, and the result showed there is no statistical difference at a 5% level of significance ( $z=-0.96$ ,  $p=0.33$ ).

Roger is the other clerk whose task is to sort payslips and other documents. The task observed in this study is the sorting of payslips done for two days. Only sorting of payslips was observed because this is the only task in the office where Roger has a counterpart. A time study was conducted on Roger and his co-worker while sorting payslips for two days. The detailed result of the time study can be seen in Table 4. There were 37 comparable observations for the two days. The required sample size for comparison was computed to be 35 days. Thus, the sample gathered can be used for statistical comparison.

As can be seen, Roger's sorting time is shorter and more consistent than his co-worker. A statistical test was conducted to determine if there is a basis for concluding that Roger is more productive than his co-worker. A t-test comparison of means showed that the two means are equal at a 5% level of significance ( $t=-0.67$ ,  $df=67$ ,  $p=0.5$ ). Thus, Roger and his co-worker

have the same level of productivity in terms of sorting payslips.

Oliver had been on the job for a year and liked the task of encoding and filing invoices. He is very punctual, learns easily, and works fast. In the absence of productivity data, Oliver's supervisor and co-worker think that his pace in encoding invoices is comparable with other employees. However, his supervisor is not confident in giving him more advanced tasks such as posting of invoices because he cannot make good decisions and tends to make mistakes compared to other encoders.

Closer observation of the video taken showed that he gets easily distracted by other people in his immediate environment. He always looks at the alarm clock that he constantly brings to work. He is preoccupied with time and being on time. As such, he spends some time checking his alarm clock that takes away his focus on work.

According to Oliver's supervisor and co-worker, Oliver is willing to learn and learns fast. He is very cooperative and maintains a good relationship with people in the office. He is independent and requires minimum supervision. He has initiative and likes to chat with other people. However, this inclination to chat prevents him from focusing on his work at certain times. He sometimes gets emotional, especially when he is late and has a problem following protocol.

Roger is well-liked by his co-workers because of his demeanor and friendliness. During the conduct of this study, he was observed to be opening the front door and greeting everyone in the morning before the start of work. Based on an interview with his co-workers, he is a source of positive energy in the workplace such that his occasional absences are noticeable.

According to his supervisor and co-workers, Roger is trainable and learns easily. He is good at mechanical jobs, such as sorting payslips. He can work independently as long as clear directions are given. He is very dedicated to his job, such that he wants all sorting tasks to be given only to him. Although sorting can be boring to other workers, Roger finds it interesting and looks forward to doing it every day.

However, as a person with a developmental disability, Roger acts immaturely and only obeys certain people of authority, such as his supervisor. His productivity is based on his mood for the day. There are times when he plays around without regard to the work that needs to be finished for the day. He is easily distracted with food and has a preoccupation with water and brushing his teeth. His supervisor is in charge of directing him back to work whenever he is distracted.

### ***Store Work Assessment***

Lady had been working as a pharmacy assistant for one year in one of the drugstore branches. She is in charge of taking customer orders, getting products from shelves, and restocking the shelves. Prior to conducting the study, the workplace was observed to determine tasks that are done by Lady and a counterpart worker. For the observed two days, Lady's tasks were:

1. taking items ordered by the customer from the counter and bring it to the cashier, and
2. getting products from the back of the store and bring it at the counter.

For task 1, there were 11 observations taken for Lady and her counterpart. However, for task 2, there were 12 observations for Lady and only five for her counterpart. Data gathered were summarized in Table 5.

Statistical analysis was conducted to compare the observed time of Lady and her colleague. As the sample size is very small, and the normality of data cannot be assumed for task 2, the Wilcoxon rank sum test was used for comparison.

In the statistical test, it was posited that the performance of Lady is no different from her co-worker in the retrieval task 1 (H1) and task 2 (H2).

After performing the calculation, the computed value of z-statistic is 1.96, and the p-value for task 1 is 0.29. Thus, it can be concluded that hypothesis 1 cannot be rejected. For hypothesis 2, the computed value of the R statistic is 100.5, which is greater than the critical value of 34. Thus, it can be concluded that the median performance time of Lady and co-worker are the same at the 5% level of significance.

**Table 5. Productivity Comparison of Retrieval Tasks**

Obs	Task 1- Retrieve Items from Counter (min)		Task 2- Retrieve Products at the Back (min)	
	Lady	Co-Worker	Lady	Co-Worker
1	0.18	0.08	0.93	0.38
2	0.15	0.18	0.50	0.60
3	0.10	0.08	0.60	0.67
4	0.05	0.08	0.42	0.42
5	0.13	0.10	0.45	0.97
6	0.05	0.08	0.45	
7	0.07	0.13	0.65	
8	0.07	0.17	0.18	
9	0.08	0.12	0.67	
10	0.08	0.10	0.32	
11	0.12	0.11	0.37	
12			0.43	
Mean	0.10	0.11	0.50	0.61
Median	0.08	0.10	0.45	0.60
SD	0.04	0.03	0.19	0.23

A work sampling was also conducted on Lady and another co-worker. There were 82 observations gathered for two days. For all observations of being idle, the reason is a lack of customers, so they are just waiting. Based on data gathered, Lady is busy 67% of the time and her co-worker 75% of the time. The two proportions were statistically compared using the test of two proportions. Results obtained showed that the hypothesis that the two proportions are the same could not be rejected at a 5% level of significance ( $z=-1.03$ ,  $p=0.30$ ). Both workers have the same busyness for two days.

Princess is a pharmacy assistant for one year at another branch of the drugstore. Her work involves counting coins, sweeping the floor, arranging shelves, dusting, bagging, and mopping the floor.

Although Princess is involved with many tasks in the store, only a few of her tasks can be compared to other employees, such as counting coins and bagging. For the two days she was observed, it was noticed that there are many tasks that are exclusively assigned to her, such as dusting and arranging the shelves, sweeping, and mopping the floor. Thus, there are only two tasks that were compared with another person for this study: (1) counting coins and (2) bagging.

For task 1, there were only 11 comparable observations and four for task 2. As can be seen in Table 6, there is only a single time when her co-worker

counted coins with her. Princess mainly counts the coins, and her partner puts the counted coins inside a plastic bag.

Statistical analysis was conducted to compare the observed time of Princess and her colleague in counting coins. Given that the sample size is very small, and the normality of data cannot be assumed, the Wilcoxon rank sum was used. The hypothesis that there is no difference between the median performance time of Princess and co-worker in the bagging task was tested. Results showed that the median performance time of Princess is equal to her co-worker at a 5% level of significance ( $R=114.5$ ,  $RC\leq 60$ ). For counting coins, it was obvious that the task time of Princess is higher than her co-worker in all observations.

Work sampling was also done on Princess and her co-worker. There were 90 comparable observations for two days. Based on data gathered, Princess was busy 89% of the time and her co-worker 96% of the time. The two proportions were statistically compared using the test of two proportions. Results obtained showed that the hypothesis that the two proportions are the same could not be rejected at a 5% level of significance ( $z=-1.7$ ,  $p=0.09$ ). Both workers have the same busyness for two days.

Lady was characterized by her supervisor as obedient, cooperative, and hard-working. She remembers the names and orders of usual customers

Table 6. *Productivity Comparison for Bagging and Counting Tasks*

Obs	Bagging (mins)		Counting Coins (mins)	
	Princess	Co-Worker	Princess	Co-Worker
1	0.23	0.40	0.52	0.34
2	0.25	0.25	0.54	
3	0.45	0.43	0.62	
4	0.45	0.35	0.70	
5	0.30	0.23		
6	0.52	0.50		
7	0.53	0.60		
8	0.25	0.28		
9	0.15	0.33		
10	0.35			
11	0.50			
Mean	0.36	0.38	0.59	0.34
Median	0.35	0.35	0.58	0.34



and does not gossip about her co-workers. She learns easily and has the initiative to refill the shelves without being told because it is her favorite task. She also maintains a good relationship with her colleagues.

Lady, however, is sensitive and gets easily affected by negative feedback from her co-workers and supervisor. Her mood changes when she is reprimanded but can recover within the day. She is independent in doing other tasks except giving change because making mental computation is her weakness. Overall, Lady's colleagues have no major issues about her work or attitude. Her disability is not seen as a condition that affects her job.

According to Princess's co-workers, she is obedient, can multitask, and never gets late because she is very time conscious. This obsession with time, however, works to her disadvantage because she cannot focus on her work 30 minutes before the end of the shift. She looks forward to going home even before the shift ends. To prevent this, her co-workers tell her about the need to work until the end of the day she is paid for her work.

Princess's work is comparable with others and very cooperative. Unlike other people with ASD, she can look at a person straight in the eyes. She is trainable and listens very well. Nevertheless, like other PWDs, she is described as sensitive, especially when her co-workers correct her. She easily gets emotional, especially when dealing with people she likes in the workplace. According to her supervisor, she still needs supervision at work because she has been with the company for only one year. The tasks that are given to her are mostly menial tasks, such as cleaning the store.

All the participants had the same mean task times for all tasks observed except for Oliver, whose main task is encoding invoices. Oliver can do encoding quickly. His only problem is staying focused. People around can easily distract him, and the workplace aggravates this because it is crowded. Big movements catch his attention, and his obsession with time also affects his concentration.

Roger's ability to sort invoices quickly is well known in the office. As can be seen in the results of the time study, his mean task time is shorter than his co-worker and more consistent. The work sampling, on the other hand, showed that Roger is as busy as his co-worker. However, when Roger becomes distracted from his work, it is easily noticed by others in the office because he tends to create noise, such as talking to other employees and roaming aimlessly inside the office.

Essentially, Roger works in the same way as the others. His disability does not make him an inferior worker because he delivers what is expected of him in his job.

Oliver and Roger work in the same location but different departments. They were given tasks that are suitable for them. The main challenge with these two workers is the ability to focus on their jobs. Isolating them and taking away possible distractors, however, can possibly improve the situation. The supervisor of Roger does this occasionally. He puts Roger in one room to sort files. This proves to be a good intervention to increase his productivity.

Princess and Lady, who are both working as pharmacy assistants, are different from Roger and Oliver. They can focus on their tasks and can work faster than their counterparts. Most of the tasks assigned to them are manual work that they have already practiced for almost a year, so it is reasonable that their task times are shorter than other employees. However, it had been obvious from the results that Princess took longer to counting coins than another employee. She had been doing this every day, and this task is almost exclusively hers because it is repetitive and something that she is capable of doing. The constant repetition did not make her better than the performance of another employee, probably because it requires mental processing. The practice of assigning tasks exclusively to PWDs, even though it can be assigned to other workers, had been observed in other companies as a means of accommodation (Javier et al., 2014). However, this may not be a good strategy because they have assigned another person to check Princess's work after she had sorted the coins. Such a task assignment is wasteful because it requires two persons to do the job of one. As Princess cannot be left alone to do mental processing tasks, this should not have been given to her in the first place.

The four participants are satisfied with the kind of work given to them. They appreciate the opportunity to work and showed more enthusiasm compared to other employees. However, one of them felt being bullied in the workplace. This may be true or just a perception because most of them are emotionally sensitive. A situation like this can potentially influence the job satisfaction of PWDs.

It was noticed that not all co-workers of PWDs are knowledgeable about their condition. Thus, these co-workers are very careful in assigning tasks to them and do not know where they can be good at. Only some

employees were given a seminar on PWDs. People at the branches were only given a short briefing by the supervisor. Thus, employees that interact with PWDs think that they should be given more information about dealing with their disability as this can have different manifestations depending on the person. Co-workers suggest that they be given training on how to handle and interact with PWDs. The companies that employ them should also systematically identify task assignments by profiling them.

## Discussion

There are only a few companies that are open to hiring PWDs in the Philippines. The pressure for profit and productivity is one of the many considerations for the reluctance to hire PWDs. The work assessment conducted showed that for certain tasks, PWDs are as productive as other employees, especially if the task was carefully selected to consider their unique abilities. For example, jobs that require attention to detail can be tedious, boring, and prone to error. However, some persons with autism thrive doing these kinds of tasks. Thus, previous studies about fears regarding absenteeism, turnover, productivity, and accommodations of PWDs are unfounded (Unger, 2002). These conclusions considered points of view of employers that are not directly supervising PWDs. As a matter of fact, there are many companies that evaluated PWDs favorably in terms of performance and attendance (Nemours & Company, 1991; Pañares, 2018).

According to the supervisors of the PWD participants, they are rarely absent and show much interest in coming to work. It is the first time for all of them to have a permanent job, and they appreciate the chance given to them by the company. Aside from that, they come to the workplace early. However, the excessive time consciousness of two participants makes them slow down in their work 30 minutes before ending the shift. They are already staring at the clock and cannot concentrate anymore. The supervisors tried to manage this by explaining to them the necessity of finishing the whole shift. The change in behavior was brought about by the significant influence of the supervisors that PWD employees consider as second parents.

Some PWDs have good cognitive and adaptive skills that make them suitable for regular jobs (Javier

et al., 2014), as was evident in the current study. Oliver copes up with the everyday targets of the job. The target is a source of concern like other employees, but he was able to manage it daily. He functions very well in the organization except for some social gaffes that were corrected by the supervisor. Lady, on the other hand, is the only employee that was allowed to interact with customers. She has a good memory and remembers the names of customers and their “usual” orders. Customers appreciate this unique capability of Lady.

An objective comparison of task times between PWDs and their abled co-workers showed no significant difference. Thus, employers should not view hiring PWDs as a cost because they deliver fair work in terms of time. They tend to be discriminated at the onset because employers focus on their disability and the perception of risk (Annett, 2017; Henry et al., 2014). Employees with ASD interviewed in Australia indicated that more than 50% of them have skills that are matched to their jobs or even better (Baldwin, Costley, & Warren, 2014) and performed better than their counterparts in terms of work ethic and quality of work (Scott et al., 2017). As mentioned earlier, the PWD employees and their families are grateful for the opportunity to work. It was the first time for all of them to work in a company and interact with co-workers, so the experience brings them excitement.

Employers should consider the reality that abled workers are not exempted from underperformance but are not discriminated. The supervisors interviewed do not consider the PWD employees as different from the others. Their attitude towards work is sometimes better than their co-workers. Ng and Feldman (2013) showed that people that have been on the job for too long lose their motivation to perform. Evidently, performance is not just related to a person's capability but also on job attitude. A survey of HR professionals indicated that attendance, reliability, and the ability to perform a job are the most important characteristics of a model employee (Dolce & Bates, 2018). The PWD participants in the current study exhibited a positive attitude on the job. Supervisors reported that they report to work early and are seldom absent. Javier et al. (2014) reported several instances where PWDs were observed by their parents to exhibit a high motivation to go to work. Graffam et al. (2002) found that PWD workers are rated slightly more reliable and low maintenance compared to the average worker and reasonably productive. Thus, the benefits of employing them in



terms of recruitment, maintenance, and safety outweigh the costs related to accommodation.

HR professionals are wary about employing PWDs because of their own lack of understanding about the condition and how it can impact other people in the workplace (Dolce & Bates, 2018; Henry et al., 2014). Supervisors view managing them as additional work or an undue burden because they need more caring due to their special needs (Annett, 2017). The dynamics within the team is also expected to change, which supervisors also need to manage aside from the regular challenges they encounter in the workplace (Annett, 2017). These potential problems, however, can be addressed through education. Supervisors in the current study expressed that the orientation provided to them prior to the recruitment of PWDs helped them in understanding the situation of the PWDs and prepared them for unexpected behavior. When these behaviors manifest, the supervisors use their previous knowledge to make a proper intervention, such as talking to them and reminding them about their work responsibilities. However, there is a need to orient all people that will work with PWDs and not just the supervisors. In the case of persons with autism (PWA), the main challenge is dealing with mood instability and meltdowns. These episodes can disturb and confuse co-workers, so they should be trained on how to properly deal with such situations. There is a tendency for co-workers to either over sympathize or get irritated with PWAs in the absence of awareness.

Task assignment is one of the success factors in employing PWDs. In a workplace where tasks are varied, such as in the drug store, the supervisor may find it difficult to identify which tasks can better fit the PWD. This is an accommodation that some companies might not be willing to do because of their own lack of awareness and dedication to help a PWD. Thus, it is important for the company to conduct an in-depth interview of potential PWD employees to gauge strengths and weaknesses. It might help if an independent organization can do an assessment with the permission of the PWDs to identify areas of strength that are relevant to employment. The result of the assessment can be used to find suitable employment for PWDs in the industry.

The current study affirms that PWDs are productive workers given the right tasks. With recent legislation in the Philippines that require companies to allocate 1% of positions to PWDs, there is a need to educate

employers about the advantages and challenges of employing PWDs to allay fears and understand how productivity can be optimized.

This study contributes to PWD literature by providing empirical data regarding PWD productivity in comparison with counterpart employees. The findings are meant to be used to influence employers to consider employing PWDs because of their positive contribution to the workplace. For many PWDs, working is a source of pride (Javier et al., 2014). It is not true that PWDs can cause an unnecessary burden, especially for supervisors who will handle them. Employers need to give them a chance to be part of the workforce and understand them in the process. It had been documented that employers who had been exposed to PWDs in the workplace improved their perception about disability (Luecking, 2008). PWD workers, just like anyone, deserve to be given an opportunity to join the workforce and contribute to the economy.

## Conclusion

The overall result of the work assessment done showed that the productivity of PWDs is comparable with other employees. The challenges of integrating them into the workplace can be minimized by proper orientation and training of other employees. The disability of PWDs does not affect performance if the right tasks are given to them. Thus, it is strongly recommended that companies who decide to employ PWDs assess them well to know the right assignment.

The following are the recommendations provided by employees of companies that employ PWDs and my own observation.

1. If a company decides to employ PWDs, the employees should be prepared by giving them orientation and teaching new skills such as sign language. Such preparation allows for smooth entry of PWDs in the workplace and makes the environment less stressful for them. If employees are aware of their limitations and take extra effort to learn how to communicate with them, PWD workers will feel welcome at the onset.
2. Employee orientation on the employment of PWDs should not only focus on their limitations but also on their strengths. There are tasks that

can better be done by PWDs compared to other employees. These tasks should be identified through empirical studies.

3. As employees come and go, training should be constantly conducted to provide a consistent flow of information about PWDs. Infographics on PWDs can be spread in conspicuous places, such as the canteen, to ensure maximum exposure to employees. Such actions communicate a company's commitment to welcome PWDs in the workplace and will make existing employees more sensitive to their needs and limitations.
4. Support groups within the company may be formed within the company to help PWDs adapt to the working environment.
5. Companies should profile PWD applicants to determine the right tasks for them.

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