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FEATURE

**Lived Experiences on Employment of Persons
with Disability in Mandaue City,
Cebu, Philippines**

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Abstract. *This study explored the lived experiences of persons with disabilities (PWD) working in the local government offices in Mandaue City, Cebu, in their employment activities to propose measures to enhance their well-being through policy formulation. The study utilized the Qualitative Husserlian phenomenology, with an interview as the source of data collection, and followed Colaizzi's method of data analysis. The study revealed four emergent themes as follows: (a) deficiencies can be corrected with the right attitude for support; (b) empowering PWDs to augment employment, (c) implementation and compliance needs monitoring, and (d) mobility and accessibility of PWD require private-public partnership. The recommendation includes the creation of a council composed of PWDs, coordination with hiring companies, a non-governmental organization that provides training, and the local government unit (Mandaue City) that will propose a policy creating a council to monitor the implementation of RA 7277 and Batas Pambansa Bilang 344 of 1982 (Accessibility Law) in the City of Mandaue.*

Keywords: qualitative phenomenology, persons with disability, mobility, accessibility, employment, Mandaue City, Cebu, Philippines, phenomenology

Introduction

According to World Bank International Bank for Reconstruction and Development – International Development Association, there are around one billion inhabitants or 15% of the world's population that is exposed to some form of

disability, and this group of people has experienced unfavorable socio-economic issues than those without disabilities.

Persons with physical disabilities are among some of the most vulnerable people in our society due to their dependence on others for care and support or because of social isolation, their place of residence, or the nature of their disability. A PWD is expected to be bullied primarily by friends and relatives within the family circle. They are observed to suffer physically, psychologically, emotionally, mentally, and other forms of deprivation of human rights.

Thus, a law was enacted to give them protection and opportunities. There is already a law, RA 7277, that made it easier for a PWD to make use of the opportunities granted by the law for employment purposes. However, a lot of PWDs are still experiencing challenges, especially when looking for employment. Republic Act 7277 provides for the rights and privileges in terms of employment of PWDs. It assures that the PWDs have equal employment opportunities. It means that there shall be no PWD that shall be deprived of getting the equal chances for proper employment. They must receive the same assistance, remunerations, inducements, and stipends that other employees receive. In public organizations, it is required that 5% of all employees shall be set aside for the employment of PWDs

With all of this government assistance, there are still a lot of PWDs that have experienced negative treatment. Thus, this study explored the lived experiences of persons who are physically disabled (orthopedic deficiency) who have been working already in the city. The study was undertaken in the highly urbanized city of Mandaue, Central Visayas, Philippines. It aimed to propose a policy recommendation creating a council to monitor the implementation of RA 7277 and Batas Pambansa Bilang 344 of 1982 (*Accessibility Law*) in the City of Mandaue.

Review of the Literature

The most current article available that talked about the employment of PWDs is written by Furuoka (2011), where they examine issues about PWDs through three case studies in the United States, Japan, and Malaysia. The first case study examines the US regulation for the promotion of PWD employment through the introduction of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and found that the unemployment rate among PWDs did not decrease with its implementation. The second case was Japan's quota system for the employment of PWDs. After its introduction in Japan, the employment of PWDs gradually increased. The third case study examined Malaysian welfare non-governmental organization Asian Community Service (ACS) and its effort to promote the employment of PWDs. In 2000, they were able to establish a workplace named "Stepping Stone Work Centre"

that provides job opportunities to people with intellectual disabilities. There has been no recent article written in the Philippines.

Articles on the demographics of PWDs in Canada provide a wide array of information from the 2012 Canadian Survey on Disability. Arim (2017) found out that there is an estimated 14% of the Canadian population aged 15 years or older reported having a disability, which is consistent with the United Nation's estimate of 15% of the world's population living with some form of disability (United Nations Enable, n.d.). Efforts are being made to improve the well-being of PWDs and increase their opportunities to participate in economic and social life. The findings of this report highlight potential challenges to the inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities.

A study on PWDs on discrimination was advocated by Turcotte (2014). He found out that men were more discriminated against than women. Discriminatory outlook of employers during employment acquisition or employment has been observed as alleged by PWDs. He concluded that PWDs are less likely to be employed. On the other hand, the findings presented by Erickson, Von Schrader, Bruyère, and VanLooy (2013) showed a snapshot of the degree of implementation of disability-related policies and their perceived effectiveness. They said that implementing practices and policies is fairly consistent across industries and the four main areas of practices and policies. This has been implemented by the majority of the organizations, including those in the diversity and inclusion plan. This requires subcontractors to follow the disability nondiscrimination requirements, maintain interactions with community organizations, give training on disability responsiveness and nondiscrimination, create a grievance method for practical accommodation, permit lengthy leave as an accommodation, appoint a specific person or office for their accommodation, propose elastic work engagements, and have a return to work/disability management program. Only a few organizations implemented several practices that received some of the highest effectiveness ratings. These practices included having a centralized accommodation fund, formalizing the decision-making process for the case-by-case provision of accommodations, and establishing a disability-focused network (employee resource/affinity group). The Affirmative Action and Nondiscrimination Obligations of Contractors and Subcontractors Regarding Individuals with Disabilities (as cited by Turcotte, 2014) went far beyond the current requirements, which do not require actual measurement of PWDs in the recruiting pool or workforce. The actual process of identifying employees with disabilities is something that is of concern to many employers. One of the most encouraging findings of Turcotte (2014) is that fewer employers reported organizational barriers to hiring individuals with disabilities. Although the accommodation cost remains a concern for employers, fewer

employers felt that attitudes/stereotypes, supervisor knowledge of accommodations, cost of training, or supervision were barriers compared with 12 years ago. Although still high, fewer employers than those 15 years ago saw supply-side issues as a barrier, for example, lack of related experience or training among PWDs. These findings may indicate that informational efforts to raise awareness among employers may be helping to incrementally remove workplace barriers and increase employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. In addition, Ameri et al. (2018) investigate potential discrimination against PWDs through a field experiment that sent job applications to 6,016 accounting positions for which the applicants' disabilities are unlikely to affect productivity. One-third of the cover letters disclosed that the applicant had a spinal cord injury, one-third disclosed the presence of Asperger's syndrome, and one-third did not mention disability. The disability applications received 26% fewer expressions of employer interest. This gap was concentrated among experienced applicants and small private companies that are not covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Tests suggest possible positive effects of the ADA, but not state laws, in reducing the disability gap. Results indicate there may be substantial room for employer and policy initiatives to improve employment opportunities for PWDs.

Another concern of the PWD is workplace accommodation. The study that reviews the effectiveness of workplace accommodation regarding employment workability and cost-benefit among disabled people was done by Nevala, Pehkonen, Koskela, Ruusuvoori, and Anttila (2015). The study found that specific types of workplace accommodation, such as vocational counseling and guidance, education and self-advocacy, the help of others, changes in work schedules, work organization, and special transportation, promote employment among physically disabled persons and reduce costs. There was insufficient evidence that workplace accommodation (liaison, education, work aids, and work techniques) coordinated by case managers increased return to work and is cost-effective compared with the usual care of persons with physical and cognitive disabilities. The key facilitators and barriers of employment were self-advocacy, support of the employer and community, training and counseling, and flexibility of work schedules and work organization. On the other hand, Whitt, Cawley, Yonker, and Polage (2014) noted that many individuals with disabilities continue to face negative employment outcomes after requesting accommodations. The accommodations that make working possible reinforce the stigmas against individuals with disabilities. They can do their jobs, but they require special devices, preferred parking, alternative hours, and various other accommodations not generally afforded to other members of the workplace community. This need for accommodation only heightens the perceived difference between those with disabilities and non-disabled workers.

According to a study conducted in Indonesia using a national census 2010 and Susenas (2012), the majority of PWDs do not work in the informal sector with low wages. Only a few joined skill development programs to enhance their chances of getting a decent living. Most PWDs have lived in poverty, dependency, and social exclusion, and they tend to experience high unemployment and have lower earnings than a person without disabilities. PWDs are often segregated from the mainstream labor market. Many become underemployed or even discouraged from entering the labor market.

Labor force participation among PWDs was examined by Brucker (2015) and found out that there are variations in social capital among PWDs. She found out that adults with disabilities in the labor force have higher levels of social capital than adults with disabilities who are not in the labor force. Among those PWDs who are in the labor force, however, little difference in social capital exists between those who are and who are not employed. She concluded that advocates, policymakers, and service providers, seeking to maximize the successful inclusion of PWDs within the society, must not lose sight of social capital as a construct as equally important as human and economic capital. Innovative programs and services offered throughout the lifespan should incorporate strategies to address each of these types of resources.

There are more innovative approaches to increase labor market participation for PWDs. One that surfaced is social entrepreneurship that offers one alternative employment pathway. One of the ways to employ PWDs is through *social entrepreneurship since company that advocates social entrepreneurship is likely to hire PWDs*. However, little is known about the broader factors influencing *social entrepreneurship* to hire PWDs. Using empirical data from focus groups comprised of social entrepreneurs with disabilities and interviews with key stakeholders working in the fields of policy, disability, and business, the research of Harris, Renko, and Caldwell (2014) frames its analysis in the intersection of disability studies and entrepreneurship to explore, which factors influence the potential for social entrepreneurs to provide equal participation opportunities for PWDs in the labor market. Findings suggest that further consideration of political-economic and socio-cultural factors is needed if it is better to understand the potential of social entrepreneurs to hire people with disabilities (Harris et al., 2014).

Kim and Williams (2012) conducted a phenomenological study to understand the lived experiences of college seniors and recent college graduates with physical disabilities seeking employment opportunities after graduation in the United States. They found out that participants' attitudes about and experiences with disability are diverse such as pain to pride (which is also the findings of this study). PWDs are also denied accommodation. Their major areas of concern are the following: their marketable skills and credentials and accessibility and accommodation in

workplaces are necessary; continued education beyond the baccalaureate is a priority for many participants rather than an immediate transition to work, and the Office of Disability and professors were considered important advising agencies. Even among the participants with similar physical disabilities, the symptoms, needs, and experiences varied.

Studies about barriers to employment for PWDs focused on the continued lower employment rate for persons with disabilities. O'Sullivan, Strauser, and Wong (2012) focused their study more on barriers to employment that reach beyond functional impairment. Personality and self-efficacy have consistently been important factors when considering employment outcomes for persons without disabilities; less is known about these factors related to job tenure in samples of people with disabilities. Results of their study revealed that work behavior efficacy and personality are related to the length of prior employment. Personality was found to account for a significant amount of variance in work behavior efficacy, and personality was a stronger predictor of length of prior employment over work behavior efficacy. Specifically, the personality trait openness significantly contributed to the length of prior employment, and openness and neuroticism significantly contributed to the length of prior employment among persons with low education.

Lamichhane (2012) reported that people with physical, hearing and visual impairments were respectively large in the non-governmental organization sector, restaurants, and local schools. In addition to income, greater social inclusion, respect in the community, more friends, increased confidence, and discovering new abilities were some of the positive life changes experienced by employees with disabilities.

On the other hand, Boman, Kjellberg, Danermark, and Boman (2015) discovered that workability is closely related to the type of disability. It is not surprising that it had an impact on employment opportunities. However, higher education did not contribute to increased employment opportunities for respondents with impaired workability. As expected, employment opportunities were poorer for the youngest and the oldest age groups as well as for women. Education above the primary level seems to increase employment opportunities. They summarized that the type of disability identifies workability and the best way to counteract this is to have higher education. This conclusion raises a number of policy- and practice-related issues. For instance, there is a need for a disability work-oriented policy that is differentiated and less generic concerning the type of disability. Moreover, further development of individually tailored working life rehabilitation is needed, especially one that considers the type of disability.

Kalargyrou (2014) examines disability inclusion initiatives as a strategy to gaining a competitive advantage, especially in industries with high turnovers, such as hospitality and retail. Disability inclusion has proven valuable to their companies, in which persons with disabilities have exhibited strong loyalty, lower turnover, dependability, and improved productivity, and workplace physical and psychological safety (Kalargyrou, 2014). Therefore, creating a disability-friendly culture that is favorable and supportive to employees with disabilities is vital in overcoming biases and stereotypes.

In Ghana, many PWDs are unemployed, the majority being women. Discrimination is cited by Naami (2015) as the most significant barrier to the employment of PWDs, particularly women. live in poverty, given that some are unemployed and those employed worked mostly in marginal, seasonal, and menial jobs. PWDs also experience several challenges on the job, including negative perceptions about their capabilities, discrimination, and exclusion, regardless of the employment sector and disability type. Educational interventions, such as workshops and documenting and showcasing success stories of persons with disabilities, could be helpful to reduce negative perceptions about their capabilities and discrimination against them. Government intervention to support PWDs with start-up capital and funding for formal education is also recommended. These two elements were identified respectively as barriers to self-employment and employment in the public/private sectors. Government interventions to create educational opportunities for persons with disabilities are essential given that lower educational attainment affect their employment in Ghana, Africa.

The links between disability, education, and employment remain unclear in developing countries due to the lack of credible data. However, Lamichhane and Okubo (2014) identify and compare the effect of education on employability, employment status (full-time or part-time), job type (white collar or blue collar), and job satisfaction among persons with disabilities using a unique data-set of over 400 respondents with hearing, physical, and visual impairments in Nepal. Results show a positive correlation between years of schooling and the likelihood of obtaining a full-time and white-collar job. Regarding the type of impairment, those with physical impairments are less likely to be employed when individual characteristics are controlled but report higher levels of job satisfaction when they are employed. Results suggest the need to invest further in education for PWDs to increase their participation within the labor market.

Adopting the view that the organization can influence career development, the study by Kulkarni (2016) outlined employer initiatives aimed at developing careers of employees with a disability. It outlined how employers have helped and continually aimed to help those with a disability attain career success through certain

human resource philosophies and practices. Their study complemented prior research, which has noted barriers to career success and outlines how employers and human resource practitioners can help develop employees with a disability.

On PWD policy implementation, the findings presented by Erickson et al. (2013) help understand what companies are doing and whether what they are doing is working from their perspective. Across the four major areas of practices and policies, a few stood out as been implemented by the majority of organizations, such as including PWDs in the diversity and inclusion plan, requiring subcontractors to adhere to disability nondiscrimination requirements, having relationships with community organizations, providing training on disability awareness and nondiscrimination, establishing a grievance procedure for reasonable accommodation, allowing extended leave as an accommodation, designating a specific person or office for the accommodation, offering flexible work arrangements, and having a return to work/disability management program. Several practices that received some of the highest effectiveness ratings were implemented by only a few organizations. These practices included having a centralized accommodation fund, formalizing the decision-making process for the case-by-case provision of accommodations, and establishing a disability-focused network (employee resource/affinity group). In terms of employment trends and policy perspectives for persons with disabilities, Dawn (2012) shows that though there has been a marked shift in paradigms about their employment facilities, several backlogs and barriers make it imperative to undertake more focused and comprehensive efforts for deriving optimum benefits. On government programs linked to policy on PWDs, Houtenville and Brucker(2014) described how a comprehensive analysis of the 2009 Current Population Survey–Annual Social and Economic Supplement provides the first snapshot of the involvement of people with disabilities in a broad array of government programs. Focusing on the working-age population, the analysis revealed that PWDs represent one-third of the persons who participate in safety-net programs. Among PWDs, 65% participate in a safety-net program, compared with 17% of persons without disabilities. Among Social Security Disability Insurance (DI) beneficiaries, 38% participate in safety-net programs other than DI, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Medicaid, and Medicare. Furthermore, results suggest that only 3% and 8% of low-income nonworking safety-net participants with and without disabilities, respectively, utilize employment services. Improved data collection on employment services is needed further to evaluate the interaction of safety-net and employment services programs.

Many PWDs continue being unemployed or underemployed. One way to rectify this situation is to leverage the services of disability training and placement agencies that can appropriately train candidates with a disability and then connect

them with potential employers. Unfortunately, employers profess ignorance about the availability of such services and continue being wary of employing PWDs. In an article, based on interviews with twelve policymakers in five agencies, Kulkarni and Kote (2014) examine services offered by such agencies. Results showed that agencies engage in the following four roles when securing employment for candidates with a disability: the facilitator, the trainer, the marketer, and the partner. Based on their findings, they noted a few broad recommendations for employers regarding formulating their disability policies. Novak (2015) observed that for young PWDs, gaining meaningful employment in a typical community job is an important step towards realizing full community membership. She examined how contemporary US federal disability policy has heightened expectations that youth with disabilities, including those with significant disabilities, can and should be prepared to work in integrated workplaces. She concluded with a discussion of challenges in translating the legislative intent of federal disability policy into noticeable improvements in employment outcomes, along with recommendations for aligning legislation, funding priorities, and providing service delivery systems to achieve policy goals.

The different articles from different countries on issues of PWDs provide varying degrees of importance in finding ways the inclusion of PWDs in the society in various aspects, especially in employment, that touches the socio-economic aspect. Despite the enactment of RA 7277 and BATAS PAMBANSA BILANG 344 OF 1982 (ACCESSIBILITY LAW) in the Philippines, a gap exists that needs to be discussed to attend to the needs of PWD. Thus, this research paper intends to explore the PWDs' experience in their employment journey where most of the social gaps existed. This study explored the lived experiences of participants in their employment activities to propose measures to enhance their well-being through policy formulation.

Methodology

This chapter discussed the design used in this study, environment, participants, the instrument used, data collection, and data analysis. It also includes how trustworthiness and ethical consideration are interwoven. The aim is to produce quality research findings in content and methodology.

Research Design

This study used the qualitative method of research. According to Smith (as cited in Abalos et al., 2016), phenomenology studies phenomena-things as they appear in the person's experience or ways a person experiences things; thus, there are meanings in the experience. These meanings are the essences of human experience.

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The conscious experience is lived by the person referred to as the subject or the first-person perspective. This study utilized Husserl's phenomenology.

Husserlian phenomenology is descriptive phenomenology in which he defined the essence as the "very central core of reality" (Lauer, as cited in Abalos et al., 2016, p. 7). Husserl wanted to capture the concept of pure consciousness when he came up with a method he called phenomenological reduction, which he defines as holding in abeyance the assumptions, beliefs, and biases about the phenomenon under investigation; thus, the pure phenomenon is isolated from what is already known about a particular phenomenon (Speziale & Carpenter, as cited in Abalos et al., 2016). This study utilized bracketing or separating of consciousness what is already known about or believed about the phenomenon being experienced, which is part of the reduction process of Husserl. The process involves the grasp of the essential lived experience of those being studied (Lopez & Willis, as cited in Abalos et al., 2016). This bracketing technique was not to eliminate the existence of the prior knowledge, which Husserl called transcendence but to allow the bracketing of knowledge (Lauer, as cited in Abalos et al., 2016).

Research Setting

The setting is in the highly urbanized city of Mandaue in the Visayas, Philippines. PWDs were acknowledged as important entities in the development of the city. There is an extension office of the Department of Social Welfare where PWDs are welcomed and become members of the PWD group in the city.

Research Sampling

Using purposive convenience sampling, there were only five participants chosen because of unavailability of PWD to participate in the study. They were chosen because they were members of the Federation for the Welfare of Persons with Disabilities in the City. They are also residents and government employees of the Mandaue City Hall.

Data Collection

The empirical data generated by this study was collected through semi-structured interviews. These were conducted face-to-face at the interviewees' place of work. Interviewing constitutes one of the most commonly applied methods for data collection in qualitative research.

The interviewees were presented with a few open-ended questions designed to inspire the interviewees to devise a genuine answer on their previous experiences on the motivation of employability of physically challenged individuals. The open-
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ended question design was selected because it allowed for discussion between the interviewer and the interviewee. Yet another advantage is that those types of questions enabled interviewees to devise an answer in their terms, which improves the likelihood that the interviewees' will remain truthful and feel confident in the interview situation (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

Before commencing the process of data collection, an interview guide was produced with the intent to facilitate interview congruency. The interviews were held individually to establish a comfortable and secure research environment for the interviewees that would allow them to disclose personal information without being judged. Furthermore, the interviews were recorded with reliable audio devices, and the answers were included in transcripts to demonstrate complete transparency.

Creswell (1998) suggested that the researcher will decide early on how he will store data in a structured, organized format and safe location to protect from damage. The researcher has to exercise care in collecting accurately and in protecting the data throughout the study. In this study, the audio record is kept in a secured database before transcription, and the same was destroyed.

Decisions were based on the conduct of the interviews. The researcher did not feel comfortable taking notes and moderating the interview session at the same time. Therefore, the researcher required the assistance of a secretary to take notes during the interviews to add to the richness of data collection. He also required the assistance of an interviewer, although he is present during the interview. The interview lasted for 30 to 45 minutes for each participant.

Data Analysis

Data analysis in this study followed Colaizzi's method of data analysis. The use of Colaizzi's method enabled new knowledge to be revealed and provided insights into the experiences of the participants looking for employment and who are employed already. It ensures the credibility and reliability of its results. The following are Colaizzi's steps that were used in this study:

1. Read protocols to familiarize yourself with them.
2. Review each protocol and extract significant statements from the transcript.
3. Formulate the meanings of each significant statement.
4. Group formulated meanings into a cluster of themes.
5. Integrate results into an exhaustive description of the phenomenon, which is the employment of PWDs.

6. Formulate an exhaustive description of the phenomenon; and lastly, ask the participants regarding the findings as a final validating step.

Ethical Considerations

In the study of the ethical process in qualitative research, the following are included: the protection of human rights, evaluation of the benefits to guarantee that the benefits out-weight the risk if there are any, that in the documentation of informed consent, the participants must be explained of the contents as well as to have an understanding of the events in recording the informed consent that was signed by the participants permitting to join in the research activities. Before the data gathering process, formal authorization to access private information was ensured. After the data gathering, as deemed appropriate, debriefing must be considered, as constant communication and referrals transpired now and then. Conflict of interest must be evaluated.

Results

This study explored the lived experiences of persons with physical disabilities in terms of their employment issues. It discovered their thoughts and feelings as they experienced and narrated the story. The researcher collected significant statements from the gathered interview. Significant statements were group together to form themes.

Participants' Description

Participant 1 is a female, single high school working in the city government as *job order* receiving a monthly salary of Php 8,360.00. She is living with her parents. Participant 2 is also a female, a widow, and a college-level working in the city government as *job order*. She is living on her own, receiving a monthly salary of PHP 8,360.00. Participant 3 is a male, married high school working with the city government as *job order*. He is renting a house together with his family and receiving a monthly salary of PHP 8,360.00. Participant 4 is a male, a widower, and a college graduate working with the city government as a regular employee. He is renting a house for his children and receiving a monthly salary of Php 12,500.00. Participant 5 is a male, single, third-year high school who was hired by the city government as a *job order* receiving a monthly salary of P8,360.00. He is living with a relative who owned the house he is living in. Below are the themes that emerged from the significant statements of the participants.

Theme 1: Deficiencies can be corrected with the right attitude for support. To be employment-ready, a PWD must understand the challenges and the stresses that

they faced. Some of the challenges presented by the participants were in the area of transportation in going to the office of work and back home, fixed hours of work, computer access, money problems, mobility, and lack of support mechanism. The main problems PWDs faced in their desire to work, according to Murray and Heron (2003), are “the lack of education, the lack of employable skills, rapidly changing labor markets, employers’ attitudes and perceptions, lack of access to self-employment opportunities, unfair terms of employment, higher work-related costs. In addition, disabled women and girls face a number of special problems” (pp. 7-8).

Participant 1 felt that her skills were inadequate. She said,

Unya wala ko kapasar sanglit dili kuno ko maayo ug diction. Kay Call Center man ang akong ge applayan. (P1, L23-24)

I was not hired due to my diction when I submitted my resume to a certain call center company.

Participant 2 considered the preparatory activities in applying as challenges that she needs to overcome. She found her inability to walk using crutches in one hand while bringing the documents using the other hand, cumbersome especially in riding jeepneys where normal people are in a hurry by the hundreds without respecting each other.

Grabi kayo ka-pait nga akong nasinate sauna dihang ni apply ko ug trabaho mam tugod kay mo lakaw man gyud ka. Mo adto mangyud ka sa kompaniya nga imong gi applayan mag dala sa imong mga papeless. Pag -bitbit nimog papeles asa man ibutang nga duna manpud kay crutches na gikoptan.? Mag-dala gyud kag bag nga kasudlan mam noh. Atong huna-hunaon apiki gyud sa among pag-lihok. Samotan ug mosakay ka ug jeep. Ang drayber sa jeep dili mo pasakay nimu kay para nila makahasol ka nila ilabi ng kung mag dasok na ang mga pasahero. Dili gyud ka mapasakay sa driber. Pun-an pud ug pasahero nga bisag kahibalo nga duna kay kakulian sa pang-lawas mura lang pud ug buta nga wala makakita nimu. Walay mga respito namu mam. Lisod gyud mam ang pangita ug trabaho para namu. Sayo ka sa buntag mag-atang ug pasahero-an para imong kasakyan peru tungod dili ka pasakyon sa uban nga driver maabtan nalang ka ug hapon dili paka kasakay. (L305-318)

The most difficult experience in job hunting was in going to the company that I will apply for a job because I have to manage to hold my 2 crutches at the same time holding my application envelope. How will I hold the application papers and both crutches? Though it is advisable to bring a bag for the papers. Thinking about it, I felt inadequate in my movement. Especially in riding a jeepney. The jeepney driver will not allow you to ride so that you cannot inconvenience the other passengers especially if a lot of them want to take priority rides. You can never

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get a ride for yourself. In addition, even if passengers knew about your disability, they act like blind not to see you. That is how disrespectfully they are to us PWD. It is really hard to find a job for a PWD like us. So early in the morning, you have to find a jeepney ride, but because drivers will not allow you to get in their jeepneys you end up not getting a ride until late afternoon when office hours end.

Another part of the challenge that Participant 2 experienced was the many scheduled interviews that applicants must go through. That would mean that Participant 2 must line up in the jeepney terminal early in the morning to come to the interview venue early. She was expected to make a personal follow-up of her application. There was a time when her crutches broke. She has this to say:

Lisod gyud para namu nga pabalik-balikon ka sa pag follow-up ka yang among mobility lisod na gud daan. Dua gyud toy panahon mam nga nabali akong crutches. (L323-325)

It is so hard for us to be forced to go back and forth to the company to make follow-ups because of mobility that will restrict you. There was even a time when my crutches broke down.

Participant 2 also experienced discrimination in the job. She said that during the hiring process, the qualification needed does not match the skills that the PWD acquired and possessed. The hiring companies needed normal-bodied applicants to apply for the job hiring. When the positions need was an office staff, they needed someone who could do multi-tasking. Most of all, if the Human Resource Manager's perception is already negative towards persons with a physical disability, then discrimination is inevitable. She said,

Sa hiring, ang ilahang kasagarang pangitaon kay dili mohaom sa among abilidad. Kadaghanan sa mga hiring kay driver, errand boy, gasoline boy ug uban pa. Nag- kinahanglan gyud sila kanang walay kakulian sa pang-lawas nga trabante. Anha pud sa opisina kay multi -tasking kuno ang trabaho, sugo dire unya sugo pud didto. Labaw sa tanan kung ang huna-huna sa manager daan kay bias na ug judgemental pa gyud. Diskriminado na gyud me mga dunay disability. Lisod gyud ang akong esperensya sa pag-pangapply ug trabaho mam”(L 328-335)

In their hiring, most of the qualifications that they need are not appropriate to our abilities. Most positions that they hire are for the driver, errand boy, gasoline boy, and others. They need fit individuals without disabilities. In offices also, they practice multi-tasking, you perform minute tasks now and then. Most of all, if the mindset of the manager is already bias towards PWD he would come out judgmental. We always feel discriminated against. My experience in getting a job is challenging.

Participant 3 narrated that in situations experienced by PWDs, they find it hard to look for a job considering that many abled applicants are also looking for a job. During hiring, it is usual to see applicants in a long queue and that includes the PWDs. Nobody gave priority to PWD.

Sa kahintang sa PWD lisud gyud mangita ug trabaho hilabina sa pahaon karon nga daghan na kayo ang naginahanglan ug trabaho. Kana nga dunay hiring, kinahanglan pa ka mo linya sa pwerting taasang linya sa mga aplikante kay wala man sila mohatag ug prioridad sa pag-apply sa sama nako nga PWD. (L 527-531)

In the case of PWD, it is so hard to find a job, especially right now there are so many jobless persons. In companies where there are hiring, you have to line in a long queue of applicants because they do not give priority to PWD applicants like me.

Participant 3 added that as PWD, they are already suffering from mobility issues such as in riding transport vehicles, notwithstanding the usefulness of the crutches. If the PWD has been taken in the company, their next concern was to struggle with normal passengers in getting available transportation. That is why that as a PWD, he sees to it that he can compete with those abled workers. He also considered the hindrance to mobility as the biggest challenge for PWD. Some days finding a jeep to ride had been a nagging problem because it became frequent that drivers would not wait until the PWD is safely seated, making it disadvantageous for PWD to travel. This is what he said,

Una palang gyud inig lakaw nako padulong sa akong padulngan, inig sakay palang nako sa jeep grabe nang kalisud akong nasagubang sama taga dlaw. Sa akong paglakaw sa dalan nga dunay crutches dili gyud lalim. Sa panahon nga madawat naka sa trabaho ang problema nasad kay ang oras kinahanglan apson nimo makig uban nasad ka sa mga taong tarong ug mga panglawas. Makita gyud nako kung unsa kasayon nang kinabuhi sa walay kapulian o mga himsog ug panlawas apan dili kana maoy rason nga pwede raka ma-late sa imong gitrabahuan busa ako gyud nga paningkamotan nga makasabay ko sa akong ka trabahante ng normal man o PWD kay parehas rami nga trabante. (L 548-557)

First of all, when I walk towards my destination, when I ride in a jeep, I find it very difficult in my daily activities. As I walked down the road with my crutches, it is an unimaginable struggle. By the time you get a job, the problem is in the time you have to be in the office because you have to wrestle with the other abled passengers in getting a ride. I can see how easy it is for those healthy and abled bodies to commute to work but that does not restrict me from coming to the

office on time. So I try to keep up with my co-workers whether they are able and normal or PWDs because we are all the same in the eyes of our employers.”

Participant 4 narrated that he resigned as a cashier after working for only a year because it was so hard to find transportation that most of the time, the drivers deny a seat for a PWD.

Ikaduha, nang-apply ko ug cashier sa usa ka kan-anan ug nadawat ko, apan usa ra katuig akong pag-trabaho didto isip usa ka cashier kay tig dugay manira sa trabahoan unya ang problema naku sad kay inig pauli wala nay masakyan pauli ug usab gani dugay pa sad ko makasakay tungod kay balibaran ko sa jeep nga akong sakyan. Maong naka desisyon ko nga mo resign nalang sa trabaho (L 689-694)

Second, I applied for a cashier at a restaurant and I was accepted, but I only worked there for a year as a cashier because the store closes late at night and I find it hard to get a ride home especially when drivers rejected me to ride in their jeep. So I decided to resign from my job.

Discrimination is often encountered by Participant 4, like in this instance when he first applied in a MEPZ company (a company located in Mactan Export Processing Zone).

Una, nisuway ko ug pang-apply sa MEPZ apan wala ko nadawat kay tungod lagi kay over-aged naku unya tungod sad sa kakulian sa pang-lawas. (L 685-687)

At first, I tried to apply to MEPZ but I was not hired due to over-aged and also due to my physical disability.

Participant D also expressed his dismay by saying,

Daghan kayo nga kakulian maam oi sa pag-apply palang gani naku sama sa akong gi-saysay ganiha nga mao palang pag-abot naku sa kompaniya nag gi-aplayan gi diskrimanate naku. Sa pag-padong palang gani naku ug pag-apply nag lisod naku og pag-lakaw tungod kay layo paman ang terminal nga didto ko mag-sakay tungod sa akong kahintang. (L 744-749)

There are so many shortcomings when I applied, just as I was saying that just upon entering the company, I already felt discriminated. Just on my way to the company from the jeep terminal, I had difficulty in walking because of the distance of the terminal to the company, considering my physical disability in walking.

Participant 5 also considered mobility issues as his challenge in finding employment.

Lisod sa akong pag lihoc-lihoc ang pag pangapply sa trabaho pero katong nag apply ko sa gobierno kaniadto sa Cebu government nadawat kay na ngita sila trabante nga Persons with Disability. (L 843-845)

It is difficult for me to move around to apply for a job but when I applied to the Cebu City local government I was accepted because they were looking for workers who are handicapped.

Additionally, he considered a political factor in the employment in the government sector.

Didto ko katrabaho sa Cebu City Hall. Bus Conductor, PWD man ang gikinahang. Hangtud nga nataktak ko sa akong pagka casual tungod sa political reasons. (L 846-847)

I worked in the Cebu City Hall as a Bus Conductor whose requirement is being a PWD, until the time when I was fired being a casual due to political reasons.

However, employment also in the private sector is not easy. There are a lot of hindrances. In his case at that time, he found it difficult because the work needed the dexterity skill and good eyesight, which Participant 5 did not have. She recalled,

Nang-apply ko pinaagi sa akong mga friends nga PWD usab, didto sa Goodwill nga ang mga trabahante pulos pud PWD. Naglisod pudko sa sinug danan kay gawas nga duna koy disability sa tiil, sa mata, tungod kay production company man, need gyud kayo nga naa kay good eye sight. Gi-ingnan na ko sa nag interview nako nga murag maglisod gyud ko kay tungod sa akong problema sa akong panan-aw apan akong gipakita akong determinasyon. I undergone dexterity test ug nakapasar ko sa maong test. Tuod man nadawat ko sa trabaho isip production worker hangtud ngan nahimo ko nga team leader. (L848-856)

I applied through my PWD friends, too, at Goodwill Store, where all of their employees are also PWD. I find it hard at first because of my disability in walking and sight, being a production company, good eyesight is needed. I was told by the interviewer that it would be hard for me because of my eyesight but I showed great determination. I underwent the dexterity test and have passed it with flying color. True enough, I got the job as a production worker until I was later on promoted as team leader.

Another experience of Participant 5 was the difficulty in moving from one building to another in pursuit of employment where most buildings of employers did not follow the law or Batas Pambansa 344 that provides for enhancing the mobility of PWDs by requiring certain buildings, institutions, establishments, and public utilities to install facilities and other devices that no license or permit for the

construction, repair or renovation of public and private buildings for public use be issued. This is what he said,

Kana gyung mag sige ug lakaw pangita ug trabaho. Walay mga accessibility ang mga kompaniya nga akong gi-aplayan. Lisod gyud. (L862-863)

When one always walks in looking for a job, the most company that I visited do not have an accessibility feature in their building, it truly is a challenge for me.

Theme 2: Empowering persons with disability to augment employment.

According to Kono (2015), a PWD is confronted with a lot of difficulties like poverty and lack of financial and environmental access to quality education, although the Philippine government has acknowledged and is aware of its existence, the slow implementation of government programs for PWD as provided for in the RA 10534 and the poorly coordinated services added to the challenges that PWD encounters. The concept of equal opportunities is not at all evident to this group of Filipinos. Information infrastructure is not yet developed and there is scarce information about them. According to Kato (2015), the PWDs who joined job fairs for PWD initiated by DOLE as a way to highlight the annual National Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation Week, were only hired as casual or contractual and were later on unemployed and cannot be traced.

In this study, only one was a permanent employee of the Mandaue City government. No one can be traced to be working with any company in the city. Participant 5 who has a college degree believed that empowerment motivates him to achieve his goal in his job. Empowerment through the assistance and guidance given by the government. He said,

Usa sab sa naka tabang namong mga PWD kay ang mga serbisyo sa gobierno nga naghatag namo ug assistance ug guide para sa among development. Wala sad mi pakyasa sa pag-hatag ug pag tagad sa among mga panginahanglan isip us aka sector sa komunidad. Gi-providedan mi ug wheelchairs, crutches, vehicle sama sa motor nga designed jud para sa PWD. Na appreciate kayo nako ang nakaimbinto samaong mga ikwipo para maibanan among mga kalisod samatagadlaw namong bulohaton. (L960-967)

The things that also help us the PWDs are the services provided by the government in assisting and guiding us for our development. They did not fail to provide the needs of this sector in the community. We are provided with wheelchairs, crutches, and a vehicle-like motor that was designed for PWD. I appreciate very much the inventor of such a device because our difficulty is lessened in our daily tasks.

Additionally, Kato (2015) wrote that majority of wheelchair-users were employed in sheltered workshops, such as “House with No Steps” in Manila and “Goodwill Industries” in Cebu. These are the only two organizations that are employing hundreds of persons with a varied range of disabilities. She added that in a recent meeting of the regional committee for the welfare of disabled persons for Eastern Visayas, the issue regarding employer’s tax incentives for hiring PWDs was raised. Their general impression was that none was heard of any employer hiring PWDs that applied for the tax incentive because of the many documents required by the BIR, and the bureaucracy became discouraging to companies.

Theme 3: Implementation and compliance need monitoring. Government programs are provided for in Republic Act 7277, otherwise known “as the Magna Carta for Disabled Persons.” This law ensures the rehabilitation, self-development, and self-reliance of disabled persons and developing their skills and potentials to enable them to compete favorably for available opportunities. The law mandates creating the Persons with Disability Affairs Office in every province, city, and municipality.

Participant 1 is aware of the law RA 7277 and its provision but only wished that the provision will be implemented in Mandaue City for the sake of her fellow PWDs. This is what she said,

Nindot unta nga mo buhat ug balaod nga mo dawat sila ug mga PWD sa company ug walay age limit as long as kaya pa mo trabaho ang mga PWD. Maayu pud unta ug basta PWD nga dunay automatic Philhealth (L181-184)

It is good to create a law that will hire a person with a disability in companies without an age limit for as long as the PWD can still perform to work. It’s good also that if you are a person with a disability he/she can avail automatic Philhealth.

Participant 2 expressed her thoughts while saying that a lot of companies are not hiring PWDs. Should they start hiring, then a lot of workers in the PWD sector will have jobs.

Daghan pud mga private kompaniya nga wala nag dawat ug PWDs. Sa akong lang tan-aw dunay daghan nga kompaniya sa Mandaue City ug kung modawat lang ang kompaniya bisag usa lang ka trabante daghan na gyud ang maka trabaho sa among sector. (L371-374)

Many private companies do not hire PWDs. There are many companies in Mandaue City and if these companies hire just one PWD, there will be many PWDs who will be able to work and gain income.

She continued by saying that the law provides discounts such as transportation discounts, restaurants, and food outlets. However, these discounts are useless if the PWDs do not get a job that would give them income.

Ang balaod nag awthag sa governo nga mag hatag og discount I.D. ug purchase booklet nga magamit namu pag avail ug discount sama sa pelihan sa jeep ug discount sa pag-palit ug tambal, discount kung mo kaon sa jolibee, mc Donald ug uban pang mga kan-anan. Nindot gyud mam peru bisag nag hatag ug diskwento para namu kung wala mey trabaho, wala gihapon ug silbe ang programa para namu mam. (L375-380)

The law required the government to provide discount ID and purchase booklets that will be used to avail certain discounts in the purchase of medicines, food at Jollibee, Mc Donald, and other food chains. It is good to have this privilege but if we do not have jobs, these discount seems nothing.

Participant 2 valued education as a tool for employment. She continued that education helps get a job because the first question in an interview is always your educational attainment. Education gives one an edge to compete to have a competitive advantage.

Ang edukasyon daku pud kayo ug ikatabang mam kay kung ma-ngapply ko ang unang gyud nilang ipangutana kung unsa ang akong kurso nga mahuman. Kining duna kay edukasyon nga nahuman mam kay maoy magamit para pud mokompet ko sa uban nga mga walay apan nga aplikante sa trabaho. (L408-412)

Education is very important because the first thing was being asked by the interviewer was that what your degree is. Through education, it helps me to compete with other able applicants.

She continued that RA 7277 was not at all implemented in Mandaue City based on her experience when said narrated that she once applied in a private company; even though there were many requirements to be submitted, she realized that it is very difficult for a PWD like her to land a job. Soon after the evaluation of the documents submitted, she was denied for further processing of her application. She was still hoping that the law shall be implemented and complied with in Mandaue City for the PWDs to find jobs.

Akong na experensahan nga sa pag-apply naku sa private nga kompaniya, lisod gyud kayo ang pag-dawat sa PWD. Daghan kaayong requirements nga imong i-submit unya pag-evaluate tagak dayon ka labi kung ang nag hire gi judge naka daan tungod sa imong disability. Wala nagyuy pурсento nga madawat sa trabaho. Maayo unta nga ang mga balaod sa PWDs nga ma- emplementar lang

gyud ug sakto para among ma siguro nga duna gyud kasudlan ug trabaho. (L471-477)

In my experienced in applying for jobs at private companies was difficult. It is difficult for PWDs to be hired. There were many documents to be submitted and when these were evaluated then the PWDs were not be hired because they were being judged already. Hopefully, the laws will be strictly implemented so that we can be assured that there are reserve employments for us.

Participant 3 expressed his gratitude to the government for the skills training that she was able to participate notwithstanding his educational shortcoming because of his deficiency that leads to his inability to acquire the education needed to pursue his desired job. The skills training is considered a tool that developed his competence in finding a job.

Daku gyud og tabang naku kay wala gyud ko nakahaman sa pagiskwela tungod sa kawad-on sa kinabuhi o unsa pa na dihang rason nga maoy nakababag sa ilang pagiskwela. Sama kanako, usa sa rason sa akong wala pag tiwas sa akong pagskwela kay ang akong kakulian sa panlawas. Tungod si guro sa kahuyang sa akong personalidad nga dali rak ayo madiscourage sa akong sitwasyon. Apan karon na patuman na ang balaod mahitungod sa paghatag ug importansya ug katungod namong mga PWD, daku gyud kayo akong kalipay nga naay gibuhad nga aksyon atong gobierno nga matubag ugma hatagan ug solusyon among mga panginahanglan. Kung wala pa siguro ang gibuhad ang gobyerno pinaagi niining RA 10524, dili siguro namo masinati ang mga pribilihiyo namong mga PWD. Nibangon ming mga PWD tungod sagihatag nga oppurtunidad sa gobierno sama sa mga skills training, electronic, electrical ug uban pang mga kalihukan sa pag diskobre ug pag-pahanas sa imong potensya. Usa kini nga instrument aron mahimo ko nga competent o makasabay sa obligasyon sa usaka trabahanti. (L566-581)

The law helped me a lot. I did not finish my education because of financial constraints, physical disability, and lack of self-esteem. I am very happy with the law because our basic problems will soon be addressed. The government now is providing basic skills training, electronic, electrical, and other courses that will empower and enhance our abilities. This will also train me to become a competent worker.

Participant 3 continued that “the government is looking after the PWD that is why he is grateful. They will not be called by the community a useless person and dependent on others. It is a long time that PWDs were not given due credit because many institutions did not implement the RA 7277 and give importance to the rights

of PWD, especially in case of bullying. PWDs are praying that they are protected not only physically but also emotionally”.

Maka-ingon ko nga ang gobierno naglantaw sa amo nga adunay kakulian sa panlawas tungod sa mga balaod nga gipanday para kanamo. Mapasalamatan kayo ko niana kay dili na kami ma ingnan mga walay pulos sa komunidad ug dili name pa bigat ug mag salig sa laing tawo. Apan dugag gayud higayon nga wala mahatagan ug pagtagadag mga PWD kay dunay ubang institosyon nga wala mi implimintar o wala naghatagi ug importansya ang katungod sa mga PWD labina ang mga pag bully parehas nako, hina-ot unta nga mahatagan pa gyud ug dugang protekston dili lang sa pisikal nga aspeto lakip na ang emosyonal. (L630-639)

I can say that the government cared for us people with disabilities because it provides us a law. I’m very thankful because of that law the community will respect us and think we are not useless anymore. Although, many institutions never implement the law neither give importance to the rights of persons with disabilities especially on bullying. Hopefully, we will be provided further protections by the law not only on our physical but also on the emotional aspects.

Participant 4 was thankful for the RA 7277 for giving them the opportunity through the programs for PWD in cooperation with various agencies in giving discounts and other employment opportunities.

Daku kayo ug natabang ug pasalamat naku tungod kay aning programa daghan kaayo ang mga oportunidad nga gihatag ug susama nakong mga PWD ug sa akong mag kauban kay tungod ani kadaghan nasab nga mga ahensyang naghatag sa amoa ug mga discount ug opurtonidad aron me maka-trabaho sa ilang kompaniya. (L781-785)

It helped a lot and I am thankful for this program because of the many opportunities given to us PWD through the many agencies of government that give discounts and opportunities to work in their organizations.

He continued referring to the educational achievement that he had. He said that he was not able to finish his studies because of the difficulties he was facing. That is why he tries hard to learn skills that will make him qualify for a job.

Wala man gayod ako naka human sa akong pag-eskwela kay tungod sa ka lisod maong naninguha gayod ako nga makat-on sa mag butang nga dapat naku nga makat-onan para lang gyud ma qualified ko sa trabaho nga akong masudlan. (L797-800)

I was not able to finish my studies because of poverty; that is why I tried to learn the things that I needed for me to land a job.

He was also thankful for the government for coming up with RA 7277 for the help that it offered to PWD for opening opportunities even though not all, but at least some PWDs were helped.

Ang gobierno pinaagi sa balaod daku pud ug gikatabang sa among mga PWD kay tungod sa programa na hatagan gayod kami ug mga oportunidad bisag dili tanan nahatagan o naka trabaho peru maayo nalang kay nahatagan ug pagtagad ang mga PWD”(L807-810)

The government through the laws that were enacted, have greatly helped PWDs because of the programs that give PWD the opportunities, if not all of us, at least we were given a voice and were heard.

Participant 5 has worked with a private company that hired PWDs, and that was goodwill. He said that at first, he found it difficult to work hand in hand with his co-worker, considering that his disability is not only physically manifested by his disability in the feet but also in the eyes. But he persisted, having passed the dexterity test. He worked as a production worker and later became a team leader.

Nang-apply ko pinaagi sa akong mga friends nga PWD usab, didto sa Goodwill nga ang mga trabahante pulos pud PWD. Naglisod pudko sa sinug danan kay gawas nga duna koy disability sa tiil, sa mata, tungod kay production company man, need gyud kayo nga naa kay good eye sight. Gi-ingnan na ko sa nag interview nako nga murag maglisod gyud ko kay tungod sa akong problema sa akong panan-aw apan akong gipakita akong determinasyon. I undergone dexterity test ug nakapasar ko sa maong test. Tuod man nadawat ko sa trabaho isip production worker hangtud ngan nahimo ko nga team leader. (L848-856)

I applied through my friends who are PWDs in Goodwill where all employees are PWDs. I had a hard time at first because of the physical disability in my feet and eyes. Being a production company requires workers to have good eyesight. I was told by the interviewer that I would be having problems due to my poor eyesight but was more determined. I undergone the dexterity test and passed and later on was promoted to a Team Leader.

He added that because RA 7277 was still new, the public and other private establishments were not aware of its provision. At present, little by little, Mandaue City is doing something about it. However, other private establishments were not implementing its provisions.

Tungod sa bag-o pa ang kining maong balaod, dili pa kayo aware ang mga public ug private establishments sa mga provision niini. Apan karon, hinay-

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hinay nang naka tabangang maong balaod diri sa Mandaue LGU. Nakatuman nasa maong balaod apan ang mga private establishments wala pa gyud nakatuman. Makatabang kayo ning maong balaod kung hingpit ni nga ma implement sa mga PWD nga walay mga trabaho. (L913-919)

Because the law is newly enacted, establishments were not aware of it. Now, little by little they were implementing the law, although not all. If this law is fully implemented by all concerned establishments, it will help many PWDs even those who do not have work.

Theme 4: Mobility and accessibility of persons with disability requires private-public partnership. Batas Pambansa 344 is an act to enhance the mobility of PWDs by requiring certain buildings, institutions, establishments, and public utilities to install facilities and other devices. According to BATAS PAMBANSA BILANG 344 OF 1982 (ACCESSIBILITY LAW) , the minimum requirements for accessibility are outside and around buildings, parking, inside buildings and structures, and safety. To realize the rights of PWDs to participate in the social life and development of societies that they live, no building owners shall be issued building permits without provision for facilities and structural features that will enhance the mobility of PWDs. Prominent display of posters and stickers to generate public awareness of the rights of PWD and to foster understanding of their needs. Special bus stops shall be designed for PWDs. Discriminating against them is unlawful. The law is a welcome provision to all PWDs.

Participant 1 felt frustrated when she was not accepted in her application for a job. Aside from the monetary expenses spent on the transport fare, the difficulty in commuting towards the company that she has applied for because of her disability, she had to wear her cane from the corner where the jeepney stopped up to the location of the company. She said,

Nag guol kaayu ko kay nag nag effort ug nakagasto baya ko ug mga requirements ug pleti nya lisod sad sa akong layo ang nahimutangan sa kompanya nga akong gi applyan. Plus nagsungkod pa gyud ko ,niya gikan sa skina layo pakaayo ko ug lakawan. (L25-28)

I am so sad when I was denied employment because I put more effort and money in completing the hiring requirements. My circumstance is very hard considering my disability and the location of the company is far from the corner where jeeps ply, in terms of my mobility where I need to use my crutches to walk.

She continued that her work is far from her house in Mandaue being in Guadalupe. Being in the restaurant business, she must arrive at the business venue very early in the morning. Since she woke up late, she usually was forced to take a taxi cab. So her salary is not enough to last for the month.

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Sa dihang nag trabaho naku paet kaayu kay layu man ko sa Mandaue unya ang restaurant nga akong ge trabahoan sa Guadalupe so kinahanglan gayud akong mo mata ug sayu nya tungod kay dugay man gayud akong maka mata ug sayu kay tungod sa kakapoy sa akong trabaho unya byahe pa kayo kayo inig ka buntag ana ma late ug mata so maka taxi nalang ko so mag kulang nalang noon ako sweldo. (L 39-44)

Participant 1 continued expressing his sentiments by saying that it is very difficult to transfer from one jeepney to another, from one route (Mandaue to Colon St) to another route (Colon to Guadalupe). Another issue was the fare spent for the two rides, notwithstanding the effort of waking up early in the morning while sleeping late because of difficulty in getting a ride home. She tried because it's the only work she has.

Lisud gayud sege ug balhin-balhin ug jeep then kalas ug plite plus ang oras sa pagmata para biyahe unya dugay pa maule kay sa restaurant baya ko nag trabaho. Perme gayud ko dugay katulog unya sayu pa gayud mo mata para mo trabaho. Lisud pero kayanon kay mao raman gayud kini ang akong kadangpan wala na may lain. (L53-57)

Furthermore, participant 1 considered the cane as very helpful to her since it lessens his difficulty of moving. Without the cane, she was not useful in her work. The government should allocate a budget to purchase these things for the provision of those who have not.

Ang cane kay daku kayo gyud katabang nako kay pinaagi niini, maibtanan nako ang kalisud sa akong paglakaw, Kung wala akong cane dili gyud ko mahimung useful sa akong pag-trabaho. Governo dunay budget para pang hatag niini. (L189-192)

Mobility and accessibility were considered necessary by Participant A since she is at one time working as a cellphone technician. She experienced customers who are in a hurry to transfer from my cellphone workstation to a competitor because she cannot repair right away the cellphone because there are components necessary to repair the phone that has to be purchased from a store that is not accessible to her and in riding a jeepney, its driver will not stop to give you access to ride because they were in a hurry to get more passengers.

Peru tungod kay lisud para naku ang pag-lakaw unya mag dali ang customer nga ma repair dayon ilang celpon mobalhin sila ug lain nga technician ilabi ng kinahanglan ka mo palit ug pisa sa celpon. Ang tindahan dili accessible unya ang jeep imong sakyan para maka palit ka ug pisa kay dili pud mo pasakay nimu kay para nila maka dugay sa ilang biyahe. (L287-292)

Participant 1 added that it was a very difficult experience for her when she applied for work. She had to walk to the companies she applied to and carrying with documents. She needed to carry a bag while using her crutches. It was not easy. In addition, some drivers refused to convey because they think she is burdensome to them, especially during peak hours. Passengers knew that she was a PWD passenger, yet they did not vacate the seat for her. Thus, it made her arrive late at his destination. Normal people do not have respect for her. It is certainly difficult for her to find a job. If there are hiring, they do not hire her. There were cases that the companies will not even receive their application letter. Some companies received his application letters, but they do not have any answer from them of whether they hire her. It is tough for her to make a follow-up considering her mobility issue. There was a time that when she walked for a long distance to look for a job hiring when her crutch broke. It is good for her that there was a person who pitied her. He helped her fix her crutches by tightening them using a rope to temporarily use them.

In a job vacancy, it was usually mismatched with her qualifications. The vacancy usually offered were drivers, errands, gasoline boys, and others. They need workers who are an abled person. In the case of the office personnel, jobs require multi-tasking on the part of the employee. The most difficult thing is that the managers were already judgmental towards them. It was a difficult experience for him when she applied to *work*.

Gabi kayo ka-pait nga akong nasinate sauna dihang ni apply ko ug trabaho mam tugod kay mo lakaw man gyud ka. Mo adto mangyud ka sa kompaniya nga imong gi applayan mag dala sa imong mga papeless. Pag -bitbito nimog papeles asa man ibutang nga duna manpud kay crutches na gikoptan.? Mag-dala gyud kag bag nga kasudlan mam noh. Atong huna-hunaon apiki gyud sa among pag-lihok. Samotan ug mosakay ka ug jeep. Ang drayber sa jeep dili mo pasakay nimu kay para nila makahasol ka nila ilabi ng kung mag dasok na ang mga pasahero. Dili gyud ka mapansakay sa driber. Pun-an pud ug pasahero nga bisag kahibalo nga duna kay kakulian sa pang-lawas mura lang pud ug buta nga wala makakita nimu. Walay mga respito namu mam. Lisod gyud mam ang pangita ug trabaho para namu. Sayo ka sa buntag mag-atang ug pasaheron para imong kasakyan peru tungod dili ka pasakyon sa uban nga driver maabtan nalang ka ug hapon dili paka kasakay. (L305-318)

The issue of mobility and accessibility for PWDs is the greatest challenge to PWDs that pushed them to sacrifice; in the case of Participant 1, when she was still studying, and there was no elevator in the school, she would go up to the 5th floor to attend her class.

Kahinumdom ko sa dihang nag-eskwela ko nga ang akong room sa iskwelahan nahimutang sa 5th nga andana unya ig human sa akong klasi mo balhin pud sa lain room para sa laing subject. Bisag walay elebator ako gyud gi sakripisyuhan kay gusto ko nga mahuman ug eskwela unya pohon akong magamit sa pag pangapply ug trabaho. Ang akong pamilya mam kay daku kayo ug ikatabang naku (L412-418)

Discussion

The themes extracted from the significant statements represent their aspirations:

1. Deficiencies can be corrected with the right attitude for support
2. Empowering PWDs augments employment
3. Implementation and compliance needs monitoring
4. Mobility and accessibility of PWD require private-public partnership

The themes represented the essence of the PWDs' experiences. They acknowledged their deficiencies and needed the right support with the right attitude that would help the PWDs feel motivated to pursue their career plans. They also identified ways how the government empowered them through the creation of RA 7277. Empowerment is reflected in giving PWDs the voice to be heard through RA 7277 so that they can have a say in the control of their lives. It helped them transform their lives by giving them access to devices like crutches, wheelchairs, cranes, and other aid to help them walk and allow mobility. The skills training provided in the law will enable them to choose a career that would match the skills they develop. With the implementation of RA 7277, many sectors are involved. These require constant monitoring in the delivery of the services for the PWDs that empowered them to make the right decision in choosing the employment career that is fitted for the skills that they developed with the help of the different agencies of government ensuring the rehabilitation, self-development, and self-reliance of disabled persons.

The employment provisions of the Magna Carta for the Disable include equal opportunity for employment, sheltered employment, apprenticeship, incentives for employers, vocational rehabilitation, and vocational guidance and counseling. The three government agencies mandated to coordinate among themselves to ensure full implementation of the law are the Department of Labor and Employment, the Department of Social Welfare and Development, and the National Council for the Welfare of Disabled Persons. Compliance with the RA 7277 needs the monitoring of the right individuals and sectors. That is why this study recommends policy formulation and the creation of a council that will monitor PWDs' developmental activities. Lastly, PWD participants identified mobility and accessibility as

hindrances in securing the achievement of their career goals. This is being provided for by Batas Pambansa 344, the law that enhances the mobility of disabled persons by requiring certain buildings, institutions, establishments, and public utilities to install facilities and other devices that contributes to ease of movement of PWDs.

Conclusion

PWDs in Mandaue City believed that when there is a positive attitude that promotes social acceptance and empowerment, PWDs are able to compete better in the workplace. The Magna Carta of Disabled Person (RA 7277) and the Accessibility Law BATAS PAMBANSA BILANG 344 OF 1982 (ACCESSIBILITY LAW) have been appreciated by PWDs. However, its implementation and compliance need to be monitored. Mobility and accessibility of PWDs require the cooperation of the private as well as the government sector.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are derived from this study:

1. To propose a policy creating a council to monitor the implementation of RA 7277 and BATAS PAMBANSA BILANG 344 OF 1982 (ACCESSIBILITY LAW) in Mandaue City.
2. The council shall be composed of all PWDs, private companies, an NGO that will provide the necessary training of PWD, and the Local Government Unit of Mandaue.

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