

**BREAKING OUT OF THE GLASS BOX:  
EMPLOYEE RESPONSES TO DISABILITY INCLUSION IN  
THE WORKFORCE IN THAILAND**

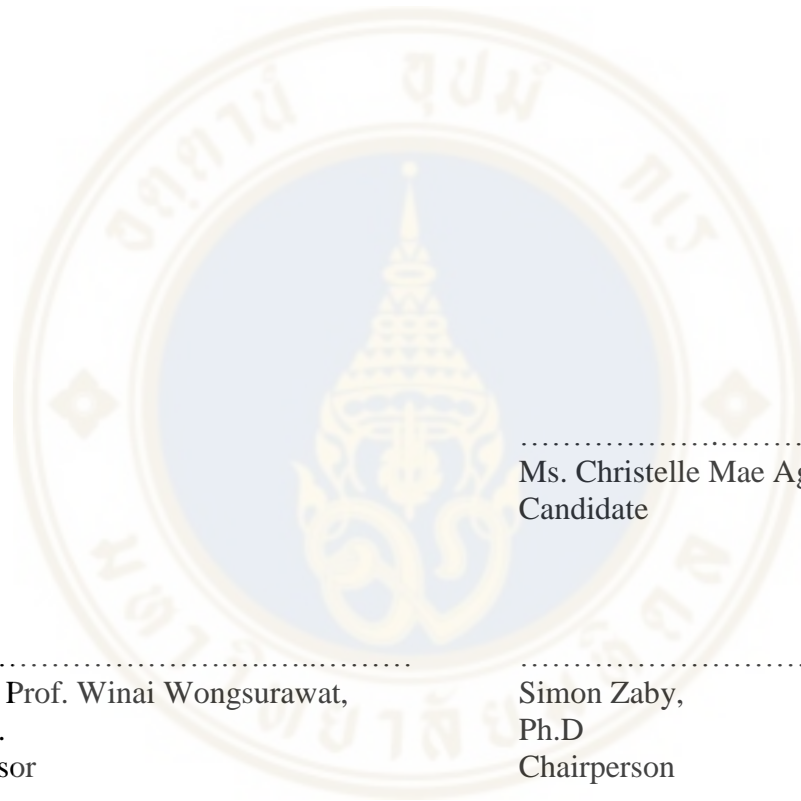


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Thesis  
entitled  
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was submitted to the College of Management, Mahidol University  
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Christelle Mae Agustin

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**ABSTRACT**

Many organizations and enterprises have been dealing with diversity and inclusion in the workforce covering differences in culture, age, race, and disability among many others. This study will focus on the diversity brought about by disability, or difference in capabilities, in the workforce particularly exploring employee perspectives to disability inclusion in the workplace. A phenomenological analysis was conducted based on the qualitative data gathered through semi-structured interviews with employees who have experienced working with people with disabilities (PWD).

This research extracted themes surrounding employees' perceptions formed from their experiences working with disabled colleagues, as well as link its possible effects to the formation of organizational culture and shared values among the employees in the enterprise. The findings show that employees working in a disability inclusive environment had enhanced motivation to work harder and gained a sense of pride as influenced by their disabled colleagues. Furthermore, a culture of open-mindedness and equity sensitivity were also observed in the employees who have experienced working with disabled people. This study will be deemed useful in further understanding employee responses to disability inclusion and give insights to the management of diversity in organizations.

**KEY WORDS: Disability Inclusion / Management / Qualitative/ Diversity  
Management**

102 pages

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Rationale of the Study

Many disabled people remain dependent due to many cases such as inadequate services, isolation and lack of community accommodation (WHO, 2011). Furthermore, there are also preconceptions towards disabled people as needy, helpless and deserving of special treatments (Colella, 1996). The image of disabled people as infinite dependents has somehow been the norm for many years (Bualar, 2014).

However, arguments have arisen to forward a change in the society's perception. As equal members of the society, they are entitled to control over their lives and have opinions on issues that concern them including health, education, and community living (WHO, 2011). In fact, it is argued that PWDs' inclusion to the workforce and accessibility to work opportunities is a right, equal to their non-disabled counterparts (CRPD, 2006).

This paradigm shift has been recognized through different initiatives and government policies already addressing diversity and disability inclusion in the workforce. As a matter of fact, international agencies such as the United Nations, the World Bank and the International Labor Organization have contributed significant policy instruments promoting the rights of people with disabilities (PWDs) to opportunities such as education, training and employment. Schur et. al (2009) emphasized that employment, more than just a source of livelihood and income, also helps PWDs to improve self-esteem and conquer social isolation.

In this process, businesses have been encouraged, if not required by law, to make reasonable accommodations and participate in the disability inclusion process (WHO, 2011). However, it is undeniable that certain effort and adjustments must be made internally within the business to accommodate such participation which may even include financial investment on support systems and infrastructures (Solovieva, Walls and Hendricks 2009). On the other hand, articles have been highlighting the role



of PWDs in creating competitive advantage for businesses and contributing to improved productivity and economic benefits despite the costs of workplace adjustments (Solovieva, Dowler and Walls, 2011).

Workplace adjustments affect not only the company [employer] and the disabled employee themselves, but also certainly the people working in the organization. Accommodations given to people with disability mean that a different treatment is given to a certain group compared to another. This set up once mismanaged may lead to a situation called a glass box. Purc-Stephenson, et. al (2016) used this metaphor to describe the dynamics that occur in terms of the relationship with other colleagues and working status of the disabled person integrated in the workplace. Like being trapped in a glass box, these barriers are often unseen and enduring. Co-worker reactions and acceptance contribute to the success or failure of the implementation of accommodation. For this reason, co-workers must not be overlooked as important stakeholders in the disability inclusion process (Colella, 2001).

## **1.2 Objectives of the Study**

On this note, the researcher would like to take a closer look at the adaptation of businesses to disability inclusion. In particular, she will look at the perceptions of employees who have experienced working with PWDs and explore the possible challenges and opportunities they have encountered from their experience.

The results of this research are expected to give us in-depth insights to the employee attitudes to PWDs taken from their workplace experiences. Furthermore, the research may give us an understanding to the tangible and intangible impact of PWDs in the workplace. This will lead readers to possibly gain a deeper comprehension on how to unlock potential and minimize challenges seen from an employee perspective relating to disability inclusion.

### 1.3 Thesis Statement

The researcher will study employee responses after their first-hand working experience with PWDs. In particular, colleagues and peers to disabled employees may have either positive or negative impressions towards disability inclusion in their work environments developed due to PWD's contributions, challenges and attitude experienced in the workforce.

The study may also be linked to organizational development figuring whether or not companies that engage in disability inclusive practices experience a stronger organizational culture whereas employees develop shared values with the company and are intrinsically motivated to perform better.

### 1.4 Research Questions

1. What do employees think about their PWD colleagues?
  - a. Considering their opinions before and after working with disabled persons.
2. Do they encounter challenges interacting with PWDs at work? To what extent?
  - a. Were these challenges caused by the disability?
  - b. Can these challenges (if any) be solved if accommodation and support in the work environment were improved?
3. Do PWDs provide unique contributions to the workplace?
  - a. What are those contributions?
  - b. Is it different to the contributions non-disabled employees would have given? How?
4. On a personal note, what are the attitudes cultivated by working in a diverse and disability inclusive environment?
  - a. What are the attitudes they see exhibited by their PWDs related to task accomplishment?
  - b. What attitudes do they exhibit themselves upon their experience working with PWDs?

- c. How are they affected in terms of motivation and productivity, both in the short-term and long-term?

## **1.5 Implications of the Study**

As a result of this study, the readers will be able to get a deeper comprehension about employee perspectives after their experience working with disabled colleagues and exposure to a disability inclusive working environment. Therefore, the readers will have an increased awareness of disability inclusion in the workplace and its effects to the people in the organization.

Furthermore, the study will be able to explore the relationship between disability inclusion and the organizational culture formed around it. Managers who are informed about such relationship may be able to take advantage of such knowledge in cultivating a desired culture in their respective organizations. Lastly, research findings may help initiatives towards empowerment of PWDs—describing challenges and revealing opportunities where they can be productive individuals contributing to company growth and community development.

## **1.6 Scope and Limitations**

The study may have few limitations that need acknowledgement. With regards to its method and time of assignment, the study will have a limited number of informants. Therefore, the experiences taken into account for this study will represent the perspective of only a limited number of employees, and not extensively covering varied experiences encountered by all employees who have worked with disabled people.

Furthermore, the informants only come from Bangkok Metropolitan Region and its neighboring province/s. Participants in other parts of the country and beyond may have reservations, different assumptions and environment from the ones interviewed for this study. In addition, since the study focuses on individual experiences, the research results will be mostly subjective and will not be subject to statistical or quantitative analysis.

Lastly, interviews will be conducted in English. Ideally, research participants must be able to articulate their thoughts and experiences from the perspective being studied. However, the researcher, having limited knowledge of the Thai language, may encounter language barriers among the informants.

## **1.7 Definition of Terms**

### **1.7.1 Accommodation**

Adjustments particularly in terms of infrastructure and working environment to enable the integration of disabled employees to the workplace

### **1.7.2 Disabled Employees**

PWDs who are currently employed and working, given their capability and sufficient accommodation, in an organization.

### **1.7.3 Disability Inclusion**

Promotion as well as implementation of practices and policies that facilitate the participation of people with disability to day to day activities in the society as normally as possible.

### **1.7.4 Glass box**

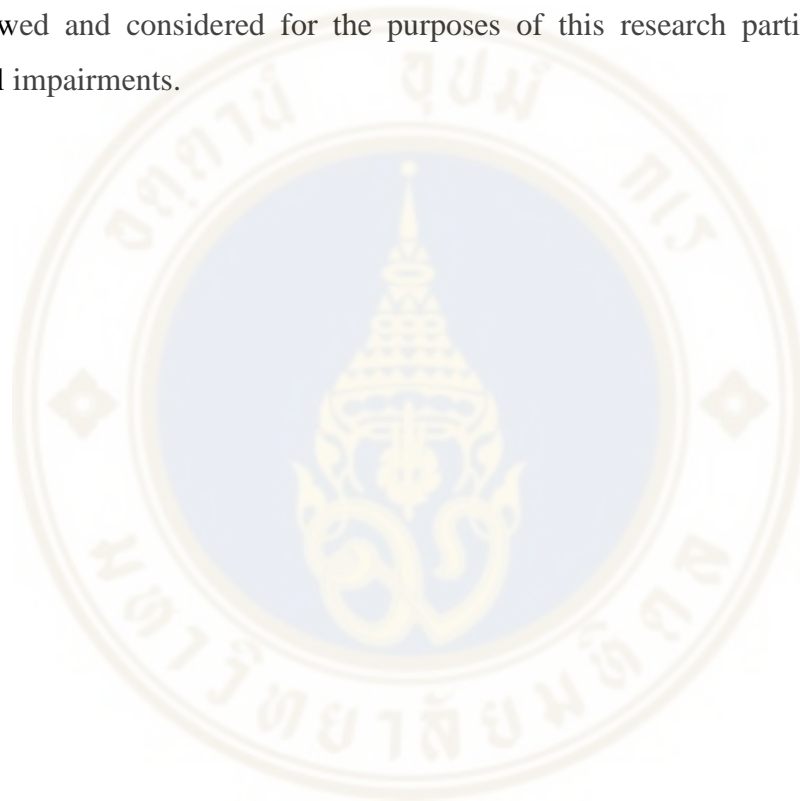
A metaphor describing the state in which disabled people are employed and physically integrated in the workplace, but still feels that stigma and social estrangement from their colleagues take place. Aside from the mindset and perception alone, it can also manifest professionally with disabled employees feeling left out in relevant work and being stuck in lower-level positions.

### **1.7.5 Disability Inclusion**

Promotion as well as implementation of practices and policies that facilitate the participation of people with disability to day to day activities in the society as normally as possible.

### **1.7.6 Persons with Disabilities / Disabled People**

People with temporary or permanent impairment, activity limitations and participation restrictions. Disability maybe physical or mental, however, samples interviewed and considered for the purposes of this research particularly involves physical impairments.



## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Two Predominant Models on Disability**

Initial organizational researches on disability were conducted based on the medical model of disability. This model views disability as a biological illness or impairment that needs to be eliminated and rehabilitated. Consequently, medical assistance is the main response to disabled people enhancing their health and limiting their possible injuries. The medical model perspective supposed that disabled people will act sickly and become dependent to other people, especially to their families. Therefore, it had the effect of ‘grounding’ PWDs and such a produced a negative mindset to employers making them reluctant to recruit disabled employees. (Bualar, 2014). Looking at disability in this lens generally concludes that PWD presence in the organization is a hindrance to performance and PWDs will be prone to reduced efficiency due to bad health and sick leave (Varlander, 2010).

On the other hand, since 1980-1990, a new perspective has been introduced. Named as the social model of disability, this model cites disability, not merely as a biological impairment, but as a product of socially imposed restrictions and inaccessibility. It was a stark contrast to the medical model of disability. The social model of disability takes into account environmental and social barriers that actually prevent PWDs from participating in economic activities as normally as possible (Oliver, 1990). Consequently, following studies have focused on the adjustment of environmental factors in order to accommodate PWD participation in the society (Irmie, 2004).



## **2.2 Disability Inclusion in the Workforce**

Disabled people were deemed by the society to be economically unproductive and unable to involve themselves in economic activities and capital acquisition (Bualar, 2014). Low performance and unproductivity were associated to PWDs due to conceived possible absenteeism and sick leaves (Kaye et al., 2011).

Negative perception towards disabled people is one of the main reasons that many PWDs remain unemployed. In fact, people's perspectives, particularly the employers, are one of the factors that determine the success of disability inclusion in the mainstream workforce (Heera, 2016). Mostly, these negative perceptions were caused by lack of knowledge and understanding that often leads to discrimination to disabled people (Lee, Abdullah & Mey, 2011; Ab Halim et. al., 2013).

The behavior of disabled people themselves are influenced by external perceptions. Their willingness to work in the organized sector is lessened because of the attached stigma and social bias towards their capability. As a result, PWD involvement to the informal sector and self-employment is more prevalent in the developing countries (WHO, 2011).

After the social model of disability was introduced, overtime, PWDs have slowly integrated into workplaces. In fact, research showed that there had been an increase in the employment of PWDs in the 90's (WHO, 2013). However, from the disabled persons' perspective, they continued to struggle to prove that they are reliable and competent employees. Although they were employed, they felt like they were treated as a second-class employee. This situation was described as a glass box, where PWDs felt that they were somehow able to join, but not fully belong to the workplace (Purc-Stephenson, Jones, and Ferguson, 2016). They also felt that they were exposed to stigma that further escorted them to social estrangement with their colleagues seeing them for their disability status rather their qualifications and capability. On the other hand, there are also situations when disabled employees complain that others often offer too much help (Colella, 2001).

The glass box metaphor further explains the disabled employee's experience of being "stuck" generally in lower-level positions regardless of the qualifications. A feeling of being hired merely to reach some human resources quota served as an unspoken barrier that excluded them from being an equal member of the



team. They seem to be left out of consideration for important decisions and relevant projects. This situation pressures PWDs to prove themselves in the hopes of escaping the glass box (Purc-Stephenson, Jones, and Ferguson, 2016).

At the end of the day, proper acceptance and objective perspective towards disabled employees' ability embedded in the organizational culture and coworker support were said to hold crucial importance to making PWDs thrive in the workplace. Values and beliefs held by the company, translated into policies and behavior, are the main factors that may lead the PWDs to a genuinely fulfilling career (Purc-Stephenson, Jones, and Ferguson, 2016).

Some researches have investigated disability inclusion in the workplaces coming from different perspectives—some looked at the perceptions of employers, some at the currently employed disabled workers themselves, while some are from the coworker perspective. These perceptions coming from different angles are briefly stated in the following part.

Despite initial employer stereotypes against disabled employees (Chima, 2001), research evidences show that they actually significantly contribute to the corporate culture and a sustainable competitive advantage (Ball et. al. 2005; Bengisu et. al 2011). Research findings progressed to viewing disabled people as a productive resource. Irvine and Lupart (2008) interviewed employers of PWDs leading to a conclusion that as long as the individual disability matches the work requirements, both the individual and the enterprise benefit from inclusion. While there truly are costs related to developing a disability inclusive work environment, employers saw the competence of PWD employees to generate a positive atmosphere and cultivate respect in the workplace. In addition, it was emphasized that participation to active community living is an opportunity for PWDs to form new relationship and learn new skills. Further research with employers stated that although youth with disabilities need significant training, they were capable in mastering their tasks. They were also seen with low self-confidence and have the tendency to be sensitive. On the other note, PWDs were described by their employers to be hardworking and responsible (Yusof, et al, 2014).

Some factors that influence employer perspective towards hiring disabled employees include previous experience or contact with PWDs, as well as probable co-worker reaction to their new colleague (Heera, 2015). Employers who have previous contact with disabled people, find it easier to accommodate disabled employees in the workforce. Furthermore, due to their former experiences, they are more likely to have gathered information and conquered stereotypes (Gilbride, 2003; Stone and Coella, 1996). Another concern for employers are the unknown co-worker reaction to their disabled colleague, particularly the impact on behavior and perspective brought about by the contact with people with disabilities (Colella, 2001; Lengnick-Hall et al., 2008).

Varlander (2010) looked at the experiences of disabled people fulfilling their roles as company managers. Disabled managers' perspectives were sought leading to findings that their management practices in their respective organizations contributed to creativity, innovation and problem-solving skills. Furthermore, according to Varlander (2010), when people experienced having disabled people as their managers, the effect on the organization radiates an empowering culture, humility and focus on well-being.

Lastly, studies on co-worker perspectives on disability inclusion in their workplaces, although not abundant, is not entirely in the dark. It is not surprising that reactions would be stirred regarding to a differential treatment between one employee to another—depending on how fair they perceive the accommodation to be (Collela, 2001).

It appears that from the colleagues' perspective, some accommodations seem unjust when there is a gap between people they see who actually have a disability and are reluctant to claim their rights to accommodations, to the others who 'claim' to have disability receiving accommodations they are not supposed to be 'entitled' to (Collela, 2001). In short, coworker judgement on the fairness of treatment between themselves and their disabled employee is based more on need rather than their contribution to the work. Nevertheless, perceptions of unfairness may also spring when coworkers perceive that accommodations directly affect them detrimentally such as taking on extra tasks, or when accommodations make disabled persons appear to be more competitive especially on performance based rewards such as merit pay and promotions. To some extent, co-workers view that some accommodations limit

disabled employees from fulfilling extra or 'non-essential' duties involved in organizational citizenship behaviors (Collela, 2001).

In addition, there are said to be three factors that affect the perception of fairness of treatment and accommodation towards disabled people namely, visibility of the impairment, social undesirability and 'self-causation' of the disability (Collela, 2001). Firstly, colleagues perceive that accommodations to disabled people is unfair when the impairment is internal in the body and when the suffering that the person experiences is not readily visible such as mild to moderate spinal abnormality. Secondly, there are also differences in the perception whether the disability is physical, sensory or psychological disorders. Apparently, psychological disorders are seen to be less acceptable or desirable compared to physical and sensory impairments (Harasymiw, Horne & Lewis, 1976). Lastly, reactions to disabilities have a tendency to be negative when the disability is perceived to be self-inflicted. As an example, a person disabled due to a drunk-driving accident may be perceived as self-caused and workplace accommodations catering to the disability may be self-warranted (Cleaveland et. al., 1997).

## **2.3 Context in Thailand**

### **2.3.1 Disability and Society**

There are more than one billion disabled people all over the world with a majority, comprising of 80 percent, living in developing countries (WHO, 2011). Regionally, Southeast Asia appears to contain a significant population of disabled people. According to the World Health Organization (2013), Southeast Asia is home to the second highest population with moderate disabilities and the third highest population with severe disabilities.

Despite this abundant numbers of PWD located in Southeast Asia, data collection methods on employment of disabled people in the Asia Pacific region rarely meet international standards of disability classification. Therefore, employment data disaggregated by disability remains limited (UN ESCAP, 2015).

The National Statistical Office, Thailand (2012) reports a total of 1,434,573 (over 15 years old) disabled people in the country as which is almost 3% of the population. Out of the aforementioned numbers, 369,080 are employed while 1,065,493 remain unemployed. 156,843 of disabled people aged between 5-30 years old have no formal education of any kind and 15,426 received up to primary education while only 1,182 received higher education (bachelor and higher). 541,179 reported to have disabilities or illness that renders themselves incapable to work or study due to reasons such as mental, emotional and learning disability, recurrent pain, breathing difficulties and blackouts or loss of consciousness.

In Thailand, being a predominantly Buddhist country, many people believe that disability is a consequence of a wrongdoing in a persons' previous life. Negative social attitudes towards disability have been associated to religious beliefs. Disabled persons were considered to be cursed or sufferers from their past sinful behaviors (Bualar, 2014).

On the other note, Buddhism also teaches its followers to have compassion for the weak and needy. In this context, disabled people are considered to be a minority that is subject to charity, protection and donations. Although, it is understood that such practices and mindset are coming from good intentions, this perspective prevents disabled people from interacting with others in their environment on equal footing and status (JICA, 2002).

In addition, social attitudes in Thailand lead to the formation of stereotypical ideas towards disabled people. Social bias is often formed through media, literature and other carriers of culture. These preconceptions from employers about impairments are additional issues PWDs have to deal with in their employment (Bualar, 2014). In the mainstream Thai mindset, disabled people are objects of pity and must remain under the custody and care of their family members (Naemiratch & Manderson, 2009).

A study by Bualar (2014), emphasized the overlooked potential of women with disabilities in Thailand. Women are facing double discrimination and are even less likely to be employed than their male counterparts. Although they expressed interest in working in the labour market, their productivity and exposure to work was hindered by both physical barriers in the built environment, attitudinal barriers from



the non-disabled community and over-protection from their families, as well as lack of information on employment opportunities. These barriers and attitudes towards their employment were said to lower their morale and self-esteem at work.

UN ESCAP (2015) reports that equal opportunities and payment for disabled people may increase the GDP by 1 to 7 percent based on a conservative estimate, still not counting the increased productivity expected from family members as well.

### **2.3.2 Work Culture**

In terms of work culture, Komin (1990) identified 9 value orientations carried by Thais in the workforce: the ego, grateful relationship, smooth interpersonal relationship, flexibility and adjustment, religio-psychical orientation, education and competence, interdependence, fun-pleasure, and achievement-task. Komin's (1990) findings indicate that task achievement value is likely to be influenced by social relationship values. The results further reiterated the Thai work perceptions that task-achievement values of being 'ambitious' or 'hard-working' was seen negatively in contrast to social relationship values like being "caring," "considerate" and "helpful." Moreover, Harada (2017) noted Thai people's tolerance for ambiguous situations and relatively low effort to minimize such ambiguity. Harada (2017) linked it to the Thai expression "mai pen rai" or "that's all right" which exhibits a carefree attitude amidst adversity, such as mistakes made by others' failure or misfortune.

Furthering the context of Thai work culture with reference to Hofstede's model of cultural dimensions, Thailand has a highly collectivist culture which explains their long-term affinity to a group or extended relationships. While people in more individualistic societies perceive that they are supposed to look after themselves or their direct family alone, people in collectivist societies take care of each other in the name of loyalty. Thais in general are not confrontational. They tend to not openly express their disagreement at the risk of offending another member of the group (Hofstede Insights, n.d).

Moreover, Thailand has the lowest Masculinity ranking among Asian countries rendering it a Feminine society. Given this scenario, the dominant values

held is caring for others and quality of life rather than competitiveness, the desire to be the best or stand out from the crowd (Hofstede Insights, n.d).

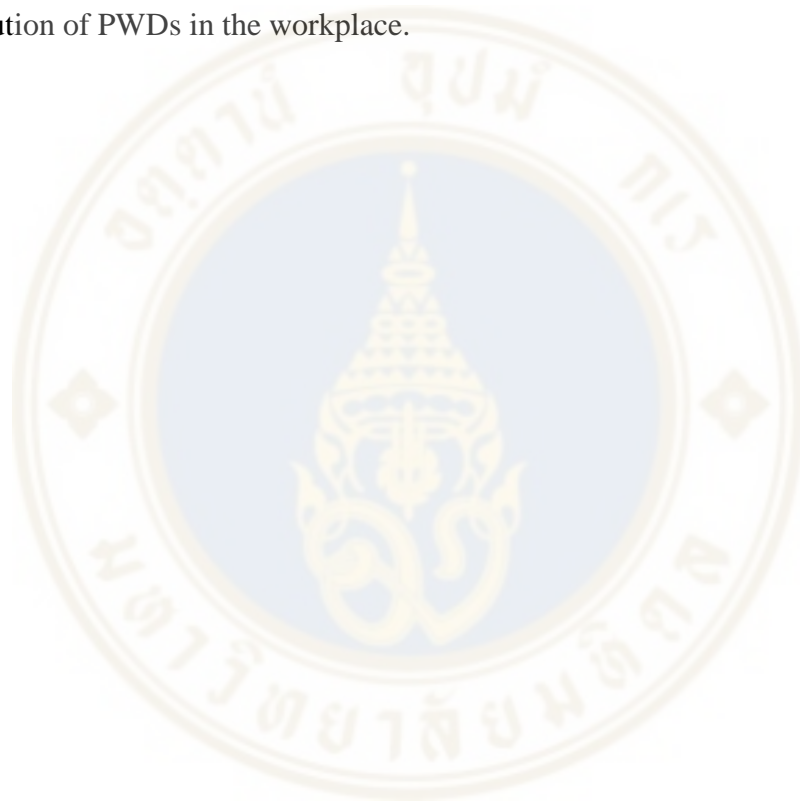
## **2.4 Other Related Studies and Implications**

Policymakers seem to have heard and responded to research findings, in turn, promoted a paradigm shift towards PWDs. Currently, the most prominent international policy instrument for PWDs is the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) adopted at the United Nations Headquarters in 2006. The convention aimed to change attitudes towards PWD, from objects of charity, medical treatment and social beneficiary to subjects who possess rights and are capable of making decisions for their lives and creating valuable contribution as active members of the society.

Since global human rights, including the rights of PWDs gained crucial importance in the international circles, the government of Thailand consequently considered disability as a major issue to be tackled in recent policies (Bualar, 2014). The Thai government, in terms of policy making, reflected the paradigm shift introduced by the CRPD through the Persons with Disabilities Empowerment Act of 2007 which reiterated the right of disabled people to education, training as well as full and efficient participation to social, economic and political activities. This Act stipulated several incentives for enterprises hiring PWDs such as tax exemption and access to government grants. On the other hand, sanctions for noncompliance were also laid out such as tax levies and property forfeiture. In addition, employers who decline to offer jobs to disabled people are required to compensate for the lack of job offer with cash going to the Disability Empowerment and Rehabilitation Fund.

The Thai government still encounters some resistance from of the members of the private sectors for the mandatory quota system despite the tax incentives (Bualar, 2014). Nevertheless, several employers have made their way to compliance for reasons ranging from mere compliance to the quota of hiring 1 PWD for every 100 employees to actual consideration of the roles played by PWD employees in business growth. Looking back, in theory, society has come a long way from the initial view of disabled people as incapable. After decades of perspective

setting by researchers through the analysis of employer and PWD perspectives, as well as paradigm shift promotion at policy-level, it is now coming to a full circle. Going back to society's perception in Thailand, mainstream attitudes does not seem to agree with recent developments. To the Thai society, disabled people should be given medical care and family protection more than employment (Naemiratch and Manderson, 2009). Particularly listening to the perspective of employees who experienced working with PWDs first-hand, the next step is finding out whether people indeed initially assumed stigma, conquered prejudices, and witnessed the contribution of PWDs in the workplace.





## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

This research aims to have a qualitative study of the impressions that have existed and developed among employees from their experiences working with PWDs. In order to effectively gather insights from the employees, the study used interviews to gather qualitative data leading to the understanding of the effect of disability inclusion as observed on a personal level.

The data collected were analyzed with a phenomenological approach which aims to understand people's first-hand experiences in a particular situation. This approach is used to describe, comprehend, and derive possible meanings of individual and subjective experiences in relation to the topic being studied (Cresswell, 2013).

Most researchers who are using phenomenology are reluctant to prescribe specific steps and techniques on a justification that one cannot impose a method on a phenomenon (Holloway, 1997). Rather, according to Hycner (1999), "the phenomenon dictates the method and the type of participants." For this reason, phenomenologists choose purposive sampling to look for participants who have had experiences relating to the phenomenon based on the researcher's judgement and purpose of the research (Groenwald, 2004). Phenomenological approach focuses on depth rather than quantity of data. Therefore, in order to maintain focus on the depth analysis, a small sample size will be kept. The recommended number of participants known to be sufficient in reaching a certain saturation point in phenomenological researches ranges from 2 to 10 informants (Boyd, 2001). Therefore, the participants in this research was maintained within this recommended range. After the data is collected and analyzed, the researcher extracted themes or generalizations that have been observed to be occurring in different participant experiences.

Consistent to the phenomenological approach, the data gathered from the interview was processed using Hycner's (1999) Five Steps Explicitation Process. Transforming the data into interpretation, Groenwald (2004), explains the simplified version of the five-step process as the following:

### **3.1.1 Bracketing and phenomenological reduction**

This phase in the process is the suspension or 'bracketing out' of the researchers' presupposition, interpretations and theoretical concepts out of the world of the informant regarding a phenomenon (Groenwald, 2004). In this sense, no position is taken for or against the phenomenon experienced by the informant.

### **3.1.2 Delineating Units of Meaning**

In this part of the process, statements are extracted into relevant units that helps the researcher understand the deeper meaning of the statements in the interview. The researcher puts various factors into consideration such as the literal content and the frequency of the statement. The actual meaning of the units might be different considering the events in the phenomenon (Hycner, 1999 as cited in Groenwald, 2004). In this sense, the researcher may need to use his/her own judgement while continuously bracketing his/her personal views from the data processing.

### **3.1.3 Summarizing each interview**

The researcher summarizes the interview incorporating the themes formed from the explicitation. The researcher may also return the summary of the themes formed to the informants for any clarification and modification as necessary.

### **3.1.4 Clustering units of meanings to form themes**

At this point, units of meaning has already been listed. The researcher, then, examines the units formed weaving the essence with consideration to the holistic context. Themes are formed by clustering the units that identify into a significant topics together. While there are many computer software packages that were programmed to help in qualitative research, Groenwald (2004), insists that such programs are not suitable in doing phenomenology, particularly in understanding a

phenomenon. Computer programs developed for qualitative research are mostly analyzing text-based data through an algorithmic process or rapid line-by-line searching (Kelle, 1995 as cited in Groenwald, 2004). However, phenomenology relies on the researcher's engagement to understand nuances that cannot be precisely delineated.

### **3.1.5 Finding general and unique themes for all the interviews and composite summary**

Upon the accomplishment of phases 1 to 4, with due consideration to the significant differences to their respective workplace environments, the researcher finds commonalities in the themes among the interviews and note unique ones if such exists. It is also important to note that, generalized themes are not the only relevant thing contributing to the research. Unique or minority opinions also provide significant insights to understanding the phenomenon researched (Groenwald, 2004).

The steps aforementioned were followed leading to the findings, conclusion and recommendation derived in Chapter 4.

## **3.2 Research Participants**

The research were conducted considering the context in Thailand. Therefore, companies operating in Thailand who have been hiring PWDs were the source of potential informants from which the data will be gathered. Businesses, organizations and individuals were contacted explaining the background, objectives and intended interview topics of the study. Consequently, they were asked if they are interested and willing to participate in the interview.

Since the research aims and objectives are dealing a minority population, there were only a limited number of people who could be sources of primary data for the study. Purposive sampling was used to select participants for the study based on the researcher's independent judgment on the employees' working experience and relation to disabled employees. Taking the research aims and objectives, the researcher selected participants whose experiences were deemed helpful in answering the research questions or achieve research objectives.

Informants of this research include employees or colleagues who are closest and most often in contact with the PWD employee. More information about the research participants and their respective disabled colleagues are detailed in Appendix A. The researcher believes that significant insights for this research will be drawn from the people who are intensely immersed in working with disabled people. They are expected to be able to explain their personal working experiences in detail with consideration to their professional position in relation to the PWD colleague. Due to limited time and financial resources, the researcher gathered informants from companies or workplaces based in Bangkok Metropolitan Region, and neighboring province/s in Thailand.

An ‘informed consent agreement’ was signed between the researcher and the participants at the beginning of the interview—reminding them that the participation in the interview is on a voluntary basis and any concern and reluctance in participation may be expressed without any negative implication or repercussion to them.

### **3.3 Research Instrument**

Semi-structured interviews with mainly pre-determined and open-ended questions were deemed to be an effective data collection method by the researcher. Since personal experiences have the tendency to be widely varied from person to person, open-ended questions gave them enough room to freely express their experiences, and at the same time, giving the researcher enough opportunity to guide the interviewees to articulate relevant responses. Follow up questions were formed based on participant responses and were used for a deeper or more accurate explanation of some scenarios.

The interviews started by explaining the purpose of the study to the research participants. The purpose of the research was informed to the respondents without disclosing the research questions. They were informed that the interviews will be recorded, but confidentiality was maintained. Interviewees were informed that their names and workplaces will not be disclosed in the research report and interviews will be transcribed under pseudonyms. While the intent of such procedure focuses on

maintaining the anonymity of the research participants, this may also increase their confidence in disclosing information without worries from possible subjective social judgments from the readers.

The interviews were conducted in English. In some cases where participants felt that they would be able to express their thoughts better in Thai language, translations were offered by their peers. All interviews were transcribed verbatim in English for analysis.

The researcher constructed questions covering topics namely:

1. Overview or general co-worker perception of their disabled employees
2. Independence or need for supervision and guidance of disabled employees
  - a. General description about the disabled colleague (e.g their educational background, tasks and etc.)
3. Challenges personally encountered during work interactions with PWD colleagues
4. Availability of accommodation and workplace support
5. Perceived (unique) contributions of disabled employees
6. Personal effect of getting exposed to a disability inclusive environment
  - a. Personal identification to corporate values
  - b. Changes in perceptions to disabled individuals (if any)
  - c. Personal attitudes developed

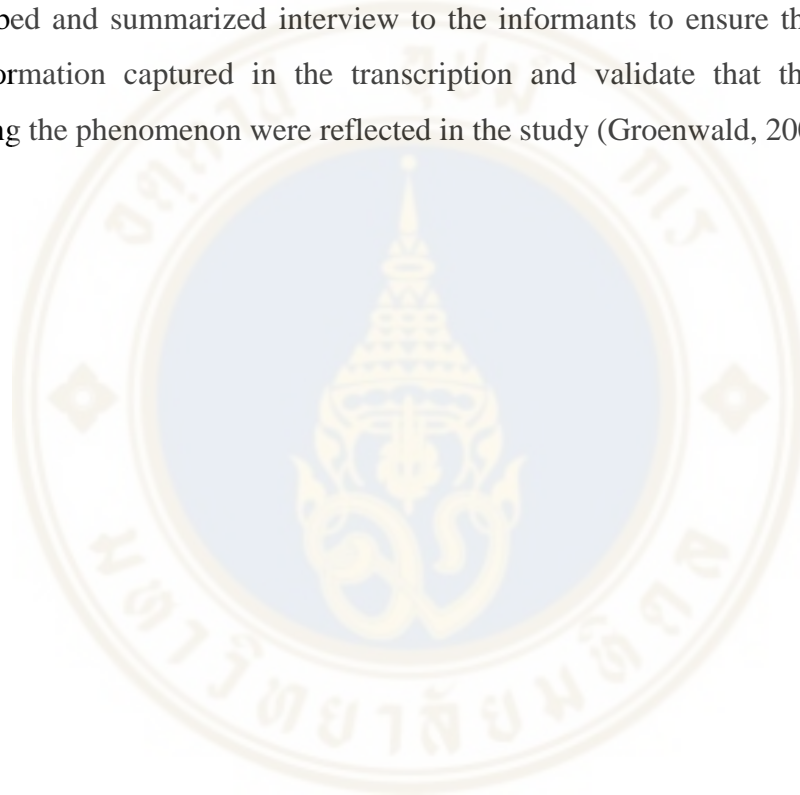
Tentative interview questions are listed in Appendix B.

Regarding data capturing in a phenomenological study, Kvale (1996) explains that qualitative interviews are literally, an interchange of views between two conversing people where the researcher tries to understand the phenomenon from the informants' perspective. In some cases, the researcher intentionally makes an informal atmosphere in attempt to make an engaging dialogue both for the interviewer and the interviewee (Bailey, 1996). Some phenomenologists experience that the duration of the interview and the number of follow up questions may vary from one participant to another (Groenwald, 2004). Maintaining an informal atmosphere and a smooth flow of discussion, the researcher took the liberty to ask the follow-up questions in different orders depending on the flow of discussion. Focusing on the lived experiences, the



researcher also asked specific scenarios and example exhibiting the working situations between the informant and the disabled colleague. In the analysis or explication process, the statements were later on categorized to fit the summarized content.

During the interview process, the researcher used probing questions to reduce threats to validity and reliability (McKinnon, 1988). Where the researcher attempts to access contextual detail of the information by repeating and paraphrasing the questions to ensure that the interviewee understood the questions being asked. In addition, a ‘member check’ was conducted where the researcher returned the transcribed and summarized interview to the informants to ensure the correctness of the information captured in the transcription and validate that their perspectives regarding the phenomenon were reflected in the study (Groenwald, 2004).



## **CHAPTER IV**

### **DATA EXPLICITATION AND FINDINGS**

The aim of this research was to understand the experiences of employees upon their exposure to a disability inclusive environment. A total of 10 employees were interviewed coming from 3 different companies, both big and small. Although they were all employees and had experiences working with disabled people, statements were taken from different perspectives: some employee perspectives are coming from the same level of work, others are acting at a supervisory level towards the disabled employee, while another works with disabled people as volunteers. Coming from different perspectives, the researcher believes that a more holistic take on the reality of the lived experiences are taken from the informants.

As mentioned in Section 3.1: Research Design, data were processed through the “Five Step Explicitation Process.” Contrary to most studies, Hycner (1999), the proponent of the aforementioned explicitation process, deliberately avoided the term ‘analysis’ meaning ‘breaking into parts’ since it has a dangerous tendency to lose the meaning in the whole phenomenon. Explicitation, on the other hand, investigates different parts of the phenomenon with consideration to its context (Groenwald, 2004).

In the first part of the explicitation, the data was treated holistically—taking the informants’ experience as a story or narrative. The aim of the first part is to grasp the whole meaning of the informants’ lived experiences instead of dividing into parts (Varlander, 2010). Consequently, data was categorized to find relevant units of meaning from individual interviews. Recurring units appearing from interview transcripts were noted making up its respective clusters. Following suit, the units and clusters were cross-checked among the informants’ interviews to see overarching themes across different people’s responses. Since the data were processed with a bracketed perspective from the researcher’s preconceptions and theoretical concepts, the findings primarily comes from an inductive method.



## 4.1 Narrative of Informants' Lived Experiences

In the following section, each of the interviews were recounted as a narrative to get the sense of the whole context before moving on to individual themes.

### 4.1.1 Ava, 37 years old, Assistant Vice President

Ava has been working with Eh, a monitoring customer service officer with a spinal column complication, for the past 2 years. However, the idea of a disabled person working in a company was not a new idea to Ava. After all, Ava knew Eh even before they have started closely working together. She knew about Eh because she has been working in the company for more than 7 years already—she even considers Eh to be popular around the company.

Prior to working with Eh, Ava generally felt pity towards disabled people. She saw the need for the family to take care of PWDs. However, upon knowing more about her colleague, she understood that more than a burden, her colleague is actually the bread winner of the family. In this sense, she learned that disabled people must have opportunities to work and support their family as well.

Although she agrees that opportunities should be given to disabled people, she also has other concerns at the back of her head. She knows that it would be more difficult to manage and there are adjustments she would need to make personally, such as being mindful and being more considerate. In the following quote, she explains the dichotomy between 2 emotions in her head:

*“We normally have 2 emotions: that ‘we need to give them opportunity’ and ‘it is more difficult to manage,’ so we need to balance each 2 emotions. When I knew that Ms. Eh will come to work with me, I need to manage where she should sit, is it an accessible area for her, does she need help, and other things”*

Aside from mindfulness about the environment involving her disabled colleague, she also lowers her expectations in consideration for her colleague's situation:

*“When it comes to expectations, I do not give 100% expectations, but we need to give the opportunity for them. Sometimes, she takes too long time for some work, but we need to understand her position... We are not the person to be picky and*

*pushy for the work... We do not expect her to be the top performer. Some people have levels and they are different, so I let her feel more comfortable working with us”*

Ava understands that disabilities might hinder someone's work. In line with this, she greatly values the importance of the screening and recruitment process in making sure that the disabled people that she will be working with is capable of doing the task.

Nevertheless, despite the screening process, Ava feels that hands on assistance is extremely necessary for her disabled colleague. Based on her experience, the disability affects her colleague's work behavior. Because of her colleague's fear of being a burden, Ava noticed that Eh does not seem to be confident enough with her work, has the tendency to be hyperactive, sensitive and panic a lot. In this sense, Ava feels that she needs to keep an eye and coach Eh closely.

When it comes to conflicts at work, Ava thinks that it is not associated to the disability. Anyone at any workplace would have arguments and misunderstandings regardless of whether they are disabled or non-disabled employees. What matters more is the willingness to recognize a mistake and resolving it.

Overtime, Ava felt more comfortable working with Eh. Getting to know her personal capabilities and her personal life, she gained trust on Eh, learns patience from her experience with her, gets inspired and treats her, not only as a colleague, but as part of the family. More than work connections, learning about Eh's life experiences inside and outside the company boosts her morale and feels proud about her companies' policies.

#### **4.1.2 Betty, 34 years old, Junior Claim Assessor**

Betty is currently working with Yaya, a 30-year-old hunchback, as a peer in claim assessment department of an insurance company.

Even before Betty started working with Yaya, she already has respect among disabled people for their effort to live normal lives. Betty is aware that severity of disability differs from each person and while those with severe level of disability must remain under care and treatment, those who have the chance to live an independent life should participate in the society.

Because of this initial perspective, as well as Yaya's existing popularity in the office, she did not feel any outstanding emotion when she realized that she is going to work with a disabled person. As a matter of fact, she considers Yaya as a normal person both in working relationship and in terms of the facilities in the office.

Performance-wise, Betty feels satisfied about her disabled colleague's participation at work. She even sees Yaya's performance to supersede her non-disabled counterparts. Furthermore, Betty takes Yaya's popularity as an advantage making her more influential to their team.

*“Surprisingly, working with PWDs, they often give suggestion to the team that is useful. She [Yaya] is, kind of, outstanding person that is brave to say, brave to give the comment that is useful for the team. She is very influential to the team as well—she is popular... In terms of potential of the competency, sometimes she is better than able bodied... She can do it a lot and she is willing to learn, willing to develop herself...I feel more comfortable. I feel [more] trust with her as compared to other people...”*

More than physical challenges, Betty thinks that Yaya is more challenged emotionally because of her disability. She tries to give support to Yaya emotionally, rather than physically, saying:

*“What I found more challenging is how to make her shine with her potential, because she does not want other employees to see that she has disability. I try to make her show her potential to others...”*

Betty laughs at the thought that, contrary to common belief that disabled people will most likely require assistance, Yaya is the one offering help to others:

*“When someone in the team members are absent or works [with] high load, Yaya knows where she should go to help without anyone telling her.”*

When asked about her general opinion on hiring PWDs, she immediately expresses her absolute agreement to go for this route, even when other options, such as contributing to the government's disability fund, is offered. Betty states that she is very proud to tell others that her company hires disabled people.

#### **4.1.3 Camille, 33 years old, Receptionist**

More than a colleague, Camille treats her officemate, Wasana—a 39-year-old crippled risk manager, as a friend.

Growing up, Camille took care of her father who had a severe disease. Although, not a disability, per se, she saw the similarity and she had spent this part of her life getting used to taking care of a sick person. Given this scenario, when she knew that she was going to work with a disabled person in the company, she initially had preconceptions including disabled people demanding assistance, as well as doubt regarding their capability. On the other hand, when she started working with a PWD, her predisposition towards disabled people being lower-level or low-skilled workers also ignited her curiosity about their potential and working capacity.

More than adjustment on her own working style, Camille felt that the company's readiness to hire PWDs and provision of accessibility is the key to the smooth work among them. Nevertheless, she understands that there are inevitable short-comings in terms of equity of company benefits.

After 2 years of working with a disabled colleague, Camille got to know her disabled colleague in a deeper sense. She felt more comfortable, she heard Wasana's life experiences, learned to discard initial judgments and keep an open-mind. More often than not, she would even overlook the disability of her colleague.

Furthermore, Wasana's higher level of education and good performance was one of the things gave Camille a high regard to Wasana. Contrary to her initial perception, she even thinks that her disabled colleague is capable of climbing a corporate ladder and develop her career path. Consequently, this gives her motivation to work harder. On the other hand, Camille is aware of the challenges one can experience while working with disabled people. Although Wasana is the closest colleague to her, she also has brief experiences working with deaf employees. These kinds of disabilities prove to be more challenging to deal with for Camille.

Despite these foreseen challenges, Camille identifies with the company for hiring disabled people, not merely because of the opportunity given to disabled people, but more for the benefits the company and its employees get out of the experience namely recognition for the company and open-mindedness for the employees:



*“Our company should support like this. Because we have been recognized and been the role model for employment of PWDs, so I think, why not continue?... On the very first, I think that when we have PWDs in the company, it makes people open their minds--the whole company...”*

#### **4.1.4 Dennis, 30 years old, Manager**

Unlike the other informants of this research, Dennis does not work directly with one disabled colleague. He works with several disabled employees hired by his company in organizing different events and projects. Although these employees were hired by the company to work in different positions, Dennis invites them to assist him in organizing events and projects with them on a voluntary basis. The disabled employees come from varied disabilities, educational backgrounds, skills and positions held in the company.

Prior to his experience working with PWDs, he already had his own perceptions to disabled people. Seeing several PWDs on the streets—alms begging, he had his doubts whether it is possible for them to work in a company.

Working with them as volunteers did not give Dennis the same pressure as compared to working with them as a direct manager. Although project and event management would have demanding deadlines and requirements, Dennis worried more about his disabled colleague’s survival in the company. He is also conscious about the prospective reaction of other people when realizing that they need to work with disabled people. In response, Dennis asks one of the disabled volunteers to give the overview of the projects to other employees to ease the preconceptions and instill an open-mind to the employees upon recruitment.

Although the tasks were on a voluntary basis and are not necessarily part of their job description from the insurance company they are working at, the disabled employees exhibited enthusiasm to work on additional tasks for the company:

*“When we give them opportunities [to volunteer] to them, they would like to pay it forward to other people as well, so they are willing to be volunteers. Because they are the very first group of PWDs [to be working in the company], they would like to be the role model so that people will open their minds and other PWDs can come to work with us.”*

Working with disabled employees for 8 years now, Dennis encountered different experiences and learned in the process. Working with deaf colleagues, he learned to adjust his communication style. On the other hand, working with a blind colleague, he also gained some useful perspectives from them regarding his product developments. Furthermore, he also learned to be more mindful about his colleagues other than himself:

*“What I learned is the communication. You need to listen to them. Not just focus on what you are saying—not about the assignment you need to give to them. But you need to listen to them and ask [yourself], ‘Is it clear? Am I speaking the language that they can understand?...”*

Having the experience of working with them for a considerable amount of time, Dennis gained trust on them, treats them as normal persons, and looks more on their capability. Their disability is considered when giving task assignments as the part of the usual manager’s task of considering the strength or weaknesses of each team member. Even for non-disabled persons, the manager must know the competencies of their team members and assign the right work for them:

*“When you have some assignments, you need to think that, ‘Do they have the capability to do the assignment with the right person?’ I think, like the normal person, when you have team members with abled bodies, you need to think about that as well...”*

It was visibly observable that the company had an accommodating infrastructure for disabled people. Aside from the infrastructure support, the company also had sign language lessons for both disabled and non-disabled employees to attend. Asked about the cost of implanting such accommodations, Dennis, as a manager who worked closely with the CEO, does not mind the cost that accompanies a disabled inclusive working environment. As long as it was thought and executed well, the costs will not be that high.

Dennis identifies with the company’s decision to hire disabled people. However, he wants companies like his to think about hiring PWDs beyond merely for the purpose of the government’s quota fulfillment. He argues that hiring disabled people for their qualifications and not for their disability is the key to a sustainable disability inclusive workforce. He disagrees with giving work opportunities to

disabled people as a mere act of charity. In fact, he thinks that doing so would be counterproductive and even further deepens the close-minded preconception towards disabled people as incapable:

*“I think it is very good that we accept them... I do not want the company to do this as charity or we need to hire them just for reaching the quota. It will not feel sustainable in the long run. When the PWDs we hire do not have the qualifications, it will corrupt the mindset of the people in the company. In the future, PWDs can get no chance to work in the company because the mindset is not open. I would like the company to continue and keep the mindset that we give people opportunity, not charity.”*

#### **4.1.5 Emily, 24 years old, HR Officer**

Emily has been working with Mr. Chansak, a 44-year-old security guard without a hand, for the past 4 years. Emily did not have any background or previous experiences with disabled people prior to her entry to the engineering firm she is working in now. It was the first time for her to encounter a disabled person in real life. Nevertheless, working in the field of human resources, she is knowledgeable about the government imposition of quota system for companies to hire disabled people. In line with this, although she did not have any prior experience, she felt ready to deal with disabled people.

Upon her first encounter with the disabled employee, she felt compassionate about the way the PWD strived to live a normal life despite his lacking body part. She also felt proud about her colleague for successfully managing normal situations with other people with a disability notwithstanding.

Working as an HR officer supervising work with Mr. Chansak, their tasks together included overseeing employees and visitors going in and out of the company premises. Although Emily is professionally at a higher position than Mr. Chansak, her disabled colleague had seniority in terms of years of service in the company. Given the situation, Mr. Chansak knew his job well enough from 6 years of experience and needed little guidance from Emily.



Although Emily thinks that the disability does not drastically affect his colleague's competency at work, Emily did encounter some challenges working with Mr. Chansak. Furthermore, Mr. Chansak is, sometimes, not able to participate in the office's team building activities, especially the ones requiring intense physical activity. Nevertheless, he tries to join other activities and takes advantage of other opportunities to mingle with other employees.

Despite the challenges experienced both involving and not involving the disability, Emily noted that, workwise, he performs just as well—even better—than his non-disabled counterparts and tries to make his disability less of a concern. Aside from the extra manpower necessary to join him in his nightshifts, the company did not need to provide extra accommodations in the workplace infrastructure and rules for his employment.

#### **4.1.6 Felicidad, 45 years old, Housekeeper**

Same as Emily, Felicidad is working with Mr. Chansak.

However, unlike Emily, Felicidad had a close encounter with a disabled person throughout her childhood prior to her work with Mr. Chansak. In a small community in the rural area where she came from, Felicidad had a close neighbor born with no legs. She came from an impoverished place and family. Furthermore, coming from a far-flung area, they were not given support for their disabled neighbor whom they treat as a family member. A wheelchair was not available, and the disabled girl was not given the opportunity to study either. Given the situation, Felicidad grew up with a mindset that the disabled girl must be taken cared of by every person in the village and must be given consideration for everything they do.

Mr. Chansak is her first encounter with a disabled person as a working employee. Given her childhood experience, she never imagined herself interacting with a disabled person in a workplace. Their duties together included watering the garden and setting up the workplace for the appropriate occasion. Felicidad is reluctant to demand any help from Mr. Chansak. However, she frequently tells stories about Mr. Chansak helping him out of his own initiative, emphasizing Mr. Chansak's good attitude and helpful nature.

This good attitude and helpful nature of Mr. Chansak instills a positive outlook in life and motivation to work harder for Felicidad. Furthermore, she never felt that Mr. Chansak was given favor more than her. On the other note, she feels that Mr. Chansak has more initiative to help than his non-disabled counterparts. Given her 9 years of experience in the company, she felt that adequate benefits are given based on their years of service in the engineering firm.

As an overall comment on Felicidad's working experience with a PWD, she thought that work was being carried out normally. She also valued the pride and fulfillment a disabled person may get from working and supports the company policy for hiring disabled people.

#### **4.1.7 Gerald, 56 years old, Leader of the Assembly Team**

The image of a disabled person is not new to Gerald. He has been seeing disabled people 'everywhere' as he described—on the street and on TV. He thought that beyond their disability, they look the same as normal people. He has not thought about working with PWDs, and he had his doubts about a disabled person's capability to accomplish a job. Nevertheless, he understood that some families would be needing the support of every living and able member in making ends meet. In this case, he thought that if the situation would call for it, disabled people can contribute to the family income.

Entering in this engineering firm where he is currently working, Gerald met Mr. Gop. A 53-year-old welder with a speech impairment. As the leader of the Assembly Team, Gerald had to work with Mr. Gop in building structures demanded by their clients.

Gerald admits that they initially had communication-based problems on the first week. This challenge in communication made him adjust his working style. Nevertheless, Mr. Gop's technical training and knowledge acquired from long years of experience made the adjustment and work easier for Gerald to deal with.

Aside from his existing skills, his diligence and humble attitude for learning helps him produce outstanding work despite the disability. This hardworking character inspires, not only his colleagues, but also the leader himself, Gerard, to work harder. Since he has a speech impairment, he also strives to communicate and

understand through other existing means such as learning from the drawing or the document. Given the situation, Gerald did not think that extra accommodation from them, such as learning sign language, was necessary.

After 11-12 years of working together, Gerald became more comfortable and happy working with Mr. Gop. Aside from understanding his expressions despite the speech impairment, they also got to know each other better and shared a deeper relationship considering that they have spent a relatively long amount of time together.

Gerald thinks that it is beneficial to have a disability inclusive workplace. Aside from the opportunity it gives to the disabled people, there is also a sense of pride cultivated in himself as a leader and also towards his disabled colleague having a capability to raise their lives. Furthermore, as per his experience, his disabled colleague even performs the tasks better compared to the non-disabled employees:

*“Overall, I am happy working with a disabled person. I am also proud of the disabled man for the reason that the disabled person can work normally. In some cases, they can work better than the normal person. I am proud of my colleague. I am proud to be his assembly leader... The company should let the disabled person come to work here, because it is better for the company to give the opportunity for the disabled person, so that they could earn some money to raise their own life or buy things... I think that his capability and the things that he did can answer the company’s wish or can support the company.”*

#### **4.1.8 Hector, 56 years old, Leader of the Welding Team**

In addition to Gerald, Mr. Gop also works with Hector as part of the team under the assembling process altogether. However, Hector is tasked specifically for overseeing matters under the welding part of the job.

Mr. Gop is Hector’s first encounter with a disabled person. He has never seen himself working with a disabled person. Nevertheless, he believes that PWDs have a choice whether they want to participate in the workforce or stay at home.

Hector agrees that there had been a communication problem initially. It was inconvenient to communicate with Mr. Gop because they had to take more time than usual slowly talking and carefully listening to each other. Nevertheless, Hector explains that this challenge did not last for long. This communication problem was

eased with both parties trying to use other methods of communication than speech. Furthermore, since the tasks are illustrated through a document, it was easier to avoid mistakes due to miscommunication.

As the leader of this specific process at work, Hector needed to teach Mr. Gop certain skills that are needed for completing the tasks. However, this is mainly because of Mr. Gop's lack of training in laser welding more than the disability. There was no additional necessity to guide Mr. Gop compared to his non-disabled counterpart.

Hector also emphasized the hard-working and helpful nature of Mr. Gop. He described his disabled colleague to be skillful and an enthusiastic learner. From his work experience, Mr. Gop is able to find ways to do things that is also being a source of learning and new ideas for Hector:

*“Me. Gop is a hardworking member of the team. He is never shy if someone wants to go somewhere or give something—a task... There is something that I can gain from Mr. Gop's experience. Mr. Gop has skills and he is a good worker, and he can figure out other ways that he can work faster. I can see that and I can apply the way Mr. Gop works.”*

In line with his positive attitude to learning, Mr. Gop has improved his skills—delivering output with better quality than his non-disabled counterparts and also shows leadership potential.

Hector and Mr. Gop also developed a deeper relationship besides being colleagues. At this point, Hector do not even notice the disability and go out and talk beyond working hours as normal friends would:

Overall, Hector feels proud about the company for its initiative to hire disabled people. He sees it as an opportunity to inspire and motivate people to work, both disabled and non-disabled. Nevertheless, he agrees that there are non-disabled people who would not be capable of working, and in this case, the effort to relieve the needs of the disabled people who cannot get hired at work:

*“I am proud of the company. It feels good that the company is hiring the disabled person, so it is going to be an image or example to other people who are normal, and also the other person who are disabled also. It is going to be good example for them to work...”*



#### **4.1.9 Ina, 23 years old, HR Officer**

Seeing a disabled person making a living is not a new scene to Ina. She has been seeing disabled people making money off small business by selling lottery tickets and snacks on the streets. Given this experience, she did not think of a disabled person working in a company as a new concept. Nevertheless, she thought that the tasks would remain limited to low-skilled jobs and routine work.

Upon knowing that she will be working with Pim, a deaf Compensation and Benefits Officer in the company, she initially felt worried about the difficulty in communication that might occur at work. True enough, there were some communication challenges that occurred initially. Communication with Pim takes time and effort as it only takes place by writing or speaking slowly. Troubles occurred particularly in concerns that needs quick understanding and action.

Despite the absence of company support and accommodation regarding the disability, after more than a year of working with each other, the communication was improved through Ina learning some sign language skills as taught by Pim.

In addition to this new skill acquired by Ina from Pim, the experience working with disabled people also taught Ina to keep an open mind and understanding towards people. Furthermore, they developed a deeper friendship which made Ina keep a positive and grateful attitude.

*“For me, it opened my mind [as to] why I need to understand people. I met her and I think how lucky I am that I can speak. She inspires me to do a lot of things... She has a positive thinking.”*

Regarding work performance, Ina does not give high expectations to Pim due to the disability. She expects Pim to do the job as told, but not necessarily anything beyond that. She thinks that Pim would be capable of doing more complicated work, but still with a lot of guidance.

There can also be potential for her to get promoted and advance in her career. However, it proved to be at a slower pace than her non-disabled counterparts. Although Ina thinks that a slower pace of contribution recognition and career advancement from the company is unfair for Pim, she thinks that there is a necessity for Pim to prove herself.



When it comes to the company policies hiring disabled people, Ina understands that the competition the company faces in terms of growth may make it hard for the company to be incorporate disability inclusion in their workplace. Furthermore, she thinks that disability inclusion may work better for companies who have already gained stability in their own industries or market, as well as have time and resources to spare for teaching and providing careers for disabled people:

*“...You should understand that [because] our company grows so fast, we do not have time to teach handicapped people. But if your company is a stable business, it is good to have a handicapped to work with you, because the company may help them to have a career, get them their needs.”*

#### **4.1.10 Jackie, 35 years old, Compensation and Benefits Officer**

Jackie, same with Ina, works with Pim.

Pim is not Jackie's first encounter with a disabled person. Jackie used to interact with a neighbor who is also deaf like Pim. Jackie's neighbor was unable to attend a higher level of education and stopped attending formal education after primary school. In addition, the said neighbor is unable to speak, read or write. With this previous experience, Jackie had a preconception that disabled people can probably work, but remains in a low-skilled position.

Given the situation of her neighbor, dealing with a deaf person was not new to Jackie. In fact, the moment she knew that she would be working with a colleague who, in contrast to her neighbor, completed Bachelor's degree and is capable to read and write removes some of the worries from Jackie. However, the extent of the work that can be done efficiently remained a concern to her.

There were communication problems initially. Nevertheless, this was overcome by each other's willingness to adapt and learn strategies to communicate better. At the end of the day, both of them learned additional skills out of the experience: Jackie learned basic sign language while Pim learned how to produce sounds that will, at least, be intelligible for Jackie. Aside from the new sign language skills Pim learned from the experience, she also gained positive attitude and inspiration seeing a disabled person as a colleague.

Despite overcoming challenges and successfully fulfilling tasks together, Jackie thinks that there is not much career development potential for Pim. This is because, although Pim is competent to do routine tasks, she remains short-sighted on the bigger picture and initiating things. Jackie also noted the necessity for more guidance towards Pim which may take more time and more work for her. Nevertheless, crediting her innate personality, she does not feel that taking extra time for teaching is a problem.

## **4.2 Themes: Employee Experiences in a Disability Inclusive Working Environment**

Several themes can be observed from the interviewees' experiences working with disabled people. Some of the themes are present across all of the cases, while others may be specific to the situation and working dynamics of the informant.

Overall, these themes illustrate the possible effects of having a disability inclusive workplace to the mindset and perceptions of employees in an organization. It also links to the existing challenges and opportunities they have encountered in the experience and how such encounters benefit or detriment the organization. The interviews also reveal the opinion that the employee gains towards its employers' recruitment policies.

### **4.2.1 Charisma Leading to Inspiration and Motivation**

Non-disabled colleagues see a disability inclusive environment as an internally fulfilling and intrinsically motivating opportunity for almost the entire workforce. Disabled employees seem to have a charisma or an innate tendency to be popular and socially influential in the company.

*“She is very influential to the team as well—she is popular...”*

*-Betty, Junior Claim Assessor*

Seeing the diligence and hardwork of disabled people serves as an inspiration for non-disabled people to work harder. Furthermore, the presence and

success of disabled people in the company was pointed out to be a possible source of inspiration for their fellow disabled people to have the courage to enter and be accepted in the workforce.

*“Sometimes, when I see PWDs working, that gives me motivation for work like, ‘They have the disabilities, they can do. So, why not us can do or try to do as much as they can?’ Abled bodies are lazy! \*laughs\* Maybe we are too comfortable with our life.”*

*-Camille, Receptionist*

Although initial literature states that company policies may exempt disabled people from doing extra work or work falling under organizational citizenship duties (Colella, 2001), as experienced by the informants of this research, the disabled colleagues were proven to still work beyond what is required of them on their own initiative. Aside from being a helpful colleague, they were also actively volunteering on side-projects that allows them to be seen as a role model towards groups of disabled people within and outside the company in an act of paying it forward for the employment opportunity they were able to attain.

*“When we give the opportunities [to volunteer] to them, they would like to pay it forward to other people as well, so they are willing to be volunteers. Because they are the very first group of PWDs [to be working in the company], they would like to be the role model so that people will open their minds and other PWDs can come to work with us.”*

*-Dennis, Manager*

This hardworking and diligent attitude springing from disabled employees create an upward spiral of motivation and inspiration around the company.

*“I earned some attitude. I learned the way the [disabled people] are working, so I think I have to work harder than the disabled man... To be a normal person, I have to work harder than the disabled person.”*

*-Felicidad, Housekeeper*

#### 4.2.2 Equity Sensitivity and Managing Expectations

There seems to be layers of dichotomy experienced by the employees in a disability inclusive environment. First and foremost, while they are knowledgeable that they have to extend patience, sensitivity and understanding toward their disabled colleagues due to their condition, they are also concerned about keeping them empowered to deal with the situation themselves. As a result, they experience hesitation in demanding for help in work-related activities and keeping low-expectation towards their disabled colleagues' performance at work.

*"I have to explain others that she cannot speak. Most of the time, I try to help her communicate with others. But I feel like she does not need my help, because she acts like she is like a normal person. I do not want to make her feel bad in the way she handles other people."*

*-Ina, HR Officer*

*"When it comes to expectations, I do not give 100% expectations... We are not the person to be picky and pushy for the work... We do not expect her to be the top performer..."*

*-Ava, Assistant Vice President*

The second dichotomy is observed in the behavior of the disabled colleagues. At one hand, responding to their colleagues' low expectations and hesitation to demand tasks, the disabled colleagues try harder to reach out and offer assistance to their colleagues.

*"When someone in the team members are absent or works [with] high load, Yaya knows where she should go to help without anyone telling her."*

*-Betty, Junior Claim Assessor*

On the other hand, some disabled employees exhibit insecurity from their condition that leads them to behave in a reserved manner. In this case, some non-disabled colleagues reported the need to emotionally support their disabled colleague to let their potential shine. Their desire to not let their disability catch attention prevent them from taking the courage to reach their full potential.

*“What I found more challenging is how to make her shine with her potential, because she does not want other employees to see that she has disability. I try to make her show her potential to others...”*

*-Betty, Junior Claim Assessor*

Furthermore, Non-disabled employees feel the sensitivity, a sense of panic and fear to make mistakes from their disabled colleagues. This may be caused by the fear that the prospective mistake would be attributed to the disability, as well as pressure to get the work correctly done despite the disability.

*“...Eh is very hyper and she does not want to be the burden, so nature of her, she needs to do this job...She has this sensitivity and she panics that she will not get it [the task] again...”*

*-Ava, Assistant Vice President*

All these layers of dichotomy experienced by both the non-disabled employees and their disabled colleagues ultimately results in an increased equity sensitivity in the organization. Equity sensitivity is a mindset among employees where the effort and contribution they are making to the organization is comparable to another concerned employee. People may have different extent of equity sensitivity: there are the kind of employees labeled as *benevolents* who find satisfaction in giving their talents, altruism and finding personal worth in the organization. On the other end, there are the *entitleds* who prioritize personal interests and are always looking for ways to maximize personal rewards from the organization, most often through extrinsic means such as pay, benefits and job security. In the middle of the spectrum lie the *equity sensitives* who are focusing on maintaining good employment relationship and achieving desired outcomes (Rai, 2008).

The act of offering assistance and lowering expectation from the non-disabled colleagues, while counteracted by their disabled colleagues' constant effort to prove their competence show behaviors observed in benevolents and equity sensitives. Both parties extend equity sensitivity towards the situation and a culture of a more cautious behavior is observed in terms of the employee relationships in the workplace. Attitudes leaning to entitlement and prioritization of personal interests were less likely seen in from the interview responses.



*“I have to be working harder as Mr. Gop did. If Mr. Gop works harder than me, it is not going to be good.”*

*-Gerald, Leader of the Assembly Team*

*“...There’s a little bit about work that I need to teach more, teach extra... Personally, I am nice to people so there is no problem with me.”*

*-Jackie, Compensation and Benefits Officer*

*“Ms. Eh is one of the family that I am taking care of and no other company seeing this way. We are the part of the Thai society that is doing this...”*

*-Ava, Assistant Vice President*

*“I feel that we have very, very good benefit, similar [equal] to PWDs, but comparing to us, they mostly have higher expense for living. So, sometimes, I feel that those benefits given to them is lower.”*

*-Camille, Receptionist*

Presence of equity sensitivity in the organization were positively linked to organizational commitments and job satisfaction and negatively related to job turnover likelihood (King and Miles, 1994).

### **4.2.3 Open-mindedness, Conquering Prejudices and Gateway to Innovation**

The employees who had prior encounters with a disabled person, having seen them begging alms in street or as a family member who they needed to take care of, are the ones who have exhibited more preconceptions and stereotypes towards disabled people. These prejudices include doubts on the capability of the disabled person to fulfill a task, contribute significantly to the company or to be able to work at a higher level position.

*“Before working and being friends with PWDs, I thought that PWDs always like requesting privilege, demanding... At first, I still doubt that, ‘is she smart? Is she truly able to work? ... Because, normally, I saw PWDs working at entry-level or maybe in the labor in factories.”*

*-Camille, Receptionist*

On the other hand, those who did not have prior encounter or experience with disabled people come into the workforce as a clean slate without any preconception. Hence, the image painted towards their disabled colleagues as abled individuals was solely formed in the workforce.

Therefore, a disability inclusive workplace makes the company employees accustomed to encountering unfamiliar situations and keeping an open-mind towards diversity. Overall, being immersed in a disability inclusive workplace becomes the key in conquering prejudices formed through their initial encounters with disabled people.

*“Sometimes, she teaches us things about living because of her experience, share her stories... I learned that when we find something new, we need to be very, very, open. Do not judge by its first look. This is what I learned living with PWDs.”*

*-Camille, Receptionist*

As per the opinions of the colleagues expressed in the interview, diversity management is enhanced as per their experience. Working on a team, they are being more considerate on each members' competencies and utilizing the opportunity to understand each person's strengths and weaknesses. Recognizing these competencies helps in task delegation and teamwork success.

*“When you have some assignments, you need to think that, ‘Do they have the capability to do the assignment with the right person?’ I think, like the normal person, when you have team members with abled bodies, you need to think about that as well...”*

*-Dennis, Manager*

Furthermore, interview results also exhibit learning points introduced by disabled people to their non-disabled counterparts—such as new communication strategies, insightful comments related to product development, more efficient process of doing things.

*“I learned how to communicate with her... I ask her to teach me [sign language]. She always teaches me.”*

*-Ina, HR Officer*

*“One advice that was very useful was, ‘How can blind people buy the insurance and enter into contract?’ They cannot sign, they cannot type... I asked her*

*[blind colleague], 'When you enter into a contract, what do you do?' She gave me an advice that 'should just get a thumb stamp, finger stamps, and witnesses.'*

*-Dennis, Manager*

*"Mr. Gop has skills and he is a good worker, and he can figure out other ways that he can work faster. I can see that and I can apply the way Mr. Gop works."*

*-Hector, Leader of the Welding Team*

#### **4.2.4 Sense of Pride and Fulfillment**

A sense of pride and fulfillment in different angles were detected from the interview responses. Firstly, employees express their pride towards their employers for having an inclusive policy towards disabled people. They take their employer as a role model and advocates their company's policies to their peers within and beyond their workplace. Some of the respondents expressed that they are proudly telling other people that they are working in a disability inclusive company.

*"I am proud of the company. It feels good that the company is hiring the disabled person, so it is going to be an image or example to other people who are normal, and also the other person who are disabled also. It is going to be good example for them to work..."*

*-Hector, Leader of the Welding Team*

Interview responses also show that the intention or purpose of the company for hiring disabled people affects employees' perception towards their company. When the employee knows that the company is only doing it as per government requirement or tax incentives, the employee does not exhibit this sense of pride, and even subjects the company to comparison against other companies that do better. Furthermore, when a disabled person was hired for the quota instead of their merits and qualifications, the employee perceived this even as detrimental to the company and for the image of disabled people themselves:

*"...for my company, we include handicapped people...because the government told us to do so... I know some people [company] can do better than us, but for my company, we do because the government asked us."*

*-Ina, HR Officer*

*“I think it is very good that we accept them... I do not want the company to do this as charity or we need to hire them just for reaching the quota. It will not feel sustainable in the long run. When the PWDs we hire do not have the qualifications, it will corrupt the mindset of the people in the company. In the future, PWDs can get no chance to work in the company because the mindset is not open.”*

*-Dennis, Manager*

Secondly, there was also a sense of pride cultivated from the employee towards their disabled colleagues. Many instances in the interview cited that the disabled person's capability to work and live a normal life dignifies the disabled person in the eyes of their colleagues.

Lastly, there is also a sense of pride and fulfillment to themselves as a colleague who has been contributing to a disability inclusive environment. They see themselves as a contributor to the opportunity given to the disabled colleague. Whatever inconvenience caused by the disability experienced in the workplace was offset by the pride to the perceived contribution to the society's betterment in the bigger picture.

*“Overall, I am happy working with a disabled person. I am also proud of the disabled man for the reason that the disabled person can work normally. In some cases, they can work better than the normal person. I am proud of my colleague. I am proud to be his assembly leader...”*

*-Gerald, Leader of the Assembly Team*

Gouthier and Rhein (2011) identified attitudinal organizational pride as a cognitive and durable pride springing from one's perception of an organization. This attitudinal pride was exhibited from the respondents' statements. When there is pride in the organization and the employees identify themselves in the decisions of their leader, it is more likely for the employees to have the shared sense of vision which may have direct influence on commitment and turnover intention, as well as an indirect relation to creativity (Gouthier and Rhein, 2011).

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

Previous literature pointed out that one of the biggest barriers to disability inclusion is stigma and prejudice in the society towards the disabled people. From the employer side, lack of knowledge, and misunderstanding of disability prevents employers from considering hiring disabled people (Heera 2016). The disabled people themselves are discouraged to work in an organized sector because of the fear to the attached stigma and prejudice towards their disability (WHO, 2011). For those disabled people who have involved themselves in an organized sector, some reported to experience social estrangement from their colleagues and a constant struggle to prove that there are reliable and competent employees. This lack of belongingness and full participation in the workforce felt by the disabled employees was termed as feeling like being in a glass box—exposing them to judgement from their colleagues while keeping them from fully belonging and exhibiting their capabilities to contribute in the workforce (Colella, 2001).

This paper explored the employees' perspective from working with disabled colleagues. Most of the interview responses exhibited a positive effect on the mindset and motivation of employees in the company. Furthermore, they also felt a sense of pride towards the decision the company made regarding hiring PWDs which is helpful in developing rapport between the leaders and the followers as well as nurturing commitment of service to the organization. On the other hand, we were also able to get a hint that uncertainty of the extent to which non-disabled employees should extend assistance and lower their expectation may be a factor that leads to the feeling of being in a glass box as reported by the disabled colleagues. This situation is currently being dealt by keeping an open-mind and maintaining equity sensitivity in the organization.



While the findings of this research support the claim that a positive impact is experienced from having a disability inclusive workforce, companies that have programs to include disabled workers remain at a minority. UN ESCAP (2015) reported a 60% unemployment rate of PWDs in Thailand and due to its ageing population, maximized use of productive capacities of its citizens, including PWDs will help boost economic growth by filling labor shortages.

Some of the interview responses reiterated the importance of connecting to a third party such as non-profit organizations or government agencies to effectively reach disabled job seekers fit for the organization's requirements:

*"...Because we have the helper, the Foundation, that filters or screens PWDs before sending to us, so it really helps us to identify what are their potential, what they can do. Because if they don't filter and let us know, we will ignore them [PWDs]."*

*-Ava, Vice President*

In addition, around 500, 000 disabled people were reported to not participate in the workforce due to reasons including, remaining at home and doing household chores (53,821 people), still studying (7,923), under the support of relatives (10,309) and being too young or too old to work (433, 252). Furthermore, only 15% of the total disabled people within the ages 5-30 ever attended formal and other forms education which may have affected their chances and opportunities for employment (NSO, 2012). Therefore, organizations who would have an interest in recruiting disabled people combined with the willingness to invest the training their recruits through formal or vocational education may consider this opportunity to fill the gap between disabled people willing to work and the capacities required by the organization.

While the reason for PWD unemployment was not explored in detail in this research, the author suggests understanding why organizations would be for or against disability inclusion may be explored for further research: firstly, the presence or absence of employers' know-how in implementing disability inclusive policies that would be beneficial as well as uncostly for the company. Secondly, the availability and accessibility of the link between disabled people who are looking for work opportunities and the organizations open for disability inclusion. Thirdly, whether the

degree of competition in the company or industry faces plays a role in the willingness of employers to hire disabled people.

*“...You should understand that [because] our company grows so fast, we do not have time to teach handicapped people. But if your company is a stable business, it is good to have a handicapped to work with you, because the company my help them to have a career, get them their needs.”*

*-Ina, HR Officer*

In addition to the possible reasons aforementioned, there may also be additional barriers that were untapped by the results of this research. Thailand scoring high on individualism-collectivism dimension from Hofstede's cultural dimensions model, means that Thais have a highly collectivist society that is exhibited at work (Pimpa, 2012). Findings from Komin (1990), also show that Thai socio-cultural system values social relationships more than task achievement. Therefore, such cultural dynamics may have given a leeway for more tolerant and patient answers with regards the PWDs' participation at work exhibited in the interview responses.

A cross-cultural study may be conducted to see whether employees in coming from countries with national culture who are stricter in efficiency and output would have different perspectives towards a disability inclusive environment. Furthermore, the degree of cultural diversity in the organization may also generate another variant of employee response answering whether a multi-culturally diverse organization would be more or less accepting of disability inclusion.

Lastly, since the findings of this qualitative study linked disability inclusion motivation and inspiration as experienced by the employees intrinsically, a quantitative study may also be explored finding the extent of the actual productivity increase in a disability inclusive and a well-managed diversity in the organization.

This research made an effort to contribute to the understanding of the effects of a disability inclusive working environment, as well as identify barriers and challenges that have been experienced by employees from their encounter with their disabled colleagues within the Thai context. Findings of the research leaned towards positive outcomes linking to increased motivation, sense of pride, sensitivity and open-mindedness in the organization. Overall, diversity in the workplace through disability inclusion improved the overall climate in the workplace, encouraged

flexibility and teamwork, as well as challenged traditional mindsets and promotes open-mindedness. Given that the research is exploratory in nature basing on a limited number of respondents' and their experiences, further inquiries touching on quantitative studies and different cultural dynamics may provide additional insights guiding disability inclusion and diversity management in the workforce at large.



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**APPENDICES**



**Appendix A: Research Participants**

<b>Informant Details</b>	<b>Disabled Colleague Description</b>
<p><b>1. Participant A</b> 37 years old Assistant Vice President Insurance Company</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paralyzed lower part of the body (uses a wheel chair)</li> <li>• 35 years old</li> <li>• Been a colleague to Participant A for 2 years, but has been around the company for 7 years</li> <li>• Tasks: monitor medical claim reports and customer service</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Participant B</b> 34 years old Junior Claim Assessor Insurance Company</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hunchback</li> <li>• 30 years old</li> <li>• Currently studying Bachelor's degree in management</li> <li>• Working with Participant B for 3 years</li> <li>• Tasks: approving insurance claims, desk job</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Participant C</b> 33 years old Receptionist Insurance Company</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Born without legs (uses a wheelchair)</li> <li>• 39 years old</li> <li>• MBA degree holder</li> <li>• Working with Participant C for 2 years</li> <li>• Tasks: risk management</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Participant D</b> 30 years old Manager Insurance Company</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Works with many PWDs on a voluntary basis for projects</li> <li>• Disabled people come from varying ages, educational background, as well as both high and low level positions</li> <li>• Participant D has been working with PWDs for 8 years</li> <li>• Tasks: different functions on event organizing</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Participant E</b> 24 years old HR Officer Engineering Firm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Without a hand</li> <li>• 44 years old</li> <li>• Reached until grade 9 of basic education</li> <li>• Been a colleague to</li> </ul>



Informant Details	Disabled Colleague Description
	<p>Participant E for 4 years, but has been working in the company for 6 years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Task: security guard</li> </ul>
<p><b>6. Participant F</b> 45 years old Housekeeper/Cleaner Engineering Firm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Without a hand (same person as no. 5)</li> <li>• 44 years old</li> <li>• Reached until grade 9 of basic education</li> <li>• Been a colleague to Participant F for 6 years</li> <li>• Task: security guard</li> </ul>
<p><b>7. Participant G</b> 56 years old Leader of the Assembly Team Engineering Firm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speech impairment</li> <li>• 53 years old</li> <li>• Reached until grade 9 and went to a vocational school</li> <li>• Been a colleague to participant G for 11-12 years</li> <li>• Task: team member, labor intensive tasks</li> </ul>
<p><b>8. Participant H</b> 56 years old Leader of the Welding Team Engineering Firm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speech impairment (same person as no. 7)</li> <li>• 53 years old</li> <li>• Reached until grade 9 and went to a vocational school</li> <li>• Been a colleague to participant G for 15 years</li> <li>• Task: team member, labor intensive tasks</li> </ul>
<p><b>9. Participant I</b> 25 years old HR Officer Energy Company</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deaf</li> <li>• 39 years old</li> <li>• Bachelor's degree holder</li> <li>• Been a colleague to Participant I for 1 year and 8 months</li> <li>• Task: encoding information in the database</li> </ul>
<p><b>10. Participant J</b> 35 years old Compensation and Benefit Officer Energy Company</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deaf (same person as no. 9)</li> <li>• 39 years old</li> <li>• Bachelor's degree holder</li> <li>• Been a colleague to Participant I for 1 year and 8 months</li> <li>• Task: encoding information in the database</li> </ul>

## **Appendix B: Interview Questions**

### **Prior to working with disabled people**

1. Do you remember your first encounter with persons with disabilities (PWDs)? On TV, in movies, the ones you meet in person? Can you tell us about it?
2. What do you think about disabled people then? Did you ever imagine yourself working with them? Why or why not?
3. When you first knew (maybe from your boss or from your colleague) that you will be working with a disabled person, what did you think about it?
  - a. Did you feel worried about work? happy? neutral?

### **Initial working experience with disabled people**

4. Can you tell me about your work and what you do?
5. Can you tell me about your disabled colleague and his tasks?
6. What is his/her disability?
  - a. Do you know their age (at least estimation)?
  - b. Do you know their educational background (e.g finished grade school, high school, university, etc.)?
  - c. What are their tasks/responsibilities?
7. When did you start working with PWDs? How long have you been working with them now?
8. Can you tell me some stories during the first times/week you worked with each other?
  - a. What tasks did you do together? What kind of work did you see him/her do?
  - b. Did you have to adjust some of your working style to work with them? If so, what did you feel about these adjustments?

- c. Did you need to guide them? If so, what were their attitudes to your supervision? Are they happy to learn, or reluctant to try?
- d. Did you encounter some troubles? Do you need to do extra work?
- e. What did you do to overcome obstacles, if any?
- f. Did you learn anything new from your experience?

### **Long-term working experience with disabled people**

9. Now, after \_\_\_ months/years of working with your disabled colleague, do you still do the same tasks? What are they?
  - a. [If tasks are different] Can you tell us how different are they?
  - b. Do you still encounter the same challenges as before?
  - c. Do you have new challenges? What are they?
  - d. Are you more comfortable working with them now?
  - e. Are there adjustments you need to keep doing? If so, how do you feel about it?
  - f. Can they do their job without supervision after some time?
  - g. Do you learn anything new, maybe from the way they do things? If so, do you think you would not have learned this if you did not work with a disabled person?

### **Overall comments**

5. In general, please describe your experience working with PWDs.
6. What do you feel about working with them in general (happy, inspired, motivated, frustrated, stressed)?
7. What do you think about your company when they include PWDs in their workforce?
  - a. Do you think it is a good decision?
  - b. In Thai law, companies can pay a certain amount of money if they are not able hire PWDs based on the required quota. This practice is quite common. As an

employee who has experienced working with PWD, do you think they should do this instead?

8. After working with disabled people, what do you think about them now in terms of their capability? Do you think their disability greatly hinders them from doing their task?

**Note:** Follow-up questions marked with Latin alphabet (a,b,c...f) will not be necessarily asked during the interview. It only serves as a guide to the interviewer in case further details were not mentioned by the research participants.



## **Appendix C: Interview Transcriptions**

**14 December 2018, 10:31 AM – 10:56 AM (25 minutes)**

**Participant A aka Ava**

**37 years old**

**Assistant Vice President**

**Do you work with one specific disabled person or with many? What is her disability?**

- One person. Disease with the spinal column... After her surgery, she got complication from the surgery.

**With her educational background, did she complete bachelor's degree or formal education?**

- She got the bachelor's degree

**How long have you been working with her?**

- 2 years, but she's been here for 7 years but she rotates to other departments.

**What about her tasks? Can you tell me what do you ask her to do or what are her responsibilities?**

- Monitor report and some cases, service our customers

**Do you know her age range?**

- Around 35 years old.

**Based on your own experience before working with PWDs, what were your perceptions?**

- Pity and would like to give the opportunity for them. The person I am working with now, she is not only a PWD but she is also the main source of income for the family as well. So she is not the burden for the family.

**So before working with PWDs, you thought that they should be taken care of, you would not think that they are the bread winner of the family?**



- Before, I thought, at first, that PWDs need the family to take care of them. But when I was getting to know more, I felt like, “oh she is not a burden to her family.” Because we have the helper, the Foundation, that filters or screens PWDs before sending to us, so it really helps us to identify what are their potential, what they can do. Because if they don’t filter and let us know, we will ignore them.

**How about when you first knew that you were going to work with PWDs, what did you feel? Did you think, ‘Oh this is going to be hard!’ Were you excited to learn something new? Or were you just, ‘It does not matter.’**

- We normally have 2 emotions, that ‘we need to give them opportunity’ and ‘it is more difficult to manage,’ so we need to balance each 2 emotions. When I knew that Ms. Eh will come to work with me, I need to manage where she should sit, is it an accessible area for her, does she need help, and other things...

**Can you tell me about the first week you worked with together?**

- Ms. Eh was not a new comer. We have known each other for a long time, like see each other in the company, and Ms. Eh is actually quite popular in the company. Because the company is taking care of... when we know we have a PWD that comes to work with us, we help the line manager. We don’t want to put the burden on them. We have the platform, the elevator, the traveling, the space... So it’s easier for line manager to not think about this part.

**What kind of adjustments did you do when you started working with them?**

- On the competency side, we have the screening and interview recruitment process, so she had the potential to work. No worries about that. But the other adjustment that we need to do are just small things like setting up the seats...where she should sit... is the area okay... but the other things on the work side, we treat them like normal people

**You did not feel that you have to do more work because there are some things she cannot do?**

- Yes, when it comes to expectations, I do not give 100% expectations but we need to give the opportunity for them. Sometimes she takes too long time for some work, but we need to understand her position.

**For some adjustments like that, did you feel that it was unfair, somehow, like, “Why is it okay for her to get more time to get things done and then it’s not okay for me?”**

- Because I am a manager, I just look down for the overview but I think that among the peers with PWDs, they have some arguments about this issue as well. But these things happen to abled bodies as well. Two abled bodies will argue about this as well, so it’s kind of... uhmmm...

**You mean, it does not matter if they are working with PWDs, arguments will happen anyway?**

- Yes, yes.. it’s the working issue. It’s impossible for two persons to be the same.

**How about now that you are working with them for 2 years, do you feel more comfortable now? You got used to it?**

- From my view, I gained more trust on her and I know that her life has been tough for a long long time... And I would like to be the one to provide the opportunity for her to have the happy life for working and everything, so we are not the person be picky and pushy for the work, so sometimes we are more relaxed for her to take time and learn. Because we just don’t expect her to be the top performer, so some people have levels and they are different, so I let her feel more comfortable when working with us.

**Do you need to teach her often? Can she do her part of the work well even without you looking?**

- Yes. Because her education is not on a normal persons like us... Some persons with disabilities may have mental issues as well. We cannot tell whether this learning issue comes from her disability or her personality. Because Ms. Eh is very hyper and she does not want to be the burden, so nature of her, she needs to do this job, this job, this job.. It’s like routine. But she cannot process like the broad overview.. So, she cannot

tell that this comes from her personality or her disability. But this happens and she only focus only on the snapshot of the work.

**Do you think she improves? Do you think there is an opportunity for her to get promoted?**

- By nature, she would like to learn. Ms. Eh has the potential to grow, but as the manager, I need to consider which job does she like, which job is she good at... We need time for coaching and we need coaching to be very well for PWDs and develop them in the career path.

**Is there any biggest challenge that you have encountered?**

- Feelings. About the feeling of PWD that I work with. Because, she is quite strong, she had a tough history of her life, but at the same time, she has this sensitivity and she's very panic—panic that she will not get it [the task] again.

**How about for yourself, did you learn anything from your experience working with PWDs? What did you learn or what did you improve on yourself?**

- Patience. And I saw that the world still needs companies that gives the opportunity for PWDs to be more.

**So in some way, you are happy that there is a company like this one, opening opportunities for PWDs?**

- \*nods\*

**How about for doing the tasks, did she do something differently and you thought that, “oh this is different. I did not think that we can do this job like this before.”**

**Was there any instance like that?**

- Yes. I have issues like this at work, but the good thing is that Ms. Eh is aware of her mistake and she is willing to resolve it together with the team, so it is a strength point for her.

**Just on overall comments on your working experience, do you feel happy or a bit more stressed, or do you feel inspired?**

- I feel inspired because Ms. Eh is one of the family that I am taking care of and no other company seeing this way. We are the part of the Thai society that is doing this.

**A lot of companies do not get to reach the quota, so they can just pay the government. Do you think it is better for this company to do that as well, or is it better that they continue to do what they are doing?**

- I would like my company to continue. Money cannot buy everything. Instead of paying the government, why we don't buy social? When we have PWDs working in the company, other staff can learn the story from them. And we can see the truth of life. Because some people are depressed, and also disappointed, so they can see that the PWDs can live and be happy and why can't we?

**Last thing, do you think their disability hinders their work, or it does not matter—they can still do their job even with disability?**

- I think so, yes. But the important thing is that we need to put the right people in the right job and we both can be happy to working together, so this is what employers should consider. Job screening and testing is very, very important.

**14 December 2018, 11:07 AM – 11:24 (17 minutes)**

**Participant B aka Betty**

**34 years old**

**Junior Claim Assessor**

**Can you tell me about your colleague with disability? What disability does she have?**

- Yaya has a spinal cord bent (hunchback), but she can walk.

**Do you know about her age and educational background?**

- 30 years old. Right now, she is in the process of studying the bachelor's degree in management.

**What are her tasks and responsibilities?**

- Yaya is responsible for approving claims, under the case that the policy must pass two years. Because we have the contestable period, the time we can reject or accept the claim.

**So it is mostly desk job, in front of the computer?**

- Yes

**How long have you been working with her?**

- 3 years

**Before you started working with your colleague with disability, what did you think about PWDs?**

- At first, before working with her, I respect PWDs that they have the effort, they try to be normal, to be equal.

**Did you think that they just have to be taken care of, stay at home, receive treatment? Did they need to stay at home and rest?**

- It depends on how severe is the disability, in my perspective. Because some PWDs have the severe level of disability, so they should be taken cared of or be in the institute for treatment. But in my view, there are some PWDs that can have independent life should go out in the society.

**How about when you first knew that you are going to work with PWDs, what did you feel, were you happy, excited or just neutral?**



- Because we knew each other in the company and Yaya is quite popular, so for me, it is neutral.

**How about when you started working with them, is there any adjustment that you need to do, or is there any adjustment that you needed to do on your working style?**

- In terms of facilities, Yaya is considered to be a normal person because she only has a back bend, but she can walk... she can do other things. In terms of potential of the competency, sometimes she is better than able bodied. So she can do it a lot and she is willing to learn, willing to develop herself. She is quite agility and also strong.

**Did you encounter some obstacles or challenges and what would be the biggest challenge on you?**

- Barely have any challenge, it can be nothing because she can walk, she can live by herself like normal bodied, so she does not need any special help. What is the more challenge that I found is how to make her shining with her potential because she does not want other employees to see that she has disability. I try to make her show her potential to others.

**How about in terms of the benefit, is there any cases when you asked, “Oh it is unfair, why is she getting this benefit...”**

- I do not even think about it because it is something that we should help her.

**In terms of work, did you learn anything new from this experience? What did you improve on yourself?**

- Yes, there is. Surprisingly, working with PWDs, they often give suggestion to the team that is useful. She is, kind of, outstanding person that is brave to say, brave to give the comment that is useful for the team. She is very influential to the team as well—she is popular. You see that she is talkative and friendly, but in terms of her mind, she is mature.

**In terms of her suggestions, is it something that you did not think, but because she had a disability she was able to share this comment?**

- I do not even feel that Yaya is a disabled person. But it is because of her potential...

**How about your own feeling working with her, do you feel more motivated, happy, or just neutral?**

- I feel more comfortable. I feel trust with her because when comparing to other people, because I need to review her judgement for the claim, I feel comfortable and trust her work. When someone in the team members are absent or works high load, Yaya is knows where she should go to help, without anyone telling her.

**So she is very independent in terms of the work?**

- \*nods and laughs\* and she helps others as well.

**Other companies don't reach the quota in hiring PWDs. When they don't reach the quota, they just pay to the government. Do you think your company should do that as well? Is it beneficial or should they continue what they are doing now?**

- Absolutely we should go for this because I feel very proud when I tell others that we hire PWDs. I am lucky to have Yaya on my team.

**14 December 2018, 11:30 AM – 11:46 (16 minutes)**

**Participant C aka Camille**

**33 years old**

**Receptionist**

**Can you tell me about your colleague with disability? What disability does she have?**

- Ms. Wasana, she is about 39 years old. She does not have legs, she only have this part \*points at upper thighs\* since she was born.

**Ah, she does not have legs, so she uses a wheelchair?**

- Yes, but she can walk.

**How about her educational background?**

- Master. Master's degree—MBA

**Can you tell me your work with her? What is her task and her responsibility?**

- She works in risk management team. I do not work directly with her, but we are colleagues and friends because we work very close area.

**This is about your personal experience with PWDs. Before you started meeting them in the workplace what did you think about them?**

- Before working and being friends with PWDs, I thought that PWDs always like requesting privilege, demanding... helping... something like that.

**So you think they were just at home, asking for help, being dependent to their families—something like that?**

- \*nods\*

**When you knew that you were going to work with them in the company, what did you feel? Did you feel worried that, “Some things may not be done or maybe they will ask me to do work for them...”**

- Hmm. No...

**On the other hand, did you feel happy or excited to work with them?**

- I feel excited and also curious about their... What is their job? How can they work? Can they work in the company? Are they able to be successful in the workplace? Can they be promoted and be in the high-

level in the company? Because normally, I saw people with disabilities working in start -level or maybe in the labor in factories.

**So when you first worked with them, what did you feel? Were you able to find the answers to those questions in your head? Did some things change?**

- At first, I still doubt that, “Is she smart? Is she truly able to work?” After that, I found out that she is really good. And I found out, finally, that disability does not relate to the ability to work.

**Working in this company, did you think that there are adjustments that you need to make in order to work with them?**

- For me, I did not need to adjust anything, but for the company to provide accessibility. Because in the past, I needed to take care of my father that have a severe disease. It’s some kind of a disability in one way that I need to take care... For my experience, I did not need to adjust. I got used to it.

**Did you feel that there is any obstacles or challenges in the communication or anything?**

- For communication with Ms. Wasana, it is fine. Totally fine... no obstacle, no challenge... But we have other PWDs in the company who are deaf that we need to do the sign language.

**For yourself, what did you learn from your experience with them? Is there anything that you discovered on yourself or improved?**

- I learned that when we find something new, we need to be very, very open. Don’t judge by its first look. This is what I learned living with PWDs.

**How about the benefits, did you ever feel, sometimes, that it is unfair and ask, “Why do they get this benefit or that?”**

- I don’t feel any unfair treatment in the company. On the other hand, I feel that we have very, very good benefit, similar to PWDs, but comparing to us, they mostly have higher expense for living. So, sometimes, I feel that those benefits given is lower.

**So, [you mean], even if the benefits are equal...**

- \*nods\* ...but they have a higher cost of living.

**How long have you been with them?**

- 2 years.

**Now that you have been with them for a long time, have there been any changes?**

**Do you feel more comfortable with them?**

- I feel very comfortable—more. Sometimes I forget that they are disabled people. We used to go to watch a movie and just booking the ticket in the middle! \*laughs\*

**How about their work? Do you think that they need more teaching, more guidance, or not really—they are independent?**

- For Wasana, she is very able, in my view. Sometimes, she's better than us.

**Can you elaborate more—in what way they are better?**

- Sometimes, she teaches us things about living because of her experience, share her stories—something like that. And she's got Master's degree while I'm still Bachelor's.

**Just for the overall experience, do you feel stressed or frustrated?**

- With the deaf colleagues, sometimes I feel that we need to have a long patience. It is very challenging for me.

**How about when you see PWDs working, what does that make you feel?**

- Sometimes, when I see PWDs working, that gives me motivation for work like, “they have the disabilities, they can do. So, why not us can do or try to do as much as they can?” Abled bodies are lazy! \*laughs\* Maybe we are too comfortable with our life.

**Other companies don't reach the disability recruitment quota. Sometimes, they just pay the government for not hiring PWDs. Do you think this company can just do that as well? Should they do that or should they continue hiring PWDs?**

- Our company should support like this. Because we have been recognized and been the role model for employment of PWDs, so I think why not continue.

**In conclusion, [since] you, sometimes, forget that they have disability and you don't think it hinders their work?**

- \*nods\*

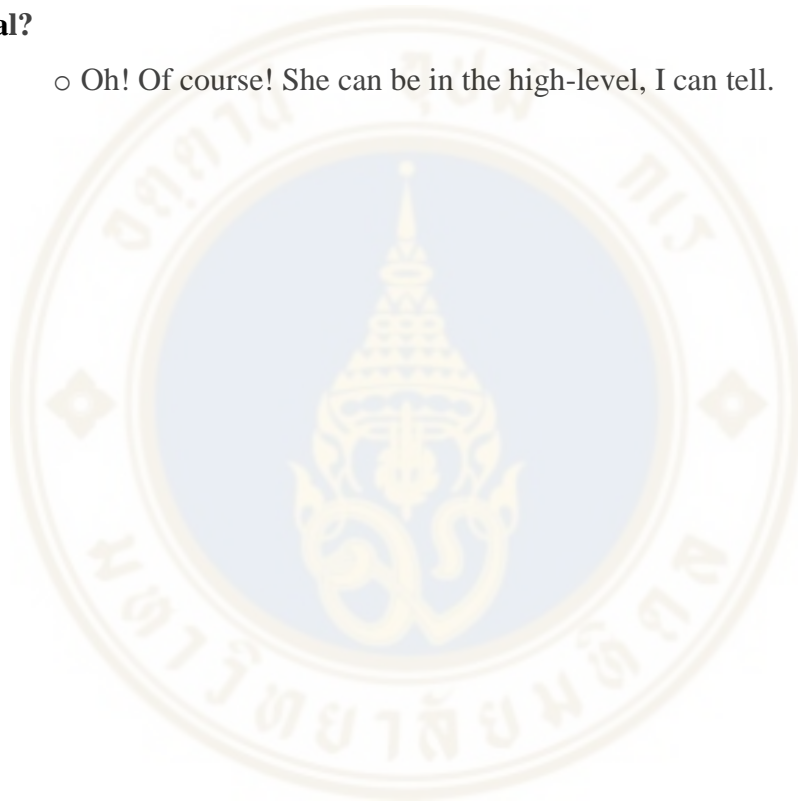


**Do you think there is any unique contribution that they give to the company such as ideas?**

- On the very first, I think that when we have PWDs in the company, it makes people open their minds—the whole company. The education is very important for PWDs. Because Ms. Wasana is not like disabled. She just does not have legs. She is not like others—blind people or deaf. Those types of disabilities will be more difficult to deal with.

**How about the career path, do you think she will get promoted or she has that potential?**

- Oh! Of course! She can be in the high-level, I can tell.



**14 December 2018, 11:50 AM – 12:11 (21 minutes)**

**Participant D aka Dennis**

**30 years old**

**Manager**

**[mentioned off-record] Description of the disabled colleague**

- Does not work with one particular disabled person, but works with many PWDs on voluntary basis for projects

**Since you don't work with one particular PWD, but you work based on volunteers, right? So can you, maybe tell me, before working with PWDs, what did you think about them?**

- At first, I think that "Is it possible for them to work in a company?" Because I have to admit that I saw a lot of PWDs at the side of the road... Asking for money... That's my perception, but through my volunteers I realized that, "Oh they have much more."

**You got interested in working with PWDs [mentioned off-record]. At first, did you feel worried about work as in, "Oh some things may not be accomplished" or are you excited to work with them?**

- Since I do not assign them the work directly—I am not their manager—so I am just thinking about the other part: can they survive in the company? Because, at first—on the very first few months after they are boarding in the company, people get shocked when they need to work with PWDs, and I ask the volunteers to give the overview of the project. I remember that, "Are they able to survive from the line manager?"

**These volunteers, are they usually in the labor, lower level, or higher?**

- Mixed. Because the volunteers that I work with are all the PWDs that work with the company, so they are from various levels. When we give them opportunities, I get to talk to them. When we give opportunities to them, they would like to pass forward to other people as well, so they are willing to be the volunteers. And because they are the very first group of PWDs, they would like to be the role model so that people will open their minds and other PWDs can come to work with us.

**When you work with them, did you have to adjust your working style? What adjustments did you need to make?**

- What I find interesting about the deaf, you need to adjust the communication style. Because their language grammar is not like us that switch between subject and verb.

**You are talking about the sign language?**

- The typing. Even when you type or chat with them, text them. Their language is a little bit weird. So the communication, when I ask her to do something, I need to think very carefully.

**So they are deaf by they can speak Thai?**

- Not talk, but just chat.

**What kind of work do you do with them? Is it like setting up projects or event?**

- Yes. We have the Run Together that I work on. We have very very function that needs to be done. I ask them, who will be in charge of this and that...

**You worked on a lot of projects with them already?**

- \*nods\*

**Now that you have worked on a lot of projects with them, are you more comfortable with them now?**

- I trust them more. Because I have the experience that they can do it. But I think it is not because of the disabilities, I mean to think carefully, it is about the engagement between them and me. Sometimes when I ask them that they should go to work and come to me, they may not be comfortable to work, not because of their disabilities, but because of their line managers and also their other work. When you work for a line manager, you understand that you need to ask for permission that you need to work for me for a temporary period, something like that.

**How about the things you said about product development [mentioned off-record]? Is it part of the work or is it just them helping you?**

- Just helping me. I just walk around and ask, “what do you think about this? If I do this?” ... Something like that

**Can you recall some unique advice that they gave?**

- One advice that was very useful was, “How can blind people buy the insurance and enter into the contract.” They cannot sign, they cannot type... So they advise that if the agent sells the policy to them, they will ask for the kin to fill in the application. In terms of signatory, I ask her [blind colleague], she buys a lot of land, so I ask her, “When you enter into a contract, what did you do?” She gave me an advice that “You just get the thumb stamp, finger stamps, and also the witnesses. It is enough to enter into the legal contract.” So she gave me the advice about this.

**This is one of the things you learned, right? Is there any other things that you learned from working with PWDs?**

- Working with them, what I learned is the communication. You need to listen to them. Not just focus on what you are saying—not about your assignment you need to give to them. But you need to listen to them and ask, “Is it clear? Am I speaking the language that they can understand?” This is what I learned.

**How about your feeling working with them? Do you feel motivated or inspired, you feel stressed or frustrated sometimes?**

- Not frustrated. I interact with them for a very long time, like 8 years from the start. I feel like they are normal persons. But what I feel right now is I trust them—that they can do it.

**Do you think their disabilities hinder their tasks?**

- I don't think so. When you have some assignments, you need to think that, “Do they have the capability to do the assignment with the right person?” So I think, like the normal person, when you have team members with abled bodies, you need to think about that as well.

**So you think it does not have to do with disabilities—even for the non-disabled persons, you have to know their competencies and assign the right work for them?**

- Yes...

**Lastly, what do you think about your company including PWDs in the workforce, Instead of just paying to the government?**

- I think it is very good that we accept them. I am like the policy maker here, what I can tell you is that, I do not want the company to do this as charity or we need to hire them just for reaching the quota. It will not feel sustainable in the long run. When the PWDs we hire do not have the qualifications, it will corrupt the mindset of the people in the company. In the future, PWDs can get no chance to work in the company because the mindset is not open. I would like the company to continue and keep the mindset that we give people opportunity, not charity.

**One last question: It's costly for a company to make an environment accessible for PWDs such as the ramps, elevators, wheelchairs, cars and things like that. Do you think these costs are worth it?**

- Actually, these costs are tax deductible. I think, in terms of the company, it will not give you that high cost. If you think about the company, deep down, it is not that costly if you are open and do it. Luckily, we just moved from another building and when the CEO chose the new building, he considered the accessibility. It does not cost anything—we just selected the right building.



**16 January 2019, 9:40 – 10:08 AM (28 minutes)**

**Participant E aka Emily**

**24 years old**

**HR Officer**

**Can you tell me about your first encounter with disabled people? Do you see them in movies, TV or on the street? Can you tell us your feelings about it before?**

- In the first time, I feel compassionate. Because when I see the disabled person who did not have the complete parts of the body, but they can live with a normal life. In some of my feelings, I feel proud of the disabled person, because, although they don't have a chance to have the normal part of the body, they can still live with other people in a normal situation.

**How do you see them live normally? Is it because you see them work or you see them on the street or in the hospital?**

- The first time I saw a disabled person is in this shop. Before this job, I did not see a disabled person for real

**Did you ever imagine yourself working with them before you have met them here?**

- In the first time, I did not think about that 100%. But in some of my thoughts, I was prepared to work with a disabled person, because our laws require that companies hire disabled people.

**When you first knew that you were going to work with a disabled person, what did you feel? Did you feel worried about work? Did you feel happy or neutral?**

- I felt normal working with disabled people. I did not worry about work.

**This is about your [disabled] colleague. What are their tasks? What are the tasks that you do with them?**

- I am working as an HR Officer, so I am working with the disabled one—the security guard. I have to watch over him looking over the

security things. Example, when someone is coming to our place, or our employees come out, he has to check the car or the vehicles.

**May I ask how long have you been working with him now?**

- 4 years

**During your first week of working with each other, if you remember, did you need to adjust your working style with them and what adjustments did you make?**

- I am confident. I did not worry about it, so I did not have to adjust. Because Mr. Chansak, he is just disabled with his arm, so it is not really going to affect his work.

**Do you need to guide them and what are their attitudes towards you? Are they happy to learn or sometimes hesitant to try?**

- I did not have to teach him because I just came to work here after him. He has been here before me, so he already knows his tasks or his duties.

**Did you encounter some challenges obstacles working with him—maybe, sometimes, carrying a car door or carrying something. Is there anything like that?**

- Yes. There are problems, but it is not related to the disability. Example, in some days, the security guard, he let the employees out without the permission, so I am going to be affected too. My boss or someone in charge with the employees is going to ask me why I let them out without permission. It is not related with the disability, but with the duty—even an abled man will have that problem also.

**How about for yourself, did you learn anything new from your experience with disabled people—or maybe something you improved on yourself?**

- Hmm... This one is a tough question. But mostly, I got the compassion. When I see that one disabled man can come to work, and I think the other way, some abled people cannot carry on their duty, cannot come here on time or keep their responsibilities.

**So you are saying, in some way, disabled people even work better than non-disabled people?**

- \*nods\*

**After working for 8 years with them now, uhhm... you already answered some of the things—no challenges, but are you more comfortable working with them or meeting disabled people after 8 years?**

- From the long time working with him, there is a good attitude between us.

**Is there anything before that changed now?**

- At first, I thought that disabled persons will live more easier. But when I came here, I work with disabled people, we become close to each other and I can ask him personal questions. Everyday, when I see him drive back home with just one hand, I feel sad. But that sadness makes me feel more amazing and gives me more compassion—the one I have not gotten before.

**Did you notice anything they do differently, for example, like you said, driving a car or, maybe, making coffee. Is it different from the way we do things?**

- In some cases, he is acting or taking action like a normal person. But in some cases, with the disability that he has, he cannot join the company activities. Because he does not have hands, he cannot join sports day or join in the competition unlike other people who are normal.

**So, like team building activities or sports day?**

- Yes

**What does he do then—is he just at home that time or does he still observe?**

- He is committed, like on sports days, when we have activities, based on his duty, he has to cover the security office. But on annual party, he takes the privilege to join other people.

**But when there are games in the party, he could not join?**

- In the party, he can join, but on the sports day or daytime activities, he has to do his duty.

**Did you ever feel stressed or frustrated working with them, or are you happy or inspired?**

- At first, it feels so-so, but as time passes, I feel grateful.

**What do you think about your company hiring disabled people? Some other companies just pay the tax or give money to the government when they do not hire disabled people. Do you think your company can just do this as well?**

- I choose the other way. I choose that working with disabled person is better than paying the tax. This is going to make some opportunity to the disabled person, so they could have more money and take care of themselves or their family also.

**How about the facilities around this office—are there any changes to cater them like the toilets or the handles?**

- For the two people, we have 3 disabled people here in the company, no special facilities. For the one who is not here, he has his own restroom to support him, just for him only.

**How about the sick leave, do they leave more often than others?**

- Normal for Mr. Chansak. He works 30 days a month for his duty. He is working harder, more than non-disabled.

**Do you think disability hinders their work, or do you think it affects?**

- The way he is disabled, in some cases, it affects the duty also. For example, sometimes, we have people who come to work in the factory and when they time out, we have to check the back of the car if the things that they took out are okay or not okay. With only one arm, he is affected when he has to look over in the night. He is looking at the trunk, right? He has to turn on the flashlight when he has to check what's at the back of the car. So I have to request for more people to watch over him.

**You mean to watch him over the night shift?**

- Yes. In some cases, it is going to be affected by the disability.

**16 January 2019, 10:12 – 10:36 (24 minutes)**

**Participant F aka Felicidad**

**45 years old**

**Housekeeper / Factory Keeper**

**Can you tell me your first encounter with PWDs before you worked in this company? Did you meet them before in person, from the street, on TV?**

- One of my parents, grandparents, is a disabled man.

**So you have been living with your grandparents before? Can I know the disability if you remember?**

- Actually, the one who is disabled is the daughter of my neighbor. She is born with no legs. She cannot walk. The leg did not grow like a normal person. I do not know the medical terminology, but she has small legs.

**So she was using a wheelchair?**

- My childhood was long time ago. It was very far from here. I was born in the countryside and there were not many people supporting this [disability] there, so the wheelchair was not available

**Was that relative working or she just stays at home and you take care of her?**

- Based on the family's lifestyle, we are very poor. The disabled person, she got no choice to study. Every person must take care of her. The disabled person must be loved by every person in the village. When she is going anywhere, we are supposed to take care of her. Now, she died already.

**Given the situation of your childhood, did you ever imagine yourself working with a disabled person? Did you ever think that some disabled people are working in a company?**

- This is the first place that I came to work with a disabled person. I have never thought about it before.

**When you first knew, maybe from your boss or your colleague, that you are going to work with the disabled people, what did you think about it? Did you feel worried about work that they would not be able to accomplish it or did you feel**



**more burden that, “Oh, I have to take care of this colleague.” Do you feel happy or just nothing?**

- I felt normal. Disabled person just looks like us.

**Can you tell me what work do you do with the disabled person? What tasks do you do together?**

- With my duty and his duty, there are some activities that we are working together, just like watering the garden. I have to let him help me because he does not have a normal situation. He is not normal. His arm is not working very well, so he just asks the chance to help me. This is one of the activities that I am working with him.

**So, at the end of the day, it is him helping you?**

- Yes. \*laughs\*

**Does it also happen that you need to help him in some of his work?**

- In some situations, just like planting the garden, last month, we have the celebration of our King Rama 9, so we have to put on the flags and put on the flowers. That one is going to be the duty of the housekeeper and I let Mr. Chansak help me.

**What are their attitudes working? Are they very happy to learn—when you need to ask for their help are they happy to help? Or are they sometimes hesitant or reluctant to try?**

- The disabled man has a good attitude. That’s why, sometimes, that employees order the things online, and the things are going to be put on the security office, right? I will go there to take it and give it to the employees inside. I see that the disabled man has a good attitude to help me in everything that I have requested.

**Sometimes, did you encounter troubles or obstacles working with them?**

- \*shakes head\*

**Is there any benefit given to them that is not given to you? Do you think that, sometimes, it is unfair?**

- I actually get more benefits because I am working here for more time.

**Can you tell me how long have you been working here?**

- 9 years

**How long has she been working with the disabled person?**

- I don't remember

**It is okay, I can ask him [security guard] later**

- Security guard: 6 years [mentioned off-record]

**Is there anything new that you learned from your experience working with disabled people? Is there anything new that you improved on yourself?**

- I earned some attitude. I learned the way they are working, so I think that I have to work harder than the disabled man. Because I have every single part of the body. I already have it, but the disabled man, he does not have hands. To be a normal person, I have to work harder than the disabled person.

**In general, [what is] your feeling about them after a long time of working with them now, do you feel happy, inspired? Do you feel stressed or frustrated sometimes?**

- Based on the situation, I am feeling happy. In some times that I have to carry the package from the delivery, Mr. Chansak, he tries to help me carry the package. Instead of some people that are normal, but they did not help me carry the package.

**Some companies just pay tax instead of hiring PWDs. Do you think that it is better for this company to do that or should they continue hiring disabled people?**

- I choose the 2<sup>nd</sup> way, because it shows that the disabled person may have their own pride when working and gain money by themselves. Instead of waiting for the money from the government or the house to give them the money.

**Overall, do you think, their disability affect their tasks? Do you think their disability hinder them from doing their work?**

- Just like normal. He just do not have a hand, but normally he can work.

**16 January 2019, 10:55 – 11:14 (19 minutes)**

**Participant G aka Gerald**

**56 years old**

**Leader of the Assembly Team**

**Can I ask, do you remember your first encounter with disabled people before you worked here? Did you see them out in the street, watched a movie or on TV?**

- Before working here, I normally saw disabled person everywhere—on the street, on tv also.

**What is your opinion about it before?**

- For the first time, I felt normal. I feel that they are looking just like us.

**Did you ever think that they are able to work? Did you imagine yourself working with disabled people?**

- I never thought about it.

**Did you feel that they should just stay at home, they should just be taken care of, and they do not work?**

- I think, for me, it depends on the family. If the family can support the cost of living, the disabled person may not come to work. But for the persons who have to take responsibility to their family, they must come to work. The family shares the money.

**So if the family can afford, the disabled person cannot work anymore?**

- Yes

**When you first knew that you were going to work with disabled people, what did you feel about it? Did you worry about work not being done? Were you happy, excited or just neutral?**

- At first, I thought that it might be some of the cases that there is the work that he cannot support as well as the normal people.

**Can you tell me about the work that you do with the disabled people? What are their tasks and what is your role?**

- As the leader of the assembling team, I have to look over the drawing to let Mr. Gop cut and build the part that is based on the drawing. This is the work that we are doing together.

**Can you tell me if you remember about the first week you were working together? What kind of work did you see him do and if there are any adjustments you need to make?**

- Based on the problem of communication we had on the first week, it was tough for me to understand what he said and what he was trying to communicate with me. So for the first week, we had to adjust a lot.

**Did you need to guide him a lot or he can do his tasks without your supervision?**

- There is not much problem because Mr. Gop, when he came here, he already gained the experience and skills before. There was not much thing to be worried about.

**How about his attitude, did you see him happy to learn or is he reluctant to try things?**

- Mr. Gop is happy, he is working hard and brings that diligence to us. In some cases, the work that he has done is even better than what normal people, some of the workers, did.

**So the quality of the work is sometimes better?**

- Yes

**I understand that in terms of communication, you need to listen better, and things like that. Is there any other adjustment on his part? Is he trying to communicate with you in some other ways?**

- Mr. Gop tried to speak clearly, but it is still not like a normal conversation. He strives to use the document aside from speaking.

**Can he read or write?**

- Yes

**How about sign language, is that an option?**

- He can understand us speaking and he can read, so the sign language is not necessary.

**During the first week of you working together, what problems did you encounter?**

- Nothing much. The work that we are working together, the product that come out from our section is fine, so there is no problem.

**How about for yourself, was there anything new you learned from your experience and did you improve anything on yourself in some way?**

- First time, that we were working together, based on Mr. Gop, he is working harder. He is a diligent man. I have to be working harder as Mr. Gop did. If Mr. Gop works harder than me, it is not going to be good.

**How long have you been working with him already?**

- 11 or 12 years

**In the 12 years that you have been working with him, are you more comfortable with him now? Are there new things you discovered or new challenges that you encounter?**

- If we compare from the first day, the understanding is much better now than from the first time we were working together. Now, I can communicate and work with Mr. Gop.

**Can he do his job without supervision now?**

- Mr. Gop can work by himself. I did not have to take care or direct him anymore as normal. In some cases, when they have problem with the work, Mr. Gop will come and ask questions—making sure that he is making the correct work.

**Is there a misunderstanding sometimes?**

- Based on the building assigned to them, it is going to be based on the document. Mr. Gop can read the drawing and the job that he is assigned to do, so he is not going to have a mistake.

**Was there ever a time that you need to do more work, or give him consideration because of his disability?**

- None

**How about the benefits, are you getting the same benefits? Does he get more benefit in some cases and what do you feel about it? Would it be unfair in your perspective?**

- I do not know about the benefits that a disabled person gets. I cannot compare.



**In general, can you describe what you feel working with them, are you happy, inspired, motivated, frustrated, or stressed?**

- Overall, I am happy working with a disabled person. I am also proud of the disabled man for the reason that the disabled person can work normally. In some cases, they can work better than the normal person. I am proud of my colleague. I am proud to be his assembly leader.

**It is common for Thai companies to pay tax or to pay the government when they do not reach the quota. Do you think prefer if it would be this way that the company would hire a disabled person or is it better to just hire a normal person and pay the government?**

- The company should let the disabled person come to work here, because it is better for the company to give the opportunity for the disabled person, so that they could earn some money to raise their own life or buy some things.

**Do you think disability hinders people from doing their task? What do you think about their capability?**

- For Mr. Gop, I think that his capability and the things that he did can answer the company's wish or can support the company.

**Earlier, you mentioned your perception towards disabled people before you worked here. Is there any change from that now that you have been working with them for a long time?**

- At first, I was happy. Now I am much more happier, because we can communicate well, it is better than before. We have spent our lives here in this company, so we are loving each other.

**16 January 2019, 11:25 – 11:51 (26 minutes)**

**Participant H aka Hector**

**56 years old**

**Leader of the Welding Team**

**Do you remember your first encounter with PWDs? Before you worked here, have you seen them in your childhood, on TV, in movies, on the street?**

- The first time I saw a disabled person is here in this company.

**Did you have any preconceptions that disabled people should just be at home, their family should take care of them or they should not work?**

- If the disabled person have a choice, they can choose the job that they want to do. They can choose to earn the money to help their families or they can take care of their own.

**How about for yourself, did you imagine yourself working with disabled people before?**

- I never thought that one day, I will come to work here with a disabled person.

**When you first knew, maybe from your boss or your colleague that you would be working with a disabled person what did you think about it? Did you feel worried that some work will not be done? Were you happy, excited or neutral?**

- I did not worry about it. I just focused on my job. I did not care about the work that the disabled person does.

**During your initial work with the disabled person, can you tell me about the work that you do together?**

- Based on the project, the job that we are doing together, I am working in the assembling team, so Mr. Gop has to build the parts from the drawing and we have to work together to complete the drawing.

**Was there any adjustment that you needed to do when you started working with him, maybe on the first week?**

- At first, communication was a problem. We have to talk slowly to make sure that Mr. Gop understands what is the task—what is being presented. I spend more time to listen to Mr. Gop as well.

**Did you feel that those times were inconvenient?**

- At first, I felt inconvenienced to work with Mr. Gop and the communication is not good—but for the first week only.

**Is there any other methods of communication you tried aside from speaking?**

- At first, aside from the speaking, we use the hands or sign language and he keeps repeating what he is speaking.

**At work, do you need to guide him a lot—do you need to supervise him, or they can do it themselves?**

- For the first one about the work, the things that I guide is the welding skills. Because the first time Mr. Gop came here, he did not have the skills in the laser welding, so I was the one who guided him. Another one is the documentation process. I also guided him with the skills on working on the paper and operating with the office.

**Did you need to guide him more compared to normal or non-disabled people?**

- \*shakes head\*

**So it is just the same as others?**

- Mr. Gop is interested and excited to learn.

**What is his attitude in learning? Is he happy to learn or is he sometimes shy or reluctant to try?**

- Mr. Gop is a hardworking member of the team. He is never shy if someone wants to go somewhere or give something—a task to do. Mr. Gop is always there.

**Did you encounter some troubles or did you need to repeat something or do extra work?**

- There is no problem when we are working. I do not need to explain a lot to support Mr. Gop. But there are cases that we have a lot of work, I am just going to go there and help Mr. Gop to complete his task. It does not come from the disability, it comes from work.

**Is there any time that there was a miscommunication and then you did not finish the job or you had to repeat it?**

- There is no problem from the communication. Because we are working from the paper, from the drawing, so there is going to be no communication problem.

**How about for yourself, did you learn anything new from your experience working with disabled people? Is there any improvement on yourself?**

- There is something that I can gain from Mr. Gop's experience. Mr. Gop has skills and he is a good worker, and he can figure out other ways that he can work faster. I can see that and I can apply the way Mr. Gop works.

**Can we give some examples on what kind of work?**

- Example, when we want to assemble a table, we have poles and the top of the table. When the workers want to work on the tables, if we are talking about the metal tables, that's the example. We have to put on the poles and put on the upper side. You do not have to put on one by one and do the welding. You are going to have a cheat. Cheat is a guide structure. We do not have to put the pole one by one. It is going to look like a table. It is going to be faster than putting the pole one by one... You can just have the four poles already and the cheat is going to support the poles. It is going to be faster.

**So he learned this by experience?**

- Yes, each worker got a different skill. This skill, I learned from Mr. Gop.

**How long have you been working with him?**

- 15 years for estimate

**Can you tell me, after 15 years of working with him, are you more comfortable with him now? Can you communicate to him better or used to his way of speaking?**

- If compared with the first time, now they are.

**Are the tasks same also from before or did it change?**

- On the first job, Mr. Gop's duty was cutting only—he's cutting metal, cutting parts, cutting standard materials. But, nowadays, he can do everything from the first step to the last step.

**Can he do his work without his supervision now? Can he do it independently?**

- Yes. Especially if I can give him a supporter, an assistant, he can be a leader.

**So in terms of job improvement [career advancement], he can be a leader?**

- Yes.

**In general, what do you feel about working with them? Do you sometimes feel stressed, frustrated, motivated or inspired that you need to do more?**

- I see Mr. Gop as a good friend and good worker. In some days that we are finished at work, we go out together. I do not even see Mr. Gop as a disabled person. I see him as normal.

**How about some benefits or consideration—sometimes do your boss or your colleagues give him more consideration and give less consideration to other people? If so, do you think that's unfair?**

- I do not think about it. If Mr. Gop can gain higher salary, I feel that he is deserving for it.

**It is common for other companies to pay the government or pay tax when they do not hire PWDs. Do you think it is better for the company to do it that way or just keep hiring PWDs?**

- In my opinion, I think that the company must hire disabled man, at the same time, the company must pay tax for the disabled person as well. Because if we hire, we do not have to pay, but the company has to choose both of the ways.

**Is there any reason for this opinion?**

- There are also other disabled persons who cannot work. And if the company keep hiring disabled person, I am afraid that the other disabled person who cannot work are going to gain less money.

**How do you feel about your company hiring disabled people? Do you feel proud of your company or it does not matter if a disabled person is working here?**

- I am proud of the company. It feels good that the company is hiring the disabled person, so it is going to be an image or example to other people who are normal, and also the other person who are disabled also. It is going to be good example for them to work.



**For disabled persons, do you think their disability hinders them from doing their tasks?**

- Mr. Gop helps the company as much as he can. In some cases, they give us better than other normal people. I come up with an example: every year, we have a sports day. On sports days, it is not just a sport. It is going to have a skills competition on building—who can build more nicely and who can work faster. Mr. Gop won that competition.



**31 January 2019, 18:21 -18:40 (19 minutes)**

**Participant I aka Ina**

**25 years old**

**HR Officer**

**Can you tell me your first encounter with PWDs before you started working with them? How did you see them first? Did you see them on the streets, on TV?**

- I see them selling lottery, selling some snack or something.

**So, did you imagine disabled people in the company or have you always seen them working on low-skilled job?**

- I think they can work in the company.

**When you first entered this company and your boss or your colleague told you that you will be working with a disabled person, what did you feel about it? Did you feel worried or neutral?**

- At first, I felt worried about how to communicate with them.

**Can you tell me what was the disability of your colleague?**

- She is deaf.

**What tasks did you do with her?**

- I am the recruiter and she is in charge of payrolls. When I recruit someone to join the company, we should do something like signing the contract. Then, I will send the personal details to her and she will put the information in the system.

**Mostly desk job? I mean on the computer?**

- \*Nods\*

**Does she need to communicate a lot given her job? Or is it mainly reading and writing? Does she need to listen and speak a lot?**

- No, she just types information in the system. If I want to communicate with her, I would just write, or she can read my mouth if I speak slow.

**Do you know her educational background?**

- She graduated with Bachelor's degree.

**For how long did you work with her?**

- Around 1 year and 8 months

**Did you need to guide her a lot? Or are they independent on their working style from your experience? Did you need to teach them?**

- No, she has more experience than me.

**Did you ever encounter some troubles working with them or difficulties?**

- In the first time, I encountered. Because some process—if my staff forgets something like password in the HR system—she is in control of the system. I do not know how to tell her in fast time “I need information now,” but I am not on my table. I cannot call. It is quite difficult with her to communicate

**Was there any time that you felt that you needed to do additional work or extra work because of something she could not do, or not really?**

- Not really.

**Those problems you mentioned, like the passwords and things like that, how did you overcome those obstacles later on?**

- I just wait until I can go to my table or text her.

**Did you think it was inconvenient?**

- For me, not that much.

**After a while of working with her, you said more than one year, did you still encounter the same challenges as before? Or you have figured out a way to communicate with her?**

- I learned how to communicate with her

**What did you feel afterwards? Are you more comfortable with her already?**

- She became my close friend. She keeps my secrets. All my secrets, she knows. \*laughs\* Because she would not say it, right? And when I have troubled times, I can tell her everything. I can tell her when I don't like someone. \*laughs\* and she can listen to me.

**What is attitude when you do those things?**

- She is very chill. She has good attitude. She will say, “It's okay Ina, I can listen to you and I will keep it in my head.”

**How about the adjustments you made, you said you have to speak slowly—any other things?**

- Sometimes, I forget that she cannot speak. I will call, “come here” and she will say, “what?” And when I hang out with her, I forget that she cannot speak. I have to explain others that she cannot speak. Most of the time, I try to help her communicate with others. But I feel like she does not need my help, because she acts like she is like a normal person. I do not want to make her feel bad in the way she handles other people.

**Are there any accommodations for her in the company? For example, sign language classes or any other ways for the company to help you bridge the gap?**

- No. I ask her to teach me [sign language]. She always teaches me. But there are no other accommodations for her in the company. Just normal.

**How about on yourself, did you learn anything new from you experience working with a disabled person?**

- For me, it opened my mind why I need to understand people. I met her and I think how lucky I am that I can speak. I can communicate with other people. When I am having a hard time, I can think that she is very amazing. She inspires me to do a lot of things. I can dress beautifully, because she dresses beautifully everyday. She does not care. She has a positive thinking. I look at her and say, “Oh she thinks that she is very lucky, so why do I think myself as unlucky when I have everything?”

**You are also an HR Officer in-charge with the recruitment, right? Are you knowledgeable with the benefits that they get, is it equal with the non-disabled counter parts?**

- The same benefit but not the same salary for the staff

**Any reason for the difference? Is it the position?**

- Because she is working only for the document, not like a skillful position. Just routine work

**Do you think she has a positive attitude to learning? If so, would it be possible for her to do more complicated jobs?**

- She can. Sometimes, she helps me do some salary receipts. She has potential to do more complicated work, but I need to explain her exactly what I need her to do. Like clear instructions. Because she has not gotten used to it yet, so she needs more explanation.

**How about for career advancement, do you think they can get promoted or it is stagnant on that position?**

- She got promoted [already]. Before, she was at level 4, but now she is at level 5. But for a normal officer, it is just around a few years—2 or 3 years—to get promoted. For her, after 4 years. [It was] longer than others. Compared with the same position, she takes a longer time to get promoted. Because, she needs time to learn and to get more complicated work.

**On your own personal opinion, do you think this is fair or is it unfair?**

- For me, I feel like it is unfair for them because, as you know, she is having a hard time, but she can work like normal people. For me, I think, the company should take care more about her if she can prove herself.

**Is there any consideration, for example, some people do not expect much from her because she is disabled? Is there any instance like that?**

- \*had difficulty understanding the question\*

**Do you expect her to deliver outstanding output, just normal or less?**

- Just normal. Because everyone knows that she is a handicapped—disabled—so people do not expect her to do more.

**But in terms of performance, does she perform better than her non-disabled colleague, or just enough?**

- She works by order—she can work. But people do not expect, or put high expectation, on her.

**On your own feeling, are you happy that you have this experience working with disabled people? Did you get inspired or motivated to do better? Or it does not affect you that way?**

- She inspires me a lot. She is like my best friend, and I continue my contact with her even after work.



**The Thai Government has two options for companies—either they hire disabled people or just contribute to the disability fund. On your opinion, which option would be better or, at least, more beneficial to the company?**

- For the HR, for my company, we include the handicapped people. We do because the government told us to do. Because, you should understand that our company grows so fast, we do not have time to teach handicapped people. But if your company is a stable business, it is good to have a handicapped to work with you because the company may help them to have a career, get them their needs. I know some people can do better than us, but for HR, for my company, we do because the government asked us.

**So, it is more for the quota requirement and not for giving opportunities to disabled people?**

- \*nods\*

**And you're saying that for a company that is very competitive, it is better for them just to hire the abled people, [is this] right?**

- Yes

**Do you think your colleague's disability hinders her from accomplishing the job?**

- They can do [work].

**31 January 2019, 18:49 -18:08 (19 minutes)**

**Participant J aka Jackie**

**35 years old**

**Compensation and Benefit Officer**

**Can you tell me about your position and work in the company?**

- I used to work at the Compensation and Benefit Department with the disabled employee, but now, I am moving to another section which is Employee Relations and Organization Communication.

**Are you working at the same level or higher [with the disabled employee]?**

- \*unsure\* Higher

**Before working in this company, have you ever had any encounter with a disabled person before in general?**

- I know some, but I have not worked with the handicapped person before.

**Can you tell me how did you know them? Are they your friends or strangers?**

- They were my neighbors. They are also deaf and they cannot speak.

**Did you interact with them?**

- Use the body language to communicate, because that one [neighbor] did not go to school—they quit the school since primary school.

**Are they working or staying at home?**

- They just stay at home

**Given the experience with your neighbors, what did you think about disabled people before?**

- They can live the normal life, but for myself, I did not think much. Just say hi and greeting.

**Did you ever think that disabled people are capable of working during that time?**

- I think that they probably can work, but in a low-skilled position.

**When you first knew that you were going to work with a disabled person in your current company, what did you feel? Did you feel worried or excited?**

- I did not worry because I know since the first time that she [disabled colleague] can text, can write—there are other ways to communicate. But I am a little bit worried about how much I can work with her.

**Did you encounter any difficulty with her during the first time you worked together?**

- Has a little problem about the communication. Because I need to learn how to communicate with her, it is okay when I send the text to her. She can read, she can understand, but the problem is when she texts back, her writing language is a little bit strange—different—from the normal one.

**How did you overcome this challenge? Were you accustomed to their language?**

- I was trying to understand. Also, she is a fast-learner and she is also learning fast to adapt to me as well. For example, previously, I need to communicate with her by text only. But, after that, she [disabled colleague] learned to read the mouth, so that she knows who I am talking about—the name. Before that, she did not speak out. Actually, she cannot speak but she has sound, right? But after that, she learned to speak out with her sound.

**So she learned to speak somehow?**

- Yes. I also taught her to speak out by learning from the shape of the mouth and let her speak out loud.

**During those difficulties, did you ever feel that it was inconvenient? Were you ever annoyed working with this person?**

- Everyday life, no problem—not feeling annoyed. But there's a little bit about work that I need to teach more, teach extra.

**Can you tell me more what did you need to teach her? Is it specific to the work is it just communication?**

- For example, teaching her to enter the data, I need to write together with showing her example on the screen.

**What is her attitude when you teach her?**

- It looks like she is ready to learn and she is okay with the teaching. She has good attitude.

**Do you think if there are accommodations or support offered by the company, that would be helpful—like sign language classes—or you don't think that's necessary?**

- It would be beneficial, but it would be impossible because there is only one [deaf] employee.

**So it is not that useful?**

- \*nods\*

**How long have you been working with her?**

- 6 years. My colleague started in this company 6 years ago.

**After 6 years, do you almost understand each other?**

- Yes, we can understand each other. Can teach the language, exchange [our] languages. Sometimes, I do not need to use body language and she can understand by reading the mouth.

**Is there any other problem you keep on experiencing after 6 years, or you have overcome all the problems?**

- There is a problem when I need to teach the new thing to her. That's all. But for the things that she has been doing a long time, it is okay. No problem at all.

**Did you learn anything new from working with her? Were there any improvement on yourself?**

- I learned 2 things: one is sign language from her, and another thing is learning from her attitude, because even though she cannot speak, she can get along with other colleagues very well.

**In general, what do you feel about your experience working with them. Do you feel happy that you have had this experience, did you feel inspired or motivated to do more?**

- I feel inspired because even though she [disabled colleague] is not fully completed like us, she is very happy with her family, her friends and her life.

**Did you ever feel stressed or frustrated because of her disability?**

- No. Because, personally, I am nice to people, so there is no problem with me.

**There is an option for Thai companies to not hire disabled people and just pay to the government contributing to the disability fund. Do you think that is a better alternative or hiring disabled people is better, at least on your own opinion?**

- If hiring the disabled people that is capable to work, then it is better than giving money to the government, because we never know about the corruption or anything. You do not know where the money is going.

**For your colleague, do you think her disability prevents her from accomplishing her task at some point?**

- No. For the task of my colleague itself, there is no problem. She can accomplish her work. Because when you assign the work for her, you already think and assign the task that she can do.

**How about for career development, do you think she can reach a high position or not?**

- I do not think so. Because she can work the routine task, but she lacks the creativity to initiate the new things.