

## Realizing a Disability Workforce to be Ready to Compete in Job Market

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**Abstract.** Indonesia is one of the countries that promote equal rights without any discriminatory behavior. However, in practice, discrimination still often occurs, especially for people with disabilities (PWDs) in entering the labor market. Realizing a disabled workforce to be ready to compete in the labor market is one of the challenges for the workers themselves, the government, and even the world. It is undeniable that in the current era of globalization, workers (disabled and non-disabled) are required to work effectively and have a complex workload. For this reason, it is necessary to know that there are several aspects that can affect the absorption of the workforce with disabilities, namely internal and external factors. This paper uses a literature study research method by looking for various theoretical references related to the problems discussed. So, this paper describes the challenges that will be faced by the disabled workforce, the influencing factors, and the efforts that can be made. BPS noted that the male workforce with disabilities in rural areas participated more in the Indonesian labor market. Most of them work in the agricultural sector as well as the informal sector with wages below 2 million rupiah. When compared to non-disabled workers, the majority of them work in the trade and service sector with wages above 2 million rupiah. This is very inversely proportional to triggering a gap between disabled and non-disabled workers. From this, attention and the role of the government, the private sector, and other social elements are needed to reduce the gap in the participation of the disabled workforce.

**Keywords:** *disability, people with disabilities, workforce.*

## INTRODUCTION

Every human being has the same human rights, this cannot be distinguished by ethnicity, race, language, or religion. In Indonesia itself has put forward human rights so that there are several regulations that discuss human rights. One of them is in the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, precisely in Article 28I Paragraph 2 which states that everyone is equal without any discrimination. However, in practice there are still many people who discriminate, one of which is against persons with disabilities (PWDs). For this reason, legal protection is needed for the fulfillment of human rights in Indonesia, especially for persons with disabilities such as legal regulations, state officials who are ready and supportive of disabilities and people who can accept disability problems (Hamidi, 2016).

Disability is also an issue of equality, both in health care, employment opportunities, education, and other public access (Charlton, 2000; WHO & World Bank, 2011). World data states that the population with disabilities, both temporary and permanent, reaches 15 percent and about 80 percent of the data are people of productive age (ILO, 2017). Based on data through the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) the number of people with disabilities in Indonesia

reached 22.5 million people in 2020. If persons with disabilities are not given access to find work, it will certainly result in an increase in the number of unemployed. In fact, by providing opportunities for the disabled workforce according to the quota determined by the government, of course it will also improve the country's economy. Berlinski et al (2021), in a previous study explained that people with disabilities experience gaps in the labor market, thereby narrowing the opportunity to participate in the labor market.

In the current era of globalization, of course, every employer wants maximum results from their workers. For this reason, it is necessary to know that there are several aspects that can affect the absorption of the workforce with disabilities, namely internal and external factors. Internal and external aspects that affect the lack of absorption of the disabled workforce in entering the labor market are indeed a problem that needs more attention. On the other hand, the government has issued regulations so that companies are able to contribute to the absorption of the disabled workforce. Quotas for persons with disabilities who wish to apply for jobs have also been determined as a measure to fulfill their rights. Through the explanation of the background above, the formulation of the problem obtained is how to create a disabled workforce so that they are ready to compete in the labor market?

The purpose of this paper is to explain how to create a disabled workforce so that they are ready to compete in the labor market. By presenting the socio-economic characteristics of persons with disabilities in Indonesia as well as the challenges of employment opportunities for persons with disabilities and efforts to deal with these challenges. The benefit of this paper is that readers can find out what can be done to support the absorption of the disabled workforce into the labor market so that people with disabilities can fulfill their rights without any sense of discrimination.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **The work**

Is someone who is in the phase of having a job, either at work or temporarily not working for certain reasons. The working age population according to the provisions of the Indonesian government is a minimum age of 15 years and a maximum of 65 years. BPS (2009), states that the workforce is divided into 2 groups, namely the labor force in the working class and the labor force looking for work. The type of workforce based on work is divided into 3, namely:

1. Fully employed is a workforce that uses full working hours with a time of 8-10 hours per day. They do work during the week with the aim of earning an income. If you do not come to work due to certain problems such as illness, leave, or strike.
2. Underemployment is workers who use their working time regardless of how long they work, productivity, and income or can be said to be uncertain.
3. Unemployment is a condition that is grouped in the workforce but does not have a job and is in the process of looking for work.

### **Persons with Disabilities (PWDs)**

According to Law No. 8/2016, a disability is a person who has physical, intellectual, mental, and/or sensory limitations for a long period of time so that they will experience obstacles and difficulties in participating effectively with other citizens based on equal rights. According to

Law Number 39 of 1999 concerning Human Rights, persons with disabilities are a group of people who have the right to receive more treatment and protection related to their specificity.

**Table 1** Proportion of Adults with Disabilities 18 - 59 Years by Social Characteristics (percent), 2018

SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF	DISABILITIES
<b>Age Group</b>	
18 - 24 Years	21.1
25 - 34 Years	20.6
35 - 44 Years	20.3
45 - 54 Years	23.8
55 - 59 Years	29.6
<b>Education</b>	
No School	30.7
Not Completed Elementary School	28.2
Completed Elementary School	24.0
Graduated Junior High School	21.2
Graduated High School	19.7
Graduated Diploma / University	17.6

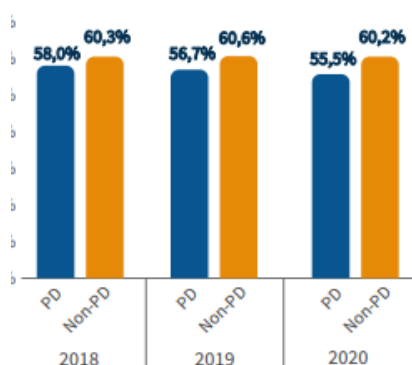
*Source: Health Research and Development Agency, Ministry of Health RI, 2019*

In the table above shows that the Socio-Economic Survey data ( The 2019 Susenas explained that on average people with disabilities aged 15 years and over were only able to study for 4.73 years or had not been able to complete elementary school (grade 5 SD) in 2018 to 2019 (BPS, 2020b). In a recent study, it was explained that participation in completion of education for them was lower when compared to non-disabled people (Berlinski et al., 2021). Disability affects the sufferer in different ways. This gives rise to various types of disability itself. Types of disability include sensory disabilities, physical disabilities, intellectual disabilities, and mental disabilities.

### **The Labor Market**

According to Suroto (2016), the labor market is all demand and supply in society with transactions between the seller of labor and the entrepreneur in employment. The function of this labor market is as a supplier of labor, as a medium for obtaining information about jobs, and as a meeting place between job seekers and companies that need workers. In considering the job market, it is necessary to look at how wide the job opportunities and opportunities are. If the job has many enthusiasts, it can be said that the job opportunities and opportunities are wide, and vice versa. This difference in opportunities can be used as a consideration in choosing a career. This also applies to workers with disabilities in starting their careers.

Until now, there are still gaps in the absorption of disabled workers. In this case, the government needs to start creating an inclusive and friendly labor market for disabled workers. This inclusive labor market not only expands employment and increases the country's foreign exchange income, but must also involve workers with disabilities in Indonesia.



**Figure 2** Employment Levels of PWD and PWOD

The data above shows that the employment rate of groups of persons with disabilities is lower than that of non-disabled groups, although the difference between the two is not too large. If seen, the trend of employment rates from 2018 to 2020 in groups of people with disabilities has decreased from year to year. In 2021, the Minister of Manpower Ida Fauziyah said that as many as 1,271 people with disabilities had worked in state-owned companies and 4,554 others worked in private companies that collaborated with the government. This needs to be done further by the government in order to increase the absorption ratio of people with disabilities so that they can improve their welfare.

**Regulations Related to Persons with Disabilities**

Many regulations have been established by the government in the welfare of persons with disabilities such as the rights they have received. In addition to regulating regulations regarding workers' rights, the government also regulates the role of companies in the welfare of the rights of workers with disabilities. These roles can be seen in the following table.

**Table 3** Regulations on the Role of Companies in the Welfare of Persons with Disabilities

No	Regulations	Article	Content
1	Law no. 4 of 1997 concerning Persons with Disabilities	14	Provide equal opportunities and treatment in terms of employment and provide jobs that are in accordance with the type and degree of disability, education, and ability of disabled workers.
2	Law no. 13 of 2003 concerning Employment	19	Provide job training according to the type and degree of disability, as well as the ability of disabled workers
		67	Provide protection according to the type and degree of disability of disabled workers
3	Law no. 8 of 2016 concerning Persons with Disabilities	50	Providing adequate accommodation and facilities for persons with disabilities

The government in this case has an important role in realizing prosperity. The roles that can be done are providing social assistance, giving awards to companies that employ people with disabilities.

**Table 4** Regulations on the Role of the Government in the Welfare of Persons with Disabilities

No	Regulations	Article	Content
1	Law no. 4 of 1997 concerning Persons with Disabilities	19	In order to improve the level of social welfare of persons with disabilities, the government provides assistance in the form of social assistance.
		24	Guidance from the government is needed to improve the social welfare of persons with disabilities. This guidance can be through the establishment of policies, counseling, supervision, and so on
		27	Companies that employ persons with disabilities as well as institutions, communities, and/or individuals who render services to persons with disabilities will be given awards by the government
2	Law no. 8 of 2016 concerning Persons with Disabilities	28	Provide equal legal treatment for persons with disabilities and these rights must be protected by the Government and Local Governments.
		140	for providers of public facilities who can support persons with disabilities
.	1403 of 2021 concerning Guidelines for Giving National Awards to Companies and State-Owned Enterprises Employing Workers with Disabilities	4	Giving awards to companies that employ persons with disabilities at least 1% of the total number of workers. This also applies to SOEs that employ persons with disabilities at least 2% of the total number of workers. In addition, National Awards are also given to companies and SOEs that cover everything from the recruitment process, training, to work continuity without discrimination for workers with disabilities

From the table above, it can be seen that the government has established various regulations related to persons with disabilities from the side of workers, employers, and the government itself. This can be said if Indonesia has provided such a way regarding the problems of persons with disabilities from their legal subjects. However, in practice there are still many people with disabilities and also companies that have not implemented this rule in the world of work. This can affect the role of the government as a giver of awards to companies that employ people with disabilities so that it is less implemented.

### METHOD, DATA, AND ANALYSIS

In this paper, this type of research uses literature studies by looking for various theoretical references related to the problems discussed. Where this paper describes how the challenges will be faced by the disabled workforce and what efforts can be made.

The research data sources used consist of secondary data or data obtained through researchers indirectly through intermediary media. Secondary data is usually in the form of historical records that have been published or unpublished. The data obtained by the authors were obtained through online media in the form of papers, articles, and journals. The data collection technique uses a literature study which is a way of collecting data that has a relationship with the topic of discussion.

The data analysis technique used was descriptive qualitative analysis, namely reference analysis in order to get an overview by collecting the data obtained so as to obtain clear information about the workforce with disabilities.

### RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Employment problems in Indonesia are currently still within the scope of the high unemployment rate. Even if it is said that job seekers with qualifications of good physical health standards still experience difficulties, especially with a workforce that has special limitations. Lestari, et al (2017) stated that the protection of rights for persons with disabilities

is still neglected due to social and cultural factors, economic factors, and weak policies and law enforcement that favour disabled groups. In overcoming the not yet maximal absorption of the disabled workforce in obtaining work, persons with disabilities need to prepare themselves to enter the labor market and know the challenges that must be faced. The existing challenges are divided into 2 factors, namely internal factors and external factors.

### 1. Internal Factors

The first problem experienced by persons with disabilities is in the form of **severity a person with a disability**. The severity can include disturbances in physical or mental organs and functions in the form of disturbances in orientation, movement, communication, activity, adaptation, social adjustment and self-confidence which ultimately hinders their chances of getting a job (Diono, 2014). In terms of communication, for example, people with hearing and speech impairments usually tend to use sign language. It certainly makes them find it difficult to communicate with others because other people do not understand sign language.

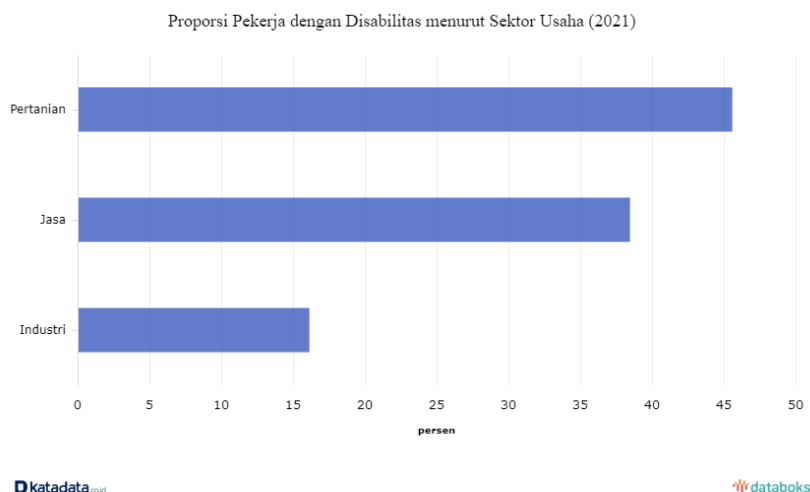
Second internal factor is **a sense of self-motivation**. Motivation is really needed for everyone. According to Herberg (2011), motivation is a person's desire to do work in order to achieve the desired goal. The disabled workforce tends to have low self-motivation, especially in applying for jobs. This happened because they had failed or had a negative image embedded in them, their educational background was still low, and personal or technical assistance was minimal (Tempo, 2020).

The third internal factor is the **lack of skills and experience** which also makes it difficult for them to participate in the job market (Kaye, 2009). In fact, it is not uncommon for their abilities to be underappreciated (Mavromaras et al., 2007). Lack of motivation from persons with disabilities causes them to become pessimistic in improving their abilities. Weaknesses tend to be used as reasons that there are no advantages that can be increased as capital to enter the labour market.

### 2. External Factors

Problems that are often the main problem are **poor understanding of the surrounding environment**. These problems are usually related to stigma, isolation, and excessive protection, the role of families and communities that are less supportive, a low economy, families who tend to hide, and the role of the business world has not been maximized (Diano, 2014). Society tends to still act non-objectively towards the acceptance of the difference assessment (Junaedi, C. Marlina, 2003: 25). This is what sometimes makes people with disabilities less able to explore their abilities so that they have difficulty entering the job market.

**Acts of discrimination Employers** also make it more difficult for people with disabilities to get work opportunities (Kaye, 2009). The discrimination experienced tends to come both before and after getting a job (Santoso, 2012). In practice, there are still many cases where business actors tend to reject applications from persons with disabilities (Andayani, 2020). Business actors prefer to employ non-disabled workers, arguing that an inclusive environment has not yet been created and there are no facilities that are able to cover the shortcomings of persons with disabilities (Hogan et al., 2012).



**Figure 3** Proportion of Workers with Disabilities by Business Sector, 2021

**Absorption of the workforce with disabilities** in various business sectors. The data above shows that the proportion of disabled workers by business sector in 2021 is the highest occupied by the agricultural sector with a percentage of 45.53%. Followed by the service sector with a percentage of 38.4% and the industrial sector with a percentage of 16.07% (Databoks, 2022). The comparison is very visible because almost half of people with disabilities in Indonesia are in the agricultural sector. This is due to the level of flexibility and complexity of work in the agricultural sector which is considered easier than other sectors. In addition, the workforce in rural areas in 2021 is 6.59%, this figure is greater than the workforce in urban areas of 4.37%. This can also affect the agricultural sector by a greater percentage than other sectors.

**Table 5** Percentage of Working Age Population by Disability Status and Economic Characteristics in Indonesia, 2019

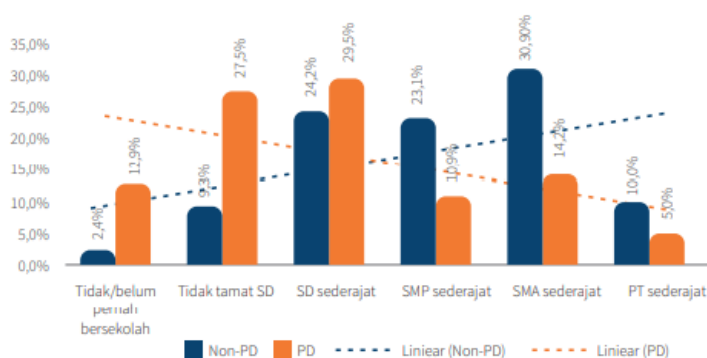
Economic Characteristics of	Formal	Non-Disabled Disabilities
<b>Sector</b>		
Work	24.51	45.84
Informal	75.49	54.16
<b>Average Wage (Rp)</b>		
<1,000.000	31,10 17,72	14,30
1,000,000 - 1,499,999	12,38	1,500,000
- 1,999,999	13,23	14,78
> 2,000,000	41,37	55,12

*Source: Jurnal Sosio Informa*

The table above shows significant differences in the employment sector of disabled workers. The formal sector shows a figure of 24.51%, while the informal sector shows a figure of 75.49%. The formal and informal sectors have differences that lie in the existence of official economic protection from the government (Mulyadi, 2008). The formal sector is a business unit that receives direct economic protection from the government, for example government employees, education services, and health services.

While the informal sector is a business unit that does not or has minimal economic protection, for example farmers, drivers, and street vendors.

From the table above, it can also be seen that **the salaries of persons with disabilities are still relatively low**. Many disabled workers earn less than 1 million, which is 31.10%. This is inversely proportional to the average percentage of wages above 2 million for disabled workers of 41.37%, but this figure is still low when compared to the average wage of non-disabled workers above 2 million, which is 55.12%. The problem above is due to the large number of disabled workers who are still paid daily wages or based on *output* produced, resulting in the instability of income received by disabled workers. This low wage can also be caused by disabled workers who have fewer working hours compared to non-disabled workers. In addition, the level of education can also affect the level of wages received.



**Figure 4.** Comparison of PWD and PWOD's Recent Education

From the graph above, the final educational attainment of persons with disabilities is relatively low at the secondary school and higher education levels when compared to non-disabled persons. The percentage of persons with disabilities who successfully complete their education at the secondary and higher education levels is almost half of the percentage of non-disabled persons. In addition, the percentage of persons with disabilities who have never attended school is still high at 12.9%. It can be concluded that there is still a fairly large gap for persons with disabilities in obtaining education which can affect their search for work.

**Efforts That Can Be Done For The Work Force To Be Able To Enter The Job Market**

Persons with disabilities are entitled to equal status, rights, obligations, and opportunities in all aspects of life. Persons with disabilities receive special treatment intended as an effort to protect from vulnerability to various rights violations, Purinami, et al (2018). The following are efforts that can be done:

**1. Upholding the Constitution**

State of Indonesia, in fact, has regulated in the Law the opportunities that can be filled by people with disabilities in entering the world of work. The government, in this case, has committed to ensuring the rights of persons with disabilities. This should be used as a reference so that discrimination does not occur, especially in the world of work. To strengthen the information from the 1945 Constitution, the government issued a regulation through Law No. 13 of 2003 concerning Manpower. There are 3 articles that specifically

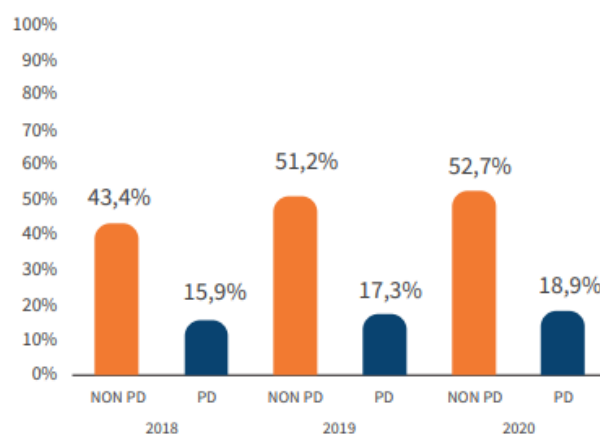


discuss persons with disabilities, namely articles 5, 19, and 67. Article 5 of Law No. 13 of 2003 mandates opportunities for persons with disabilities that every worker has equal opportunities without discrimination to get a job. Article 19 describes the provision of job training that is given specifically for persons with disabilities while still taking into account the type, degree of disability, and the ability of the workforce. Article 67 paragraph 1 also regulates the issue of protection for workers with disabilities, companies that employ workers with disabilities must also pay close attention to the protection of their disabled workers. When the constitutional rights of every citizen can be carried out properly, it will guarantee the realization of equal opportunities. So it is very necessary for a synergy and cooperation from the government, companies, and entrepreneurs to realize guarantees for the protection of human rights in Indonesia (Widjaja, et al, 2020). The government has also made efforts to achieve an increase in the absorption of the disabled workforce in the formal sector by making regulations on the minimum percentage of disability workforce participation in both government and BUMN.

## 2. Knowing the Opportunities for People with Disabilities

Providing opportunities for persons with disabilities in the world of work, including the fulfilment of rights for persons with disabilities. The law has provided that companies that employ persons with disabilities will be awarded an award. This can arouse the desire of employers in hiring people with disabilities. According to Intan Permata (Human Capital Advisor from PT Adis Dimension Footwear) stated that there are three benefits that companies get if they hire people with disabilities. First, foster awareness of equality between workers and each other in the workplace. Secondly, it can improve the company's name and thirdly it can expand the opportunities for a diverse workforce search.

Apart from the company side, job opportunities can be influenced from the side of the disability labor force. With the development of existing technology, everything can be searched so easily, including in finding job vacancies.



**Figure 5.** PD and Non-PD Internet Usage Levels

From the data above, it can be seen that internet use for people with disabilities is still quite low when compared to non-disabled people. This lack of internet access for people with disabilities can affect information related to available job vacancies. For this reason, support from families is needed to help the disabled workforce in understanding the

internet. Because using this internet access can help people with disabilities in creating job opportunities, such as buying and selling online or other jobs that require mastery of technology.

In addition, there are already many companies that offer training for the disabled workforce. One of the social enterprise companies engaged in the empowerment of people with disabilities is the Penetrating The Boundary Foundation. The foundation is also tasked with distributing the workforce of persons with disabilities, fighting for the rights of persons with disabilities, and providing information both from the fields of work, education, skills, and so on. Through this foundation, people with disabilities can exchange information with each other because of interactions with fellow disabilities. In addition, the foundation also collaborates with various institutions and companies that employ people with disabilities.

### **3. Provides Motivation**

Motivation is the spirit or desire that arises in a person to do something consciously or unconsciously and oriented towards a certain goal. Providing direct motivation to the disabled workforce will trigger an unyielding spirit and cause a feeling of respect for the surrounding environment. In achieving a goal, the consistency of the process towards it is very influential. Therefore, motivation arises as a form of *support* for individuals (people with disabilities) who are trying to achieve their dreamed goals. By providing motivation, it will indirectly create a positive atmosphere or aura so as to help minimize the fear, anxiety, or indecision experienced by people with disabilities.

### **4. Provide Training**

Government Regulation No. 43 of 1998 explains in Article 30 Paragraph 1 that the requirements for job positions and qualifications for persons with disabilities are determined by taking into account factors such as the type and degree of disability, education, skills and/or expertise, health, available formation, type or field of business, and other factors. However, most workers with disabilities are placed in jobs based on the assumption of the type of work that matches the type of limitation they have, regardless of the skills they have (Budiarti, 2018). This results in the job training provided also adjusting the assumption of the type of work that matches the type of limitations that workers with disabilities have, for example people with visually impaired disabilities are given massage training.

As a form of support for the enthusiasm of the disabled workforce to obtain a job, providing training is the right choice. The government through the ministry has established a training body, namely the Technical Implementation Unit of the Job Training Center (UPT BLK). The Ministry of Manpower also has a special website that contains information about training programs. There are many options to choose from as you wish. Training information is not only provided by the government but there are other partners who also participate in both state-owned and private enterprises.

## CONCLUSION

Realizing the maximum absorption of the disabled workforce is indeed not easy, it takes the role of all parties, namely people with disabilities themselves, the community, companies, and the government. The challenges that need to be faced by persons with disabilities are divided into 2, internal factors and external factors. Internal factors are factors that come from the person with a disability itself which consists of the severity of the person with a disability, a sense of motivation in the self, and a lack of skills and experiences possessed. Meanwhile, external factors consist of an understanding of the surrounding environment that is not good, acts of discrimination originating from employers, uneven absorption of the disability workforce, and their salaries which are still relatively low compared to workers in general.

By enforcing the constitutionality the government has committed to working so that the rights of persons with disabilities can be fulfilled. In the table presented, it shows that 75.49% of the disabled workforce is in the informal sector, which is very much compared to those working in the formal sector, which is 24.51%. The role of companies is very influential to overcome this, efforts that can be made are by opening special job vacancies for the disabled workforce. The disabled workforce also urgently needs support from the surrounding environment such as providing motivation and training. The use of technology is also very necessary because a lot of information can be obtained through the internet such as training and job vacancies.

## IMPLICATION/LIMITATION AND SUGGESTIONS

From the above conclusions, the authors suggest that more participation and attention from the government is needed in improving various skills training for the disabled workforce. Do not forget to map the skills needed by the company so as to increase job opportunities for the workforce with disabilities. In addition, employers or companies are expected to be able to comply with applicable laws and regulations and create a disability-friendly work environment. Providing infrastructure for people with disabilities to work with their limitations is also a point that needs to be considered by the employer.

As a writer who has limited knowledge and library resources, the author expects constructive criticism and suggestions from readers. Writer also hopes that there will be development of this paper both from research methods and discussions about the disability labour force so that its absorption into the job market can run much more optimally.

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