

A RESEARCH STUDY OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES' DEVELOPMENT IN BRUNEI TOWARDS DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN CAPITAL : A CASE OF DISABILITIES

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ABSTRACT

This research paper is the analyze and study development of People with Disability (PWD) in Brunei Darussalam and to understand government role in helping People with Disabilities (PWD) between Brunei, Malaysia and Singapore in terms of employment. The research begins with analyzing the objectives and the needs of this research to conduct. The methodology conducted using primary data and secondary data in order to get the source of data, such as conducting Interviews, distributing questionnaire survey, and through research papers, journals and articles. The questionnaire used was to get public perceptions of People with Disabilities (PWD) in Brunei. To a certain extent, the outcomes from the findings tells that not all public are aware of the government's support for People with Disabilities (PWDs) in being employed. Overall, all the discussion shows that other countries has a better assistance towards the People with Disabilities (PWDs) compared to Brunei.

Keywords: Capital , Human, Development, Disabilities, A Case

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Introduction and background of research study

As stated by United Nation Conventions of Rights, the term People with Disabilities (PWD) is for those who have long-term physical, intellectual, sensory impairments and mental which disallow them to interact or participate in society on an equal basis with others.

As of 2015, Brunei Darussalam has been using the term differently abled when referring to the people of disabilities (PWD) and also acknowledge that every PWD has different abilities. Brunei endorse the United Nations Convention of Rights of People with Disabilities on April 11, 2016. Up until now, Brunei still ensures these individuals are given equal rights, opportunities, supports so that they can live their lives, be known and participate in the society.

A total of 9,282 differently abled people in the country were registered with the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports as of July 2018. During 14th Legislative Council meeting, it was also cited by Hadhiah Hazair (2018) that only 56 people with disabilities (PWD) were employed as stated by Dato Paduka Seri Haji Aminuddin Ihsan, Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Hadthiah Hazair (2018) stated that Norali Ali Yusop, an advocate for the blind said that youths with disabilities who are of working age are underrepresented in Brunei's job market. This can be seen in 2018, it was disclosed by the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports during the 14th Legislative Council meeting that 56 people with disabilities (PWD) were in full-time employment out of a total of 9,282 individuals that were registered with the ministry. Hadthiah Hazair (2018) interviewed Muhd Nur'Azwan Hj Aziz president of The National Association of the Hearing

Impaired (OKP) which currently has over 200 members where he mentioned only 20 percent of their members are working.

Rasidah Haji Abu Bakar (2019) Ali Yusri Abdul Ghafor, acting head of the Ministry of Education's Special Education Unit (UPK) during a forum on disabilities mentioned that disabled people are often disregarded and miss out any potential job interviews or opportunities. As of 2017, Brunei has a labour force survey which is used for analysing long and medium term trends in the job market, estimating the size of the labour force and analysing job search activities and reason of inactivity but then Job Centre does not consider people with disabilities as labour force, thus, they are not included in the data.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this study is to understand how the government give support and help do develop people with disabilities' community along with its policy, education, financial assistance, health care, employment and welfare by analyzing the factors with other countries such as Malaysia and Singapore. The main objective of this research is to identify the current issue faced by people with disabilities in employment and to make recommendation on how improve the issues.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the problem statement, this research study will be analyzing and focusing on the following questions:

1. Challenges faced by People with Disabilities (PWD) in finding jobs opportunities in Brunei?
2. What are the governments' initiatives to help People with Disabilities (PWD) in Brunei for employment?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of this research study would be to make everyone aware of the existence of People with Disabilities (PWD) in Brunei as there are not much awareness done for them. Also, to find out the government initiatives in terms of employment in both public and private sector. Other than that, the progresses of PWD in Brunei are not displayed or updated online or publicly.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In whichever job placement, PWDs is always seen as a burden and also challenge by the employers. A study by Shigaki, Anderson, Howald, Henson, & Gregg (2012) found that PWDs are handled harshly, bullied and targeted against in the workforce relative to others, while there are proof that PWDs are more dedicated and their success can be contrasted with "competent" peers.

Although a number of studies showed that PWDs are efficient, trustable, hard-working and optimistic, (Norani, Khalid and Nor Aishah (2001; Waxman, 2017; Annuar Aswan, Mohd Faizal & Abdul Razak, 2017), the truth shows that this group of individuals does not have equal opportunity for jobs. Norani, Khalid and Nor Aishah (2001) It also stated that PWDs have many hidden skills and resources in which opportunities for employment and study are to be offered to integrate them fully into society in general.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Primary and secondary data were both used in order to fulfil this paper's objective. Questionnaire survey and 5 samples of separate interviews for the selected companies as the primary data. As for secondary data, various references including research journals, articles and statistical reports will be used.

Social media is used to distribute questionnaires to the public, the social media i.e Instagram, WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter and QR Code. Another way used to gain more and quicker responds was distributing the questionnaire through WhatsApp using the WhatsApp Link as many people nowadays uses WhatsApp so that makes it easier for any potential respondent to access and answer the questionnaire.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the data extracted from the questionnaire will be focused on. In Table 1, it is the gathered data of the respondents' background starting from their gender, age and working status.

Table 1: Respondents' Background

	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	34	24.3
Female	106	75.7
Total	140	100.0
Age		
Below 18 years old	2	1.4
19-25 years old	81	57.9
26-32 years old	29	20.7
33-40 years old	15	10.7
Above 40 years old	13	9.3
Total	140	100.0
Working Status		
Student	57	40.7
Employed	58	41.4
Unemployed	14	10.0
Self-employed	6	4.3
Retired	5	3.6
Total	140	100.0

(Authors Own Research Approach)

Apart from the survey, the data collected from the interview conducted from private companies and non-profit organization (NGO) that has been both directly and indirectly, involved in handling people with disabilities (PWDs) employment issues.. These selected companies are such as Novelty Intervention Centre and Uniklearn Brunei, and the non-profit organizations (NGO's) i.e. and Society for Management of Autism Related (SMARTER) to participate and willingly to share their perspectives and experience on the issues related to people with disabilities.

From the interview, it concludes that, In SMARTER, the apprenticeship programme is for 12 to 18-years-old students which then must undergo 7 types of CBT program. SMARTER tailored the employment based on each of their student's capabilities as the students will work under SMARTER Bistro.

From UnikLearn, their trainees are aged between 17 to 25-years-old. They mentioned that the trainees are to spend six months for training for batch 1 and 11 months of training for batch 2 with SparkLifeskill's therapists in Jangsak. The trainings may include soft skills which consist of communication, customer service, technical skills which are basic computer skills, administrative task, numbers and basic living skills i.e. cleaning. After they have completed the initial training, they will be placed under several companies for placements (Abdullah, Khadaroo and Shaikh, J ; 2008)

With these placements, people with disabilities could learn how to communicate, initiating a topic, how to maintain and end a conversation appropriately. Uniklearn trainees are placed into their work placement according to the level of their autism. Severe case of autism trainees is placed to work with bake culture as their working hours are short, the trainee only works for 4 hours.

Table 2: Interview Data from SMARTER, UnikLearn and Novelty Intervention Centre

INTERVIEW DATA		
S.M.A.R.T.E.R	UnikLearn	Novelty Intervention Centre
i) It is a society for management of Autism related issues in training, education and resources (research).	i) It is an internship and vocational training program.	i) Novelty provides Applied Behaviour Analysis, ABA-based services, academic programs and supports for children and youth from the age of 2 until 15 years old with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and Speech Delay.
ii) SMARTER provide PWD's family support group, training on autism and awareness programme.	ii) They focus on three things; - Communication - Motor Skills - Functional Mathematics	ii) The ABA program for Novelty consists all development areas including social interaction; support; visual skills; skills in labeling; imitation; interactivity, and social skills; self-help; motor skills, such as fine and oral; speech and vocalisations; perform management; preparation for school systems and primary schools.
iii) SMARTER provide educational service, psychological development program, competency-based training (CBT) program, and employment opportunities.	iii) Partners with Spark Lifeskill Centre as their technical partner and also Startup Brunei as their project manager.	iii) Novelty services include one to one teaching approach, that provided by trained ABA therapist; Behaviour Management Plan; Natural Environment Teaching; Discrete Trial Teaching; Cognitive and higher order learning programmes; Toilet Training; Communication systems such as Picture Exchange (PECS).
iv) SMARTER created employment programme; - Apprenticeship, - Sheltered Employment,	iv) UnikKone is basically the training ground, it is the second half of the programme that allows the students to put into practice what they have learned in class. UnikLearn try	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supported Employment - Open employment. 	to simulate a real-life working environment.	
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(Author’s Own Research Approach)

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS: BRUNEI, MALAYSIA AND SINGAPORE

Brunei

Despite the data on people with disabilities are being employed are still very low, there are several ongoing initiatives taken by several parties to make the rate of employability for people with disabilities to be equal and as to the rights of people with disabilities without any discrimination. The Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports emphasized that Brunei government committed to give equal rights of persons with disabilities as similar as the society.

These ongoing initiatives are such as Rasidah Haji Abu Bakar (2019), the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports highlighted on The Youth Development Centre (JAPEM) is planning specific programmes to grow the number of job opportunities for people with special needs. Acting Head of the Special Education Unit for Ministry of Education (UPK), 2019, discloses Bhasin, M., & Shaikh, J. M. (2011) the possibility of introducing a specific labor quota to the disabled as part of its effort to promote social inclusion in the workplace that discussions were held with government agency Job Center Brunei.

After completing the O-level studies, UPK is also in discussions with the Brunei Institute of Technical Education (Jasmon, Abadon., & Shaikh, J M; 2004). and the Youth Development Center for People with Disabilities on a likelihood of creating new vocational programmes. Other NGOs such as Uniklearn and Smarter are creating training programme for PWD which further explanation. Hadthiah Hazair (2018), Norali Ali Yusop suggested that perhaps if the government to provide incentives to the companies to employ people with disabilities may help to open up more job opportunities. He highlights other countries such as the United States, Australia and United Kingdom, their government provides incentives for employers to hire PWD such as if the companies would recruit special needs individuals, the companies will be given a lower tax rate.

The Youth Development Centre (JAPEM) also planned specific programmes to help increase the employment opportunities for people with special needs. Acting head of the Ministry of Education’s Special Education Unit (UPK), 2019, discussion of the need for unique quota jobs for people with disabilities as part of their attempts to promote social integration (Shaikh, J. M., & Karim, A. M. (2014). at the job market with the government agency JobCenter Brunei was revealed. Brunei’s government should prioritize on disallowing discrimination against people with disabilities which would result in having more employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Given incentives as Singapore had done for their PWDs towards the companies i.e. lower tax, so that they would keener to hire PWD which leads to more job opportunity for the PWD community.

Malaysia

According to (The Borneo Post, 2015), Job Coach Network (JCNM) Malaysia has indeed been created to enhance communication and relationships between employment trainers in support of meaningful jobs for people with disabilities by the Department of Social Welfare. Job Coach Malaysia (n.d) also stated that they provide supported employment which aim is to change employment opportunities of people with disabilities which has three categories; Paid employment, On-going support and Integrated Worksites. Paid Employment is employment which allows people with disabilities to receive same salary and benefits as other employees. On-going support is a provision of on-going support for people with disabilities and their employers. Integrated work site is inclusion of people with disabilities in the same work site with others.

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Not many companies are accepting people with disabilities to work with them but in the last 10 years in Malaysia, a total of 2.4 million people that were employed but only 3,523 of disabled persons were primarily working in the private sector. (Hooi, 2001). In 2008, only 581 disabled people had been working in the public sector, states Ms Norani Hashom, the Head of the Department of Disability Development in Malaysia. (Heron and Murray, 2003) stated that the shared workplace concerns people with disabilities that include level of training, skills in the workforce, rapid labor change, attitudes (Shen et al;2011) and perceptions of employers, access to self-employment opportunities and increased labor costs. (Tiun and Lee, 2013) observed that many workers were oblivious of and unresponsive to the needs of their disabled employees.

Singapore

According to (Minister of State for Manpower Zaqu Mohamad, 2019), Singapore's people with disabilities' employment rate was 28.6 percent in the working ages of 15 to 64-years-old. Another 4.2 percent of people with disabilities in the same age range were without a job. Singapore's minister mentioned that, last year, more than 5,700 employers hired over 8,600 Singaporeans with disabilities. As stated by (Strait Times, 2016), SG Enable had launched a new portal for disability employment where employers can advertise their job openings for People with Disabilities (PWD) where information on internship, training and employment opportunities can be accessed by jobseekers or students with special needs.

In Singapore, 2007, the Open Door Fund was launched by the Workforce Development Authority which was tapped by 350 companies with 1,300 job opportunities created just for People with Disabilities (PWD) but in 2014, the fund's name was changed to the Open Door Programme (ODP) which was funded by the Government with S\$30 million just to expand the programme. Not only that, to any employers who are interested or have recruited People with Disabilities, funding will

be provided by Singapore's government. For People with Disabilities (PWD) in Singapore, will be given support for pre-employment training and vocational training.

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BizLink is a company from Singapore which provides employment placement programme for People with Disabilities (PWD) who has a permanent disability and only for the age of 16 years old above. The objectives of the programme are to assist People with Disabilities (PWD) to secure job placements in the job market and also to provide job support and follow up services to enable People with Disabilities (PWD) to adapt and adjust well to the work environment. Not only that, BizLink also checked the building's safety and made their facilities accessible for People with Disabilities (PWD) especially their transportation. Once they complete a job match, the PWD will be given two weeks of job coaching and training.

The Government of Singapore guarantees the protection of people with disabilities in work environment. The Government also guarantees that it has clear requirements and guidance for connectivity of facilities and resources in workplace offers access to information assistance and support for disabled people. The government also gives grants to businesses to make their offices and facilities more available, such as the Open-Door Projects (ODP). It requires up to 90% of the design costs of specific accessibility devices, such as stairs, bridges, bathrooms and signs to be subsidised for improvements in the workplace and the Accessibility Fund.

Table 3: Initiatives for Employment Issues

EMPLOYMENT; INITIATIVES		
BRUNEI	MALAYSIA	SINGAPORE
i) SMARTER; The apprenticeship programme	i) Job Coach Network (JCNM);	i) SG Enable
ii) UnikLearn; Job placement after trainings	a) Paid Employment b) On-going support	ii) Open Door Programme (OPD)
iii) Likelihood of creating new vocational programmes	c) Integrated Worksites.	iii) BizLink

(Source : Authors Own Research Approach)

In Table 2, it states the overall initiatives found to help their country managing the issues of unemployment faced by the PWDs.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In conclusion, although Brunei have made countless initiatives to make PWD have equal rights in the society, there is still much more needs to be done.

In terms of employment, In Brunei, only 56 of people with disabilities were employed in 2018, out of 9,282 people registered with the Ministry. Meanwhile in Malaysia, in the last 10 years, only 3,523 people with disabilities were employed, mainly in private sector and 581 were employed in public sector but while as in Singapore, 2018, 5,700 employers hired over 8,600 Singaporeans with disabilities

Brunei currently have two training centres for people with disabilities which are UnikLearn and Novelty Intervention Centre. Novelty focuses on giving training and therapy for people with disabilities for the age of 15 below. UnikLearn focuses more on people with disabilities above 16 years old, by giving them trainings to prepare themselves for job placements. While as in Malaysia, they have Job Coach Network Malaysia (JCNM) which aim is to give seminars, trainings, facilitate information sharing amongst job coaches to promote employment for people with disabilities. On the other hand, Singapore has a company which provides employment placement programme for people with disabilities who has a permanent disability for the age of 16 years old above.

As a recommendation, the government should build training and learning centres for people with disabilities especially a centre which provides job training to help PWDs gain both technical and soft skills before they apply for jobs. Such training can help and create more opportunities for people with disabilities to gain a more competitive advantage. This way people with disabilities may have a chance to compete with other jobseekers that possess professional certificates in the society of highly competitive job market.

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