Employability Skills Requirement For People with Disability (PWD) Job Success

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ABSTRACT

Advancement of the nation depends on the human capital development, equal distribution of wealth, and well-being of the grassroots. Notably, having a secured job and a stable occupation is an aspiration for every human being; without leaving the people with disabilities (PWD). Problem related to PWD unemployment has always been a challenging topic because little information related to characteristics and skills needed by the industries to promote this group of people for employment. Therefore, this research explored employability skills (ES) traits among 21 PWDs who perceived three days of ES intervention program conducted at Putra Future Classroom, Universiti Putra Malaysia. A qualitative single study was employed after the program and the participating PWDs were requested to share their experiences via synchronous audio-recorded sessions using the WhatsApp application. The audio recorded was transcribed and analyzed using Atlas. Ti software. Six themes were emerged using color-coded and thematic analysis: 1) digital skills, 2) information and communication technology skills, 3) interpersonal skills, 4) marketing skills, 5) practical skills, and 6) writing skills. The findings: 1) advocate the identical ES traits among PWD align with industrial job demands, 2) foster contribution of PWD in the job market; and 3) elicit curriculum training for PWD by embedding ES elements. PWD unemployment has resumed being a great concern among stakeholders who believe in their potential and talent. Therefore, industrial players should be more tolerant and emancipate the contribution of PWD's role in the workforce as well as allow them to demonstrate their capabilities and skills.

Keywords: People with Disability (PWD), employability skill (ES), employment, job opportunity

Introduction

People with disability (PWD) is a group of people of those who categorized as the most vulnerable and marginalized society in the world. The deficiency and disability of these people continued to be discriminated against and frequently be reported as being neglected and abused mentally and physically by deviances. The PWD accumulated 80% who lived in developing countries (World Bank, 2018), continued struggles in preserving their life. In addition, 20% of the poorest people in the world, battle with some form of disability (Disabled World, 2018; Eide & Ingstad, 2017), indicated as the largest proportion of the minority (Bickenbach, Rubinelli, & Stucki, 2017; Luo & Wang, 2017; Quinn, 2009). Notwithstanding issues related to the abundant PWD population in the world, barely 45 countries regulated anti-discriminatory acts and disability employment laws

(United Nations, 2017). However, it is a shocking fact that the employment rate gap varies as much as 40% in the US and few European countries (United Kingdom, Hungary, Netherlands, and Romania) and it was reported higher in other countries such as Peru (United Nations, 2017).

Referring to a local report, there are 468,520 registered PWDs out of a total population of 33 million people in Malaysia (Department of Social Welfare Statistic Report, 2018). Nevertheless, it is thought that many PWDs fail to inform the government of their status. This situation has caused inaccuracy of data. While in this case, it is critical to have accurate statistics on PWDs to observe their societal well-being and advocate job opportunities for them. To elaborate, the category of PWDs can be vary and unique to some extent. The types of disability among PWD comes in different categories, for example (1) learning disabilities, (2) physical disabilities, (3) vision impairment, (4) hearing impairment, (4) mental disorders, (5) multiple disabilities, and (6) speech impairment (Department of Social Welfare Statistic Report, 2018). Equally important, overt acts upon understanding these categories of disability is vital to minimize the risk and reduce jeopardized of PWDs', especially when preparing a suitable job for them.

The government needs to look into several concerns concerning the welfare of disabled persons in the country. Social stigma, a lack of representation in the job market, equitable policies, and decisions on disability-related issues are issues hampering PWD's existence. PWDs frequently endure economic insecurity as a result of limited access to education and job prospects. Despite efforts to ensure PWD workforce involvement, it was a clear disparity in 2008 that only 581 PWDs were employed in the public sector in Malaysia (Department of Social Welfare Statistic Report, 2018). The private sector, on the other hand, performed better, with 17,000 PWDs employed. This result, by far, only 10-20% of PWDs being economically active and employed. Statistics on PWD's employment rate remain scarce and limited.

The Malaysian government's national social policy, which was implemented in 2003, emphasizes equality, rights, and involvement of PWD in society. The policy was further changed in Circular No. 3 2008-9, which outlined the implementation of a 1% policy of job placement for PWDs in the public sector. The policy described a great step forward in terms of implementation to promote the employment of PWD. According to Islam (2015), the positive efforts made by having such policies and rulings aim to ensure that PWDs have equal rights and full participation in Malaysian society. The national welfare program's overall goals, on the other hand, are expected to secure and stabilize the society and allowing people to live in peace without jeopardizing human rights, including the rights of PWD.

Henceforth, the purpose of this study is to explore the employability skills (ES) traits and attributes devise from the intervention ES program participated by the PWD. We embarked on the salient contribution of ES as 'most critical skills in the job market and reflecting on employability skills needed by the current job market. The tentative three days program accumulated module-based employability training is hopeful to be the kick-start program to empower the workforce among PWD in Malaysia.

Employability Skills for Career Success

The employment trend has evolved dramatically in recent years, and a bachelor's degree is no longer sufficient to find graduate employment (Smith et al., 2010; Verder, Denhart, & Robe, 2013). Any higher education institution has a critical challenge on how to train people today for employment (Oliver, & Jorre de St Jorre, 2018), as well as how to shape teaching and learning so that people can gain occupationally relevant abilities for the types of work required in the future (Bishop, 2019). Indeed, determining the appropriate balance of technical, employability, and academic abilities for workplace education is a difficult task. Furthermore, graduates holistic grasps on knowledge content and apply the knowledge into real-life employment settings are crucial (Jackson, 2009) Putting forward, interested stakeholders, such as the government, industry, and educational institutions, must be aware of the crucial need for employability skills (ES) that keeps on evolving through changes in the industrial landscape.

It is becoming increasingly difficult to ignore the role of ES as part of compulsory skills needed by the industries (Griffin, & Coelhoso, 2019). ES is the leading cause in contributing the job placement among graduates and might be the job security among the worker (Hossain et al., 2018). Thus, increasing the employability of its graduates should be a top priority for any responsible university (Miclea, 2004). The second facet of the learning-to-do pillar, acquiring job-related social skills, is increasingly relevant to the occupational sphere, owing to the development of service industries and their growing importance in the system of post-industrial economies (Burns, 2020). Myriad services are defined by the personal ties that form between the supplier and the customer, rather than the material or energetic processing that occurs in their enterprises. Interpersonal skills become extremely important for employment and job performance in these circumstances. Soft skills such as collaboration and problem-solving ability, communication, and personal initiative are no longer desirable but insignificant labor market add-ons, but rather decisive factors in the service economy's market. Individuals' ability to shape the future, act as change agents, and be willing to take risks is the third component of learning to do (Miclea, 2004).

One of the most significant current discussions in education is whether students are fit to enter a job market, and which employability issues among graduates have been questioned by employers. In the vocational practice, employability has been seen as an indicator to determine the readiness of entering the profession (Forrier & Sels, 2003). There is an increasing concern on adapting employability in institutions; employers are not convinced with readiness among graduates to enter the job market. Guile and Okumoto (2007) has embarked on this issue through their research that "academic and vocational qualifications struggle to facilitate access and learning and employability in the creative and cultural sector because employers are not convinced that graduates have developed, or that the forms of 'vocational practice,' that is, a combination of knowledge, skill and judgment, which they are looking for" (pg. 562).

Because of the rapidity of the industrial environment, the development of ES has necessitated action by educational stakeholders. Because technology advancements and globalization have made the

workforce more unpredictable, requiring relevant skills is the way to go if you want to stay in the workforce (Rojewski & Hill, 2017). It does provide a barrier to job seekers in terms of meeting industrial skill expectations; nevertheless, strong rivalry among corporate organizations has driven them to seek exceptional workers among the finest prospects on the job market. As a result, businesses are searching for people that are well-developed and matured in ES traits than technical abilities to execute the job.

There has been a lot of research done on how to define employable abilities. This research resulted in a slew of new terms to define the abilities needed in the job. There were some examples to describe the value of non-technical skills for example transferable skills (O'Neil, Allred & Baker, 1997), career skills (Smith & Krüger, 2011), and work readiness skills (Zinser, 2003). Furthermore, Omar, Bakar, and Rashid (2012) defined ES as a set of skills that can be transferred from one job to another and are obtained through education and training. The nurturing process and educational journey can also pass along values and personality development. In today's business, ES such as leadership, teamwork, negotiation, communication, and creative and critical thinking are all vital.

This is parallel with individuals who have strong characteristics such as a high sense of self, innovation, productivity, skill, and competitiveness, a strong sense of determination and creativity in facing the challenges of the nation as well as globalization in the 21st century (Kazilan, Hamzah & Bakar, 2009). Graduate attributes, according to a generally accepted definition, are the qualities, skills, and understandings that a university community feels its students should develop throughout their time at the institution and, as a result, shape the contribution they can make to their profession and as citizens (Bowden et al., 2000).

A more accessible and appropriate definition in respect of PWD maybe that developed by Yorke and Knight (2003, p.5) who define ES as "a set of achievements - skills, understandings and personal attributes, that make individuals more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community, and the economy". In the skills plus project, assessment, learning, and employability, Yorke and Knight (2004) developed the USEM (Understanding, Skills, Efficacy Beliefs and Meta-cognition) theory of learning and concluded that what makes a good student makes a good employee. Students' self-image and self-confidence allow them to cope with failure. The efficacy beliefs are to do with how a student's self-image and self-confidence allow them to cope with failure. Those with strong efficacy beliefs regard failure as the opportunity to learn and to do better in the future. Those with weak efficacy beliefs see failure as the irremediable result of their lack of intelligence. Meta-cognition is the knowledge of one's thinking processes and strategies, and the ability to consciously reflect and act on that knowledge to modify those processes and strategies (Graduate Prospects, 2010).

Yorke (2004) considers employability to be a multi-faceted personality trait. After all, it is the individual whose suitability for a job is assessed, which is defined as a set of skills, knowledge, and personal characteristics that makes graduates more likely to find work and succeed in their chosen fields, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community, and the economy. Knight and Yorke (2004) suggest four main areas of competence that constitute employability: (1) understanding (mastery of the subject matter of a field), (2) skillful practices (so-called generic skill in addition to subject-specific skills), (3) efficacy beliefs (trust that one can make some impact on

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situations and events), and (4) metacognition (awareness of one's competence as well as limitations combined with an insight in how to learn more).

Figure 1. USEM Model. Adapted from "Learning, curriculum, and employability in higher education" by P. Knight, and M. Yorke, 2004, *London: RoutledgeFalmer*

Employability Skills and Disability

Over the past years, there has been a focus on employability skills (ES) or soft skills development among graduates, however, few researchers pointed the significant issues of unemployment among PWDs. Previous studies were also primarily concentrating on training and induction programs for PWD (de Mb Oliveira et al., 2016; Zainal et al., 2020). Because the ES is a vital skill that is required by employers, the focus on developing this trait has to belittle the role of PWD in the job landscape. Foster et al. (2019) pointed out the remarks on ES or soft skills as non-technical skills reflecting the need for 21st-century skills that help employees securing and keeping their job. Every time PWD was called upon to develop these non-technical skills with nebulous and structured special programs, often left out PWDs blunt with these elements. When the employer reviewed such job applications from PWD, often they struggle especially when the interview session takes place. The skills are related to professionalism, communication, a positive attitude and politeness, teamwork, problem-solving and critical thinking, and networking skills (Foster et al., 2019), frequently being left out from PWD training programs.

When the ES becomes the premise in many human resource offices related to the hiring process, the elements of these skills concur with the 'code of principle' to find potential employees. Employers valued the element of ES and even much more as compared to academic skills. Lonis (2017) reported a lack of individuals with fundamental ES, such as the ability to use basic math, communicate effectively, read technical manuals, work successfully in teams and participate in complex problem-solving. While the above elements are crucial not only to the non-disabled employees albeit PWD should strive forward to training the aforementioned traits. Rockwood (2021) pointed out soft skills reflect behaviors, personality traits, and work habits, such as collaboration, critical thinking, perseverance, and communication, that help people prosper at work; adding to the critical area of employability requirement by the organization.
The academic requirement has become less primal when it comes to the hiring process instead of the capability of job seekers in marketing themselves during interviews and portfolios sharing. These PWDs determined to get hired a position in the workplace, however being compulsion by the lack of training on soft skills development. This condition making the PWDs far beyond getting the job placement adding to their deficiency to perform technical jobs with requires physical movements.

The ES for PWDs brings into the discussion when the unemployment issue among PWD has become a serious matter throughout the globe. Scheef, Walker, and Barrio (2019) anticipated that researchers looked into what individuals with intellectual disabilities in Singapore should do to succeed in the workplace. Core qualities, such as attitude, dependability, stamina, adaptability, and communication, appear to be appreciated more than job-specific technical skills. Similarly, Ab

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Halim, Muda, and Izam (2019) found that there is a strong positive relationship between self-efficacy and the students with special needs employability skills. Although these findings produce significance to understand the elements of employability skills often employers complained about the paucity of the talents and potentials among PWD. Notwithstanding the PWD was distraught to learn the employability skills that their furloughs had been quite a challenge at the training institutions.

The industries summoned a representative of training institutions especially the administrators and instructors to the lack of training related to PWDS employability skills. This condition has contributed to the lack of promotion and outstanding performance of employability traits by the PWD. Zainal, Mahmud, and Wan Pa (2020) introduced Career Transition Program (CTP) to students with disabilities (SWDs) to prepare and train them for the job market. Skills training in the field of employment is provided to SWDs in the implementation of CTP. However, it was reported that PWD is still difficult for this group to get a job despite having good skills. Basic academic skills, emotional management skills, communication skills, and self-management skills are essential traits to ensure a successful CTP training output. In encapsulating the issues, the program related to training is often less popular and is not ear to elicit due to lack of exposure and communication between industry and training institutions related to module and ES elements needed by the industry.

The rapid change in the job landscape adding to struggle and challenges to PWD in positioning themselves in the workforces. It is often ineffective to disregard the importance of ES. Barnes (2019) espoused the acquisition of soft skills element in empowering PWDS career development. Among a group of hearing-impaired students, he concentrates on the specific topics of general skills, emotional intelligence, communication skills, career development learning, and job experience. While some of the general abilities were relatively easy to acquire, other important career development learning and job-seeking skills were more challenging for this group of students.

Just as important, the need for prompt action on reinforcing PWD's involvement in the job market is vital to flourishing their societal and economical well-beings (Vilà, Pallisera, & Fullana, 2007). The reported literature mentions critical stages of ES development as a strategy to increase the employment rate among PWD. As proactive measures, studies on PWD employment remain significant as the spirit to advocate their participation in the community.

METHODS

In this study, a case study was employed as part of a qualitative investigation. We planned a structured employability skills (ES) course that was led by a local-based professional image consulting firm. The module was developed based on the study findings from employers' input on employing PWD. The employers' conclusions focused on particular ES. We invited non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that assist PWD. The Malaysian Society for the Blind from the Gurney Training Center and the Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) PWDs Support and Services Unit are both engaged in this program. There were a total of 21 PWDs who spent three days program with the organizer. Twenty individuals were classified as having a level of blindness, while one was

classified as a deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) patient. The tentative of the program is stated in Table 1.

Table 1. Tentative of the employability skills development program for PWD.

Date	Time	Activity
30 September 2020 (Wednesday)	8.30 AM - 9.00 AM	Opening Ceremony
	9.00AM - 10.30 AM	Module 1- Exploration of BETTER ● First-class people (BETTER module) ● Be prepared (B) with VUCA ● The Employability Skills Framework
	10.30 AM - 10.45 AM	Breakfast
	10.45 AM - 1.00 PM	Module 2- Integrity Management ● Building a personal integrity boundary ● Enhancing work and personal ethics (E) ● Integrity at workplace
	1.00PM - 2.30 PM	Lunch Break
	2.30 PM - 4.30 PM	Module 3- Communicate Effectively ● Establish a trustworthy (T) environment ● Exploring personal social style ● Adapting social style to work best with others
	4.30 PM - 5.00 PM	Teatime and Dismiss
1 October 2020 (Thursday)	8.30 AM-10.30 AM	Module 4 - Approach to Problems ● Tactful (T) in approaching a difficult situation ● Problem-solving approach ● PDCA analysis
	10.30 AM – 10.45 AM	Breakfast
	10.45 AM – 1.00 PM	Module 5 - Continuous development ● Enable (E) yourself to learn new skills ● Resources needed to learn ● Practice make perfect
	1.00 PM - 2.30 PM	Lunch Break
	2.30 PM – 4.30 PM	Module 6 - Mirror yourself ● Re-evaluate (R) yourself ● Exploring opportunities ● Award yourself
	4.30 PM - 5.00 PM	Teatime and Dismiss
2 October 2020 (Friday)	8.30 AM-10.30 AM	Module 7 – Professional Image Branding ● Exploring style personality ● Men's & Women's Professional Wear
	10.30 AM – 10.45 AM	Breakfast

10.45AM – 12.30 PM	Module 7 (Continue)
12.30 PM - 12.45 PM	Q&A
12.45 PM	Closing Ceremony

The program's participants were asked to participate in a focus group discussion (FGD). After completing the employability skills training, participants were asked to phone in to a group message system. These FGD sessions lasted a month and included both open conversation and scripted questions to transmit participants' input via synchronous and asynchronous responses using WhatsApp (WA) application. One question was posted to the application daily. Participants may either provide feedback in the WA group that was formed before the FGD, or they could send a private message via the same application. For documentation, we transcribed the audio message and encoded them in Microsoft Excel. The excel spreadsheet was exported to Atlas. Ti, a sophisticated qualitative analysis software to perform thematic analysis.

- **RESEARCH FINDINGS**

A thematic qualitative analysis using a CAQDAS namely ATLAS.ti (ver. 9) was performed on ten pages of interview transcripts. The purpose of the interview was to determine the employability skills (ES) traits for the PWD to secure jobs soon. Based on the analysis, a total number of six themes and 17 quotations related to ES were derived from the interview transcripts. The themes are (1) digital skills, (2) information and communication technology (ICT) skills, (3) interpersonal skills, (4) marketing skills, (5) practical skills, and (6) writing skills. In specific, five (29.4%) quotations were derived related to the digital skills, four (23.5%) quotations were derived related to the ICT skills, three (17.6%) quotations were derived related to the interpersonal skills, two (11.8%) quotations were derived related to the marketing skills, two (11.8%) quotations were derived related to the practical skills, and one (5.9%) quotations were derived related to the writing skills. The following subtopics narrate the themes along with several quotation instances.

○ *Digital skills*

Firstly, the PWD conveyed that they need digital skills to secure jobs after graduation. A total number of five quotations (29.4%) related to digital skills were extracted. For instance, informant 1 asserts that digital editing skills are important to secure a job soon:

"In addition, for me, the important skills that I need to master is (digital) editing… [1:9 para(s) 8 in Informant 1]

Informant 1 further states, apart from digital editing, skills related to the creation of digital storyboard are also important for him/her to secure a job in the future:

"…at the same time, I also have the skills in producing storyboards. With the skills, for example, a company uhh… film production company, they need skilled manpower in producing (digital) storyboards. " [1:19 para(s) 10 in Informant 1]

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On the other hand, informant 4 asserts that digital video editing and digital photo editing skills are deemed important for him/her to get and a job and generate side incomes after graduation:

"Or maybe in the future we could also teach the PWDs on how to edit videos or edit photos using applications such as Photoshop. I think that it would be beneficial for them if they want to generate side incomes." [4:17 para(s) 24 in Informant 4]

o   ***Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills***

Secondly, the ES needed by the PWDs to secure jobs soon is ICT skills. A total number of four quotations (23.5%) related to ICT skills were extracted. To illustrate, informant 1 asserts that skills related to information technology (IT), digital media, and digital communication are important for him/her to secure a job soon:

"For example in broadcasting. Skills in IT, including media, information technology, and communication..." [1:2 para(s) 8 in Informant 1]

Other than that, informant 1 also states, skills related to personal computing such as utilizing the Microsoft Office software are also important for him/her to secure a job after graduation:

"...skills that need to be provided to... people with disabilities like me uhh... we need more... skills such as computer skills for instances using the Microsoft Word, Excel..." [4:19 para(s) 26 in Informant 4]

Similar to informant 1, informant 10 also believed that he/she needs the skills related to IT for him/her to secure a job in the future:

"...about the skills we need to get a job... IT skills..." [10:1 para(s) 8 in Informant 10]

o   ***Interpersonal skills***

The next ES needed by the PWD students to secure jobs soon is interpersonal skills. A total number of three quotations (17.6%) related to interpersonal skills were extracted. To exemplify, informant 5 conveys that being friendly when dealing with others is an important skill to be grasped for him/her to secure a job soon:

"...our service as an employee or as a business owner should be friendly..." [5:17 para(s) 22 in Informant 5]

Other than being friendly, informant 5 add, being rational and modest are indeed other aspects that are equally important to be grasped in making sure he/she secures a job in the future:

"...rational..." [5:18 para(s) 22 in Informant 5]

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"…and not being arrogant." [5:19 para(s) 22 in Informant 5]

o   ***Marketing skills***

Forth, the employability skills needed by the PWDs to secure jobs soon are marketing skills. A total number of two quotations (11.8%) related to interpersonal skills were extracted. To demonstrate, informant 3 expresses that the ability to promote products is an important skill to be mastered for him/her to secure a job soon:

"Skills that we can learn, how to promote our company's products." [3:10 para(s) 20 in Informant 3]

Informant 5 continues by stating that the ability to convince and inspire customers in buying products is equally important to be learned in making sure he/she secures a job after graduation:

"Then we need to know about what products we are selling. Because if we want to convince our customers, we have to know the product very well. We have to provide evidence that says this product can help the community. So we can inspire them or even stimulate their thinking to buy our products." [5:16 para(s) 22 in Informant 5]

o   ***Practical skills***

Fifth, the ES needed by the PWDs to secure jobs soon is practical skills. A total number of two quotations (11.8%) related to practical skills were extracted. To elucidate, informant 1 states that skills related to carpentry are indeed important to be mastered for him/her to secure a job soon:

"…the skills of carpentry are also needed nowadays because our country needs skilled manpower in the labor sector…" [1:4 para(s) 8 in Informant 1]

On the other hand, informant 10 believes that skills related to computer maintenance are also important to be acquired for him/her to secure a job after graduation:

"…if our computer is broken or our boss's computer is broken, we don't have to call uhh… a computer technician. We could fix our computers or we could fix our boss's." [10:2 para(s) 8 in Informant 10]

o   ***Writing skills***

Last but not least, the sixth ES needed by the PWDs to secure jobs soon is writing skills. A total number of quotations (5.9%) related to the writing skills were extracted. To illuminate, informant 5 conveys that skills related to preparing a proposal are indeed important to be acquired for him/her to secure a job soon:

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"...skills that could be included in addition to the skills that have been taught in the program, umm for me skills... of writing proposal. Writing a group's proposal. "[5:23 para(s) 28 in Informant 5]

4.1   Summary of findings

The purpose of the study was to determine the ES needed for the PWDs to secure jobs soon. Based on the analysis, a total number of six themes related to the ES were derived from the interview transcripts. The themes are (1) digital skills, (2) ICT skills, (3) interpersonal skills, (4) marketing skills, (5) practical skills, and (6) writing skills. In specific, Table 2 below shows the distribution of quotations according to the theme.

Table 2. Distribution of quotation according to theme

No.	Theme	No. of Quotation	Percentage (%)
1	Digital skills	5	29.4%
2	ICT skills	4	23.5%
3	Interpersonal skills	3	17.6%
4	Marketing skills	2	11.8%
5	Practical skills	2	11.8%
6	Writing skills	1	5.9%
Total		**17**	**100.0%**

Discussion

This study calls for employability effort to flourish PWD employment, focused on employability skills development, changing perceptions and sentiments of communities and industrial players. To execute such changes, the methods of instruction and training require ES and soft skills element and a broader effort at different layers of institutional and ministry levels. The research findings proposed the operation and support on disability employment-related programs to pursue and strengthen these programs by examining the adequacy of ES development to industry's requirement for job placement and efforts and, where needed, further develop and implement more complete employment empowerment programs.

Facilitating and empowering PWDs employment demands strategy to hone for success and ultimately increase PWD participation in the workforce. While it remains a challenge especially with the world struggle with the pandemic COVID-19, safeguarding the PWD's life becomes the responsibility of all. Due to significant challenges in advocating PWD employment, this study explored employability skills elements from the perspectives of PWD through a structured intervention program at Putra Future Classroom, UPM, and embark on the employability skills element from a collection of literature especially reflecting from non-disabled employees and specifically on PWDs. As above-mentioned, six themes emerged from thematic analysis: (1) digital

skills, (2) ICT skills, (3) interpersonal skills, (4) marketing skills, (5) practical skills, and (6) writing skills.

The first theme eventuates the important elements of digital skills. The transition from training institution to work becomes a great challenge of there is a scarcity in terms of digital knowledge for myriad types of the job seeker. Digitalization which involves mobile applications and computer software possesses minimal physical movement. Hence, the PWD issues an undebatable opinion in regards to the importance of digital skills to assist them with employment. The evolvement of digital skills demands upskilling and reskilling overtime to cope with the latest technology and developed in formal education, others in informal and non-formal education settings (Leahy & Wilson, 2014). Digital skills are gained from formal teaching, self-learning, and peer-to-peer learning over time through educational and social usage of technology. Today's environment necessitates digital skills for people to locate, evaluate, and create information for further and higher education, training, and job. On another note, Van Laar et al. (2017) described digital skills, 21st-century skills are not necessarily underpinned by ICT. It goes beyond technical, information management, communication, collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving which stimulates the important elements under the umbrella of employability skills.

The lack of ICT skills of PWD is evident. This condition affects participation among PWDs in a digital society. Mavrou et al. (2017) agreed that emphasize ICT competence among PWD is vital to encourage independence, social integration, educational success, employment opportunities, and ultimately improve quality of life among various groups of PWD. This is consistent with the significant contribution of ICT skills by Stendal (2012) which indicated the several research disciplines have focused on how the advantage of the technology is available for social, educational, and personal purposes. Virtual worlds represent the latest addition to the technologies available, yet there is little research on how PWD use and experience virtual worlds.

Technical and job skills are repleting with a plethora of technology evolvement. Most technologies especially on assembly and manufacturing processes involve automation and machines; added to the less dependence on human effort. Modern technologies often result in indiscriminate PWD's employment opportunities, albeit some assistive tools can simplify and accommodate PWDs when performing certain tasks. Therefore, another important trait in inculcating PWD employment is the mastery of interpersonal skills. Hendricks and Wehman (2009) agreed that instead of learning job-related skills, developing interpersonal skills promotes the transition to work from education and training programs. Gurchiek (2016) and NACE (2017) shared similar findings related to the essential contribution of interpersonal skills to as someone who "gets along well with others" and "lacks a bad attitude," specifically, not complaining all the time about the job, co-workers, or the organization. These traits are highly recommended for PWD. On another note, they added that most human resource professionals desire employees with certain attributes, including reliability, flexibility, and good interpersonal skills. After few years of PWD job enrolment in the organization, human resource offices found to find that PWD will expose to voracious promotions and wide employment fields across the nation.

PWDs in the job market have demonstrated their ability to find their way out of the most challenging life situation by securing a job. PWD's effort to explore entrepreneurial opportunities will encourage them to be more independent. It is proven that entrepreneurial knowledge will bring them out of poverty and isolation. In addition to that, entrepreneurship requires excellent marketing skills. The crucial aspect of developing marketing and communication skills will assist the entrepreneurs to deliver quality service to their customers (Essien & Nseobot, 2019), prosper positive images of the company owned by PWD.

Oswald et al. (2015) reported that there are thousands of résumé resources available to college-level job seekers, combining a skill-focused résumé with a self-marketing plan can help stand out from other similarly qualified graduates while minimalizing job gaps or sparse work history. Given the fact that digitalization has taken place in a myriad of business pathways, digital marketing practice continues to grow along with the need for a qualified workforce (Key et al., 2019). Adding this value will help PWD to cope with challenging economic deprivation by exploring opportunities and expand their marketing skills through the use of technology and e-commerce marketing applications.

The mentor or trainer for PWDs are nettles about the ease with which the struggles PWDs in job placement. Schalock et al. (2010) suggested that one area that may be especially relevant for employment outcomes among PWD is an adaptive behavior. The adaptation with the organizational climate and aligning PWD with the need to immerse the job environment will help them to remain in the job. Schalock et al. (2010) added adaptive behavior refers to the conceptual, practical, and social skills performed by individuals in their everyday lives. Conceptual practical skills include communication, numeracy, academic skills, and self-direction, while social skills include social responsibility, self-esteem, interpersonal skills and social problem solving are the eminent traits for ES to break down the gap of PWD employment with other job applicants. PWD are demanded to demonstrate practical skills which include daily living skills, safety, health care, routines, and occupational skills (Smith et al., 2018), to suiting themselves with current job environment.

Following several successful applicants among PWDs to enter the workforce, the employers perceive several benefits. Lindsay et al. (2018) espoused by hiring PWD in an organization improvement in profitability (i.e., profits and cost-effectiveness, turnover and retention, reliability and punctuality, employee loyalty, company image), competitive advantage (e.g., diverse customers, customer loyalty and satisfaction, innovation, productivity, work ethic, safety), inclusive work culture, and ability awareness. Secondary benefits for PWD included improved quality of life and income, enhanced self-confidence, expanded social network, and a sense of community (Lindsay et al., 2018). They have had to prosper the life of PWD to accommodate the PWDs basic necessity. With strong collaboration and support from the industry, many PWDs now have a better opportunity in career.

PWD employment has more than a veneer of benefits to properly evaluate their potential and talents to perform job responsibilities. With the right training and facilitation, PWDs would develop skills and knowledge to contribute to the industry in comprehensive ways. Dreavers et al. (2020), believed in ensuring the strategies and supports that facilitate successful employment of PWD was

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from care training and education. Strategic planning including "formulating realistic goals" education about appropriate physical boundaries "business writing skills" training "integrity training" education about "workplace basics' are suitable content on training module development (Dreaver et al., 2020). This is consistent with the training module employed in the employability training program held in this research which focuses on employability skills added to the values that are highly demanded by the industries.

PWDs are deemed by employers to be the best job applicants for their organization if they have specific employment skills targeted needed by them. When the hiring process begins PWDs are hoped to market themselves by demonstrating their skills and capabilities to execute job scopes as advertised on the job-seeking websites. Job preparation skills such as resume writing and job interviewing skills are the key criteria when the first encounter with potential employers (Munandar, et al., 2020). On another note, Lackenby et al. (2015) describe impediments to employment for young PWD. These include issues such as the structure of the welfare system, resulting in part-time employment that effectively reduces income. Interestingly, the attitudes of both employers and the family of young PWD can sometimes impede young people from finding employment.

Limitations

There are limitations to consider when interpreting these results. One possible limitation is the potential for selection bias. It is not known why those who participated volunteered to do so. Perhaps informants volunteered because of personal experiences with blindness and ADHD disability. Additionally, all study participants involved in the ES training intervention program met three days for training and employability skills development. These participants may not be representative of all PWDs in that they may engage in more opportunities to increase their knowledge on issues facing their field. Finally, the focus groups were held in 2019, during a time of pandemic COVID-19 which resulted in asynchronous audio messages was used to obtain feedback from the informants. The results may have been influenced by the COVID-19 situation of that time and may not be fully reflective of the views of PWD's today.

Conclusion

In light of the unemployment issue among PWDs, the strategy of training and ES intervention is romp more significant than the conventional teaching and learning approach to PWD. Therefore, cognizance of the PWD teaching and learning module by embedding the ES element is necessary. For these initiatives to be successful, bilateral and collaborative efforts between industrial players and PWD skill training institutions should be in place. Fostering close cooperation and shared information on specific skills and knowledge requirements to work industry shall be executed concurrently through conference and industrial meetings. Access to internship and practicum in industrial settings would expose PWDs to real-life workforce settings. This environment will flourish PWDs confidence and integrate with industrial communities and other employees. The social gaps between PWD and other employees will spur harmonization and tolerance with the

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culture of positive mutual relationships and attitudes toward acceptance of PWD in the organization. Employment barriers among PWDs can lead to social exclusion and poverty in life; hence, we must develop a better understanding of the factors shaping PWD's employment and find ways to overcome the often subtle patterns of discrimination appearing to exist in our society.

Acknowledgments

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