

THE IMPLICATIONS OF PERSON WITH DISABILITIES ACT 2008 ON TVET EDUCATION FOR TUANKU SYED SIRAJUDDIN POLYTECHNIC SPECIAL SKILL CERTIFICATES DISABLED STUDENTS

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Abstract

This paper will focus on the implications of The Person with Disabilities Act 2008 towards Technical Vocational and Educational Training (TVET) on Special Skill Certificate Disabled Students in Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Polytechnic, Malaysia. The Person with Disabilities Act 2008 came to enforcement on 2008 in Malaysia whereby the main focus of this Act inclusive of advance the inclusion and participation in the community of persons with disability in education, work, and legal rights. The data for this quantitative study were collected through questionnaires distributed during class. The respondents were students of Hotel Management & Catering Certificate from semester 1 and 3 of December 2014 session from the Department of Tourism and Hospitality. The findings have shown the positive feedback among the students who gained the benefits from the implementations of the Act which focus on educational part. Some of the proposed actions have been identified to improve the students' achievement in these programs. Hopefully in the future, the implication of this Act will bring more benefits for the disabled and uphold their legal rights.

Keywords: Person with Disabilities Act 2008, Special Skill Certificate Disabled Student, Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Polytechnic.

Introduction

Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Polytechnic, Perlis, Malaysia was the 18th polytechnics under Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education and began operating in June 2004. There are eight academic departments in polytechnic and one of them is the Department of Tourism and Hospitality. The department offers courses at certificate and diploma in Hotel and Catering and Tourism. One of the courses is Hotel Management & Catering certificate that has been offered to disable students since Jun 2009 session. There are about 53 of students have obtained that certificate. This shows that disable students have an opportunity to further their studies at higher education levels.

According to Malaysian Act, “persons with disabilities” include those who have long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society (Persons with Disabilities Act, 2008, (PWDA))

Meaning that, the persons with disabilities have to face with their lack of physical and mental sensory impairments compared to normal persons. However, since Malaysian government has provided the basic facilities for these students with disabilities, their needs in the educations become priority.

Literature Review

(Nafiseh Alaghehband et al., 2013) stated that children with “special needs” refers to children with mental or physical disabilities which make special situations involving personalized educational programs, services and essential care requirements. Designing special education programs to serve children with special health care requires exclusive materials, equipment and techniques of teaching in accordance with the capabilities of students.

Moreover, (Ainul, 2012) highlights the prevailing regulations and compliance standards found in Malaysian legal policies, such as the PWDA (2008) (Part III of Act 685), which are aimed at facilitating the creation of accessibility to public facilities, amenities, services and equipment for PWDs. (Ainul, 2012) reiterates that accessibility is the key for PWDs to fully and effectively participate and contribute to the well-being and diversity of the community and society. (Roslinda et al., 2013) also supports the focus of the special education for the PWDs is on the physical, emotional, spiritual and intellectual development so that they can pursue their studies at higher education, get a job and live independently.

Furthermore, (M. Rezaul Islam, 2015) stated that at the global level, the latest achievement is the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the first legally binding disability-specific human rights convention; it is aimed at promoting, protecting and ensuring the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by PWDs.

Under (Section 28(1) of Persons with Disabilities Act 2008 (PWDA) provides access to education that persons with disabilities shall not be excluded from the general education

system on the basis of disabilities, and children with disabilities shall not be omitted from pre-school, primary, secondary and higher education, on equal basis with persons or children without disabilities, including vocational training and lifelong learning. On top of that, under subsection (2), the Government and private educational providers shall, in order to enable persons and children with disabilities to pursue education, provide reasonable accommodation based on the requirements of persons and children with disabilities in terms of, among others, infrastructure, equipment and teaching materials, teaching methods, curriculum and other forms of support that meet the diverse needs of persons or children with disabilities. Apart of that, the government has given opportunities for them in the education and working field as well as legislation of their legal rights.

Besides, under (Section 36 of Education Act 1996, Malaysian Act), it has stated that an established polytechnic under paragraph 34(1)(c) may offer courses of study and training programs approved by the minister; and award certificates, diplomas or such other qualifications as may be prescribed. It shows that as one of the higher education in Malaysia, polytechnics are also play an important role in order to provide suitable education for students especially the disabled. Furthermore, the minister has provided special education in special schools established under paragraph 34(1) or in such primary or secondary schools as the minister deems expedient (Section 40 of Education Act 1996). The minister also has power to prescribe the duration and curriculum on special education as provided under Section 41 of the same Act, the minister may by regulations prescribe the duration of primary and secondary education suitable to the needs of a pupil in receipt of special education; the curriculum to be used in respect of special education; the categories of pupils requiring special education and the methods appropriate for the learning process of pupils in each category of special schools; and any other matters which the minister deems expedient or necessary for the purposes of this Chapter. We can say that the government is concerned with the education for disable students as they mandate the power to the minister to prescribe the duration and curriculum on special education.

(Supiah et al., 2014) mentioned that students with special educational needs (SEN), require range of special support services in order to succeed in school. Typically, these services have been provided in specialized resource rooms or special education classes to meet individual needs of these students.

Research Methodology

Instruments used in this research based on questionnaire. The respondents were students and graduates of Disabled Student Special Skill Certificate from June 2009 until December 2014 session from the Department of Tourism and Hospitality. These students were guided by two sign language translators to complete the questionnaires. This study focuses on the students and graduates feedback on the benefits from the Persons with Disabilities Act 2008 which focus on educational part towards their situations in Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Polytechnic. (Sekaran, 2004) defines that a population as the entire group of people, events or things that the researchers desire to investigate.

Quantitative data had been used which brought out by statistic results and later analyzed to answer the research. Method to analyze the data are based on mean score which interpreted as per (Mohamad Najib, 2003); shown in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1 - Score Mean Interpretation by Mohamad Najib (2003)

Score Mean Range	Score Interpretation
1.00 – 1.50	Strongly Disagree
1.51 – 2.50	Disagree
2.51 – 3.50	Not Sure/Neutral
3.51 – 4.50	Agree
4.51 – 5.00	Strongly Agree

The researcher distributed 60 set of questionnaire to all respondents and can be said reasonable enough for the purpose of distribution among students who took this Special Skill Certificate program between June 2009 until December 2014 session which comprised of 69 students. The sample size measured are based on (Krejcie et al., 1970) table which stated that the degree of reliability is 95% where 50 respondents answered the questionnaire and the amount is greater than 2/3 from total paper that has been distributed. (Goodwin, 2005) stated that the amount of questionnaire answered are not important rather than the answer given from respondents.

The questionnaire was divided into five (5) sections which comprise section A until section E. Section A referred to respondents demography while section B, C, D & E designed for closed questions which can be optionally choose based on Likert 5 scale. Likert 5 scale purposely used to control the bias feedback (Goodwin, 2005).

Thus (Bordens et al., 2002) stated that Likert scale is suitable for feedback kind of research.

Data Analysis

Descriptive analysis used to explain the mean score collected from each item in the research in measuring the extend of positive impact from the implications of Person with Disabilities Act 2008 on TVET Education for disabled students of Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Polytechnic Special Skill Certificate.

There are five (5) parts in the questionnaire conclusive of section A until section E and overall of 25 items were given to the respondents to be answered. The separations of items in questionnaire were explained in the table 4.1. The data collected from section A which emphasized the demography of respondents were only used for researcher's administration purpose and not being analyzed for the research objective.

Table 4.1 - Item's Separation According to the Section in Questionnaire

Section	Item	Quantity
A	Respondents demography	5
B	Students reflection on Polytechnic Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Special Skill Certificate program	5
C	Impacts after taking the program	5
D	Challenges in studies	5
E	Students expectations after finished the program	5

In this research, data analyzed in mean score by using SPSS statistic 17.0 software. For the purpose of analyzing data in section B until section E, the mean score for each item will be described using interpretation mean score table which was introduced by (Mohammad Najib, 2003)

The data analyzed for section B used to survey the students reflection on Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Polytechnic Special Skill Certificate program. The findings from analyzed data have shown majority of the respondents agreed with all items which related to the reflection on Special Skill Certificate program except for the item B10 whereby most of respondents in neutral/unsure position with regard to their knowledge about the readiness to set up their own business after they have finished the study. The overall data analyzed findings for section B next shown the average mean score of 4.14 (refer to Table 4.2) and described as in agreed stage. This basically has shown that respondents are agreed with the items in the said section.

Table 4.2 - Mean Score for students reflection on Polytechnic Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Special Skill Certificate program

Items no.	Items	Mean Score	Interpretation Score
B6	Careers like a chef attracted me to take this course	4.02	Agree
B7	This program ensure me to apply all knowledge to become a good worker in future	4.8	Strongly Agree
B8	I am confident to start looking for a job once graduated	4.78	Strongly Agree
B9	I want the career based on my what I have studied	3.9	Agree
B10	I am ready to work by myself after graduated	3.2	Not Sure/Neutral
Mean Score Average		4.14	Agree

Data analyzed for section C used to survey the impacts on students after taking the Special Skill Certificate program. Majority of the respondents agreed with the positive impact stated in this survey. The overall data analyzed findings for section C next, shown the average mean score of 4.56 (refer to Table 4.3) and described as in strongly agreed stage. This basically has shown that respondents agreed with the items in the said section.

Table 4.3 - Mean Score for Impacts on Student after taking the Special Skill Certificate program

Items no.	Items	Mean Score	Interpretation Score
C11	My knowledge about hotel catering management is less before I'm taking this course	4.92	Strongly Agree
C12	I can foresee what I need to apply in future working surrounding	4	Agree
C13	I can practice especially in cooking based on what I learned in right appropriate way	4.9	Strongly Agree
C14	My self-esteem become more positive rather than before	4.92	Strongly Agree
C15	I have plan to pursue my study once graduated	4.1	Agree
Mean Score Average		4.56	Strongly Agree

Data analyzed for section D used to survey the challenges that faced by students in their studies. Most of the respondents agreed despite of the fact that the subjects taken are hard to learn, they are able to understand and manage to complete every task given with guidance from lecturers and facilities in the institutions. The overall data analyzed findings for section D next shown the average mean score of 4.24 (refer to Table 4.4) and described as in agreed stage. This basically has shown that respondents agreed with the items in the said section.

Table 4.4 - Challenges Faced by Students in Studies

Items no.	Items	Mean Score	Interpretation Score
D16	The course that I'm taking now is hard to understand	4.2	Agree
D17	All lecturers gave full cooperation to ensure me understand what I learned	4.8	Strongly Agree
D18	My institution provide me a good facilities to help me in study	4.02	Agree
D19	Most of normal students did not want to be friend with me	4.3	Agree
D20	I can revise about what I have learned anytime with my friends	3.88	Agree
Mean Score Average		4.24	Agree

Data analyzed for section E used to survey the students expectations after they have completed the Special Skill Certificate program. Majority of the respondents agreed that they will be ready to face the real world and able to compete with normal persons in seeking the jobs. The overall data analyzed findings for section E next shown the average mean score of 4.27 (refer to Table 4.5) and described as in agreed stage. This basically has shown that respondents agreed with the items in the said section.

Table 4.5 - Students expectations after finished the program

Items no.	Items	Mean Score	Interpretation Score
E21	Cooking is the best work basis for me once I'm graduated	4.6	Strongly Agree
E22	I'm ready to compete with the normal person in real working world	3.86	Agree
E23	I can apply all knowledge to become a good worker in future	3.82	Agree
E24	I can handle any problems if its happen in future	4.14	Agree
E25	I will be straight and obey to my company's rule while working	4.96	Strongly Agree
Mean Score Average		4.27	Agree

As per overall result, it can be said that majority of the respondent agreed (total mean score = 4.3) that the implications of Person with Disabilities Act 2008 on TVET Education for Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Polytechnic Special Skill Certificate has given the positive impact towards the acts, mindset of the disabled student in their studies.

Conclusion and Suggestion

The result for this finding shows the positive feedback among the students who gained the benefits from the implementations of the Act which focus on educational part. They know their rights regarding education parts where they get the opportunity to pursue their studies at higher education level especially when polytechnics offers the certificate for these disable students. Under Special Skills Program, Ministry of Higher Education provides financial assistance to students with disabilities for full-time program only. The eligibility for this financial assistance is given regardless of the condition of family income level. Students who receive financial assistance are not eligible for other scholarships or study loans under the Ministry of Higher Education. The terms for this financial assistance are students must be registered with the Social Welfare Department (SWD) and has a disabled registration card. Future research on this topic should incorporate other determinants that can potentially influence the intention to provide education to PWDs. Such factors could include previous contact with the disabled and attributes of PWDs (e.g., gender and educational level). Future studies could also compare and contrast between industries (e.g., manufacturing or service) to confirm within which industry types can PWDs best thrive after they have finished their studies at higher education level. Knowledge in this area will be most useful for training and development initiatives for PWDs. (M. Rezaul Islam, 2015) said that we can say that there are disability Act, social exclusion Act, and welfare policies for fulfilling the needs and rights of the disabled people in Malaysia. If real progress is to be made in achieving better lives for people with disabilities both the perception of people with disabilities and policy objectives must be changed.

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