

Entrepreneurial Attitude of Disabled People Towards Edu– Tourism Industry

Lily Julienti Abu Bakar^a, Armanurah Mohamad^a, Syahrina Abdullah^a, Nor Intan
Saniah Sulaiman^{a*}, Norzalinda Mohd Ali Hanafiah^a

^a*Universiti Utara Malaysia, Sintok, 06010 Changlun, Kedah, Malaysia*

Abstract

Training for disabled people and their entrepreneurial attitude in the edu-tourism industry is about to acknowledge the capability from them within train them on entrepreneurship discipline, particularly in the edu-tourism industry. Not only training, this action research approach also expanded the observation and quality of social care services for persons with disabilities in the tourism industry by looking at the facilities and infrastructure provided in the resort environment. The training methodology used in the training module in entrepreneurship and tourism whereby the participants were given motivation, in-class discussion and indoor/outdoor activities to enable them to explore the subject matters. In addition, this action research enabled the academia to reach a social model of disability through all training exercises and challenge some of the common myths that relegate disabled people to the status of a discriminated-against minority. A part of that, the practitioners has recognized the importance to understand the psychological factor of the disabled people and contributed in formulating an action plan of constructive changes, which participants can make to their work situations and personal lives. Finally, transformation in the social and economic position of disabled people in Malaysia may increase the industrial awareness in corporate social responsibility.

Keywords: Disabled people, entrepreneurship, training, edu-tourism

1. INTRODUCTION

Disabled people are part of the community in our society. Therefore, they have equal rights and opportunities to live a life like other community members. It is our responsibility as a human to ensure proper protection of the interests and welfare of the disabled. In addition, the disabled people need support from the industry who is concerned with human development. This is why, Yayasan Emkay (YE), Yayasan Pulau Banding (PBF) and Belum Rainforest Resort (BRR) emphasized corporate social responsibility as part of their contribution. Currently, the organizations lead several community programs for the local community, which includes social work, economic development and technology sharing. Their aim is to improve the lives of the communities for the better. For this reason, a strategic collaboration has been formed between Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) and the organizations to promote the Entrepreneurship and Edu-Tourism.

Intensive seminar has been conducted by UUM to the strategic partner's staff as a preparation to accept the presence of the disabled people at the BRR. Among the topics presented and discussed are types of disabilities, practical model to assist the disabled and workplace issues for disabled people. This objective of the seminar was to create awareness among the staffs and how they should handle the participants during their presence in the organizations. An important principle underlying this seminar is that issues concerning persons with disabilities should not be treated in isolation, but within the context of normal community services.

The seminar then followed by the Series of Knowledge Transfer Workshop, "Transformation of the Disabled People through Educational –Tourism (Edu-Tourism)" or so called KTP-OKU. The series provided training and ongoing support to the disabled people in the area of tourism-related programs, which include recreational

*Corresponding author. Tel.: +0-604-9286367; Fax: +0-604-9286309
E-mail: norintan@uum.edu.my

activities and eco-tourism. The training center was located at the Belum Rainforest Resort Grik Perak. Strategic partners has benefitted greatly from this series, as this is part of their Corporate Social Responsibility to the community. Various training modules consist of modules in entrepreneurship; Information Technology and Communication (ICT), Social work and Edu-tourism have been provided by UUM and strategic partners. Each of these modules was presented by speakers who are professionals and qualified from UUM and strategic partners.

For this series of workshop, ten participants from disabled people have been selected from a variety of backgrounds. They were contacted and searched through agencies such as the Social Welfare Department, Children Care Center and School for Special Education in Kedah, Perlis and Northern Perak. Some of the participants are also from UUM students who have minor disability too. Their types of disabilities are learning disability and physical disability.

Working with someone, especially with a learning disability challenged our idea as facilitator of what communication is. The researcher need to be careful on our tone of voice and body language as well as the words was used, and remind us that communication is not just about talking but also about listening. Indirectly, it require the speakers to be patient and have high passionate for ensuring they get may grab the required knowledge. This workshop also teaches us on how to be a better communicator, and how you can help someone with a learning disability to get their message across.

2. REVIEW ON ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND EDU-TOURISM IN DISABLE PEOPLE CONTEXT

According to Shane and Venkataraman (2001), entrepreneurship comprises both "enterprising individuals" and "entrepreneurial opportunities". Whereas, Edu-tourism is a form of formal or non - formal learning experience for a tourist or visitor during their vacation. Among the most common form of Edu- tourism are eco-tourism, medical tourism, language courses, culinary training and sports tourism. Now, tourism education has become the main channel of cooperation between the countries as it has the potential to create sustainable economic, social and products that can be exploited by the countries involved.

Knowledge in entrepreneurship and edu-tourism is very useful to disabled people, as self-employment is such a great way for them to survive in competitive environment. However, disabled people are likely to face specific barriers to entering and sustaining entrepreneurship (Kitching, 2014) such as:

- Access to start-up capital, whereby disabled people often experience difficulties financing new start-ups due to limited personal financial resources.
- Benefits trap, whereby disabled people often fear losing the security of regular benefit income.
- Lack of relevant business knowledge and skills.
- Lack of confidence
- Absence of appropriate and sensitive business support

Every human was believed being as a unique individual. Thus, from this action research showing us the noble effort to empower the public (university and industry) to help the participants to become a productive society and can contribute to the prosperity of a country. During the workshop, participants were exposed to entrepreneurial thinking such as identifying business opportunities and creativity & innovation. In addition, the participants were exposed to their self-competence and were given the opportunity to self- assess their competence. Through the entrepreneurship module, participant's strengths and weaknesses have been identified. Most of them have been found creative but lack of confidence and lack of knowledge in business.

2.1 Entrepreneurial attitude and entrepreneurship competency

Attitudes toward entrepreneurship among individual are affected by factors that relate to the acceptability of various actions and the values attached to them. In conjunction to the objection of this project, educate and create awareness to the participants is the main point. Indirectly awareness about entrepreneurship which can bring high status in society, creating job opportunity and it is a good career option, especially for people with disability. According to Hofstede (2001), cultural influences are among the things expressed by the attitudes of individuals towards entrepreneurship. Not only culture, the entrepreneurial climate also an important determinant of entrepreneurial activity. Previous research showed that the following climates encourage individuals to involve in entrepreneurship activities:

- Financial support
- Government policies
- Government programs
- Education and training
- R&D transfer
- Commercial and professional infrastructure

Robinson et al. (1991) stated that attitudes are the best predictors for entrepreneurial tendencies and as these attitudes were formed based on family education and social environment; they can yet be achieved and changed through teaching and learning. Through this project, entrepreneurial attitude and competency among participants has been identified, whereby they have been taught on how to seize opportunities, searching information, creative problem solving and self-confidence.

This has been supported by a study by McClelland, Maddocks & McAdams (1985) who has identified the competencies among successful entrepreneurs in India, Malawi and Ecuador. The results of their research discovered 13 entrepreneurial competencies which inherent in successful entrepreneurs. Among the competencies are:

1. Initiative; (self-initiated individuals)
2. Search, Identify & grab/seize opportunities
3. Perseverance (strong determination, patience)
4. Always searching for Information
5. Emphasize on high standard of work
6. Commitment to agreement/contract
7. Orientation towards perseverance (patience)
8. Systematic Planning, Creative problem solving
9. Self-confidence
10. Firm, Convincing
11. Use Influencing strategy (able to influent other people)

Participants has been introduced to the entrepreneurial competencies which focusing in identifying business opportunities in the tourism industry. According to Kuratko (2009), the business opportunity is to introduce the product at the right time. However, the action taken was too slow which usually lead to business failure. Furthermore, as creativity is an essential element for every individual to survive in life and business, participants has been exposed on how to develop business idea using the right technique and strategies. The creativity of the participants also has been discovered through visual arts and handcrafts activities. Entrepreneurship process not only a job but also a lifestyle which involve creativity and innovation, commitment, reactivity, dynamics, risk taking, vision development, value creation, idealism, opportunity orientation and positive thinking.

ICT stimulation packages also have been introduced to the participants to develop and nurture their ICT skills and innovation, as it is part of their entrepreneurial competencies. Thus, the participants were introduced to the concept of Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Power Point and its importance to the business environment. In addition to the main Microsoft Office, participants were also introduced to the blog development to understand the concept of building a blog for business use, create and manage blog content and introductory of blog attractive yield with a variety of templates. During the seminar, only seven was attended and in Table 1 showing their blog links. However, due on some technical reason, the blogs from majority of participants could not be sustained to being actively updated. Only one of them (KK), who are already publish his blogs before attend the seminar showing his updating his entry about his passionate in nasyeed. Meanwhile two participants were not available to have their blogs since they are not able to come during the training. Even though there a few challenges in ensuring their understandings and grab the new skills in ICT, but with their passionate and high commitment makes they are able to have their own blogs.

Table 1: Blog links created from participating disable people

No.	Nickname	Blog
1.	MA	madinahsweet.blogspot.com
2.	MS	shah7889.blogspot.com
3.	A H	amirulabdullah1993000.blogspot.com
4.	A H B	940623025555.blogspot.com
5.	N A A R	hilmi1995.blogspot.com
6.	M A R	amza92.blogspot.com
7.	M H	feezan5015.blogspot.com
8.	K K	kamipencintanasyeed.blogspot.com
9.	M F H	Null
10.	N H Z M	Null

However, from this training, it shows the ICT can facilitate entrepreneurship for people with a disability. Given the prominence of the internet in today's society and business environment, improving the accessibility of ICT remains a priority for the industry and government. Computer software and the internet are also increasingly essential for small businesses to help entrepreneurs manage tasks such as communication, inventory management and accounting.

Incorporation on interpretation skills may increase the chances of the participants to have positive and effective interactions with people and environment. Interpretation is a communication process that aims to convey the meaning of a thing and its relationship with culture and nature through direct involvement of the users to demonstrate the objects, artifacts, and landscapes at the Pulau Banding area. Interpretation is a process to provide an understanding to the user and can generate interest and awareness about the secrets of the nature (Enos Abijah Mills in Anderson, 2007). According to Tilden (1957), the interpretation is a learning process that focuses on the experiences or express meaning and correlates it with the use of a real object.

3. QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

The objective of this study is to review and explore the attitudes of participants with disabilities after their six months commitment towards KTP-OKU Program in Belum Rainforest Resort. Data has been gathered mainly through qualitative method. Due to that, qualitative analysis was highlighted extensively.

3.1 Satisfaction

A report by the Danish National Centre for Social Research on people with disabilities reveals that such persons are just as satisfied with their working conditions as people without a disability. But they are more concern on the working condition such as the arrangement of the workplace it selves, rest periods and reduced working hours.

According to Nosek (1995), life satisfaction was positively related to social integration and occupation. Whereas environmental or social limitations associated with disability had an adverse impact on life satisfaction, functional limitation had little impact. These findings suggest that satisfaction with personal assistance positively impacts life satisfaction.

Thus, the KTP-OKU project has achieved its objective by providing behavioral supports to the disabled by helping them learn new skills, provide alternatives to challenging behaviors, offer opportunities for choice and social integration, and allow for environmental modifications.

3.2 Decision making

Many countries have laws that prevent people with intellectual disabilities from making decisions because they are perceived by others to be "incompetent" or "incapable". However, Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) (2006) focuses on legal capacity guarantees that all people with disabilities "enjoy legal capacity on an equal basis with others in all aspects of life." This means that all people with disabilities have the right to make decisions.

People with a disability are no different in this regard. However some people may require some additional assistance in order to be able to make and express choices. Such assistance might include access to communication aids or translators, information in different formats, longer timeframes or different environments in which to make decisions (Supporting Decision Making, 2012)

4. RESULTS

A qualitative analysis using interviews was being conducted to support and clarify the quantitative findings that the overall of participant's attitude are at high level after attending KTP-OKU Project for six months. The researchers interviewed four participants to explore their attitudes before and after the project. The result of this interview found that KTP-OKU Project seeks to implement the eight element attitude among project participants, namely courage, confidence, motivation, recognizing self- advantages, planning for the future , willingness to learn , positive thinking and ready to move forward.

4.1 Courage

Courage is the strength derived from the participants who joint this seminar. This attitude can be seen from the expression of participants through the following passage:

OKU1 - "Before this, I was ashamed to join this project but Alhamdulillah after joining all the seminars, I have more courage to talk with other people and learn a lot about public speaking."

OKU2 - "My first impression towards this project, I will not survive until the end of the project. But thank you to this project, which change my perception and now I can talk with people with confidence."

OKU3 - "Before this I feel kind of fear to confront with other people, but until sometime, it was quite okay"

OKU4 - "My intention was to observe the project and I am quite scared at first. However, it was a great experience and I learned that we will have a chance to success as long as we give our self a chance."

4.2 Confidence

Prior joining this project, the majority of participants have low self-confidence. This can be seen from the following expressions:

OKU1- "Before this I have kind of low self-esteem, however, after one month I have high self-confidence to face the society"

OKU2 - "I saw vacancies near Wisma Persekutuan Taiping last week and asking for housekeeping positions. Now I am more confidence to be interviewed and In shaa Allah I will get the position"

OKU3- "This project taught me how to handle myself and being independent. Before this I was with my mom 24 hours".

4.3 Motivation

Disabled participants who have attended this project also found to be more motivated than before. According to participants, the motivation session handled by successful disable people from the industry is very meaningful to them. In addition, other expression from the participants can be seen from the following passage:

OKU4- "Even though I feel exhausted during the seminar, I think there are opportunities for me to work in this industry. I can learned more from the tourism industry"

4.4 Ability to analyze oneself

Before joining the project, most participants only analyze themselves from the vulnerabilities of themselves and feel inferior. This is because, they are not aware of the advantages and potential that exists within them. After joining the project, participants are able to analyze themselves and begin to realize the strength that they have. This can be seen through expressions expressed by participants with disabilities through the following dialog:

OKU-1 " I recognize that I have the ability to do housekeeping work, such as pull the bed sheet to cover the bed and I feel satisfied with what I do, even though my work is quite slow.

OKU-2 "I know I can be a good tour guide"

4.5 Planning for the future

After joining the project, participants have shown interest in planning for their future. This has been expressed by the participant through the following passage:

OKU-3 *"I am quite interested towards tourism industry because I got a lot of knowledge regarding the industry now"*

4.6 Willingness to learn

OKU4- *"If I got a chance to work here, I will learn how to work in green environment. But, is it possible for me to work here without certificate?"*

4.7 Positive thinking

Participants began to think positively about themselves and realize the community acceptance towards them. This can be seen from the following passage:

OKU1- *"I want to move forward ..."*

In addition, participants began to think positively about public acceptance of them. This can be seen from the following passage:

OKU2- *"People view us better and accept us as special person"*

4.8 Willingness to come forward

OKU2- *"I come here for my life experience ... to move forward and don't want to miss the opportunity"*

In research undertaken by Boylan and Burchardt (2003), rebuilding self-esteem was another positive reason cited by people with disabilities for becoming self-employed, as their self-esteem may have been damaged by the onset of disability and subsequently encountering rejection by employers or patronizing attitudes by advisers.

5. DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

Unemployment rate for disabled has held steadily at approximately double the rate of unemployment for normal community. Thus, training project is very important as part of community services to assist them to be more motivated and having knowledge in entrepreneurship. In the KTP-OKU project organized by UUM, the training concentrated towards entrepreneurship in Edu-Tourism sector. Precise information about this project also was available online through <http://ktpokuedutourism.weebly.com/>. This project gave good impacts to all participant, industry involve as also to UUM itself

In addition to the series of seminar training, which teaches entrepreneurial fundamentals along with issues that are specific to the disabled community like benefits counseling or handling attitudes and discrimination, the project also developing awareness among the strategic partners on how to handle disabled people in organization.

This project has been found successful in setting individuals with disability on a journey to a healthy and fulfilling life, where they can participate in all aspects of society. This project also really helps disabled people in changing their attitude to be more entrepreneurial.

Nevertheless, by giving them to involve in the KTP-OKU project, the researcher gave them opportunity to attain informal education; empowering them to enter the workforce; encouraging prosperous and inclusive communities; and challenging stigma and breaking down the barriers that prevent disabled people from living full and meaningful lives.

REFERENCES

- Boylan, A. and Burchardt, T. (2002) *Barriers to Self-employment for Disabled People*, Report for the Small Business Service.
- Hofstede, G., (2001). *Culture's Consequences; Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions and Organizations Across Nations*, 2nd edition, Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Kitching, John (2014) *Entrepreneurship and self-employment by people with disabilities*. (Project Report) Paris, France : Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. 25 p.
- Nicole Hansen and Helle OurA, Nielsen, Oxford Research in <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/observatories>

- Nosek, Margaret, A. Marcus Fuhrer, J. and Carol Potter. (1995). Life satisfaction of people with physical disabilities: Relationship to personal assistance, disability status, and handicap. *Rehabilitation Psychology* 40 (3): 191-202 Relationship to Personal Assistance, Disability Status, and Handicap.
- Robinson, P. B., Stimpson, D. V., Huefner, J. C., Hunt, H. K. (1991). "An Attitude Approach to the Prediction of Entrepreneurship", *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, No. 50, 13-31.
- Shane, S., & Venkataraman, S. (2001). Entrepreneurship as a field of research: A response to Zahra and Dess, Singh, and Erikson. *Academy of Management Review*, 26(1): 13-16.
- Supported Decision Making: A guide for supporters in UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006). In <http://www.un.org/disabilities>.