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Disability Entrepreneurs Behavioural and Perceptions Towards Online-Learning at Entrepreneurship Education Program: SAYLEAD Entrepreneurship League

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Abstract

The research is aims at identifying the potential factors affecting the disabled entrepreneurs in Selangor their social behavioral and engagement during entrepreneurship via online learning and physical education. This paper is exploratory in nature as it attempts to identify the important factors which are related to disabled entrepreneurship. For this reason, Entrepreneurship Selangor's Youth Community (SAY LEAD) Entrepreneurship Selangor developed a 6-month program to bridge entrepreneurship ecosystem for differently abled entrepreneurs in Malaysia. The study explored the level of community engagement of people with disabilities into entrepreneurship education provided by SAY LEAD in Selangor focusing on 4 main issues consists of management, technology and digitalization, engagement and innovation which formed seven (7) modules. 12 entrepreneurs with disabilities (6 females and 6 males) constituted the study sample. The background literature review, complimented by pre-survey evidence gathered during the fieldwork for this study, categorically demonstrates that entrepreneurship with disability people is the most marginalized, socially excluded. The efficiency of entrepreneurial education is determined by the degree to which learners' satisfaction. The greater the level of satisfaction, the greater the efficiency of entrepreneurship education.

Keywords: Disability, Entrepreneurs, Online Learning, Interaction, Education

Introduction

Worldwide, the prevalence of disability is argued to be growing, with population ageing and increasing incidence of chronic health conditions (World Health Organization/World Bank 2011). Approximately 16% of the adult population aged 18 and older worldwide is disabled, with noticeable differences between high countries (12 per cent) and low-income countries (18 per cent) (World Health Organization, 2011). European sources suggest that in 2009 25% of the adult population aged 16+ in EU member states had impairment, defined as a sustained limitation in daily activities, varying from a low of 11% in Malta up to a high of 34% in Slovakia (Grammenos, 2011). Under the Law of Malaysia, persons with Disabilities Act 2008 defines Persons of Disabilities as 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. Many of them are ‘hidden’ at home or in a particular institution due to social stigma, prejudice and environmental barriers which prevent them from participating productively in society. Nonetheless, people with disabilities are part of the community and as legal citizens, they have the right to enjoy all the existing facilities in the country and participate in all aspects of national development including employment in the labour market, without any discrimination. Figure 1.0 represent data of registered disabled person with Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat Malaysia from 2008 till 2019.

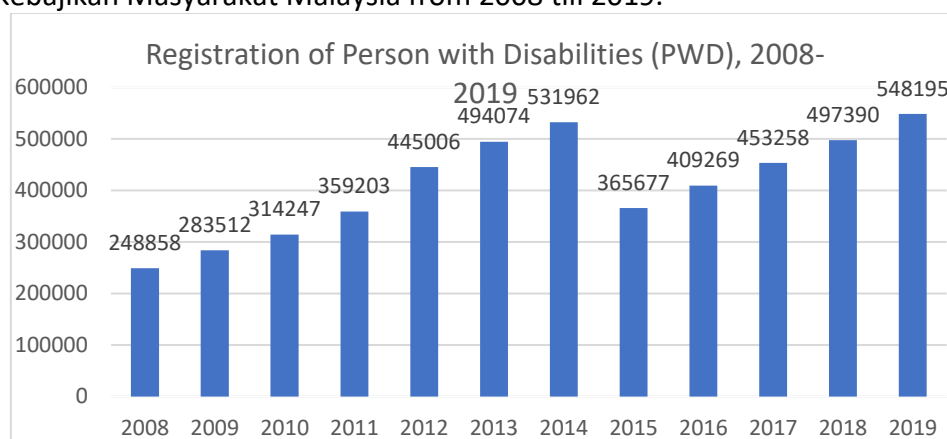


Figure 1.0 Data of pwd registration with Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat Malaysia from 2008 till 2019

Disability affects a wide range of socio-economic outcomes, including labor market participation, but also other factors that shape participation, including education, information, and transport. Disabled people experience lower labor market participation rates than the non-disabled throughout Europe, although activity rates (Grammenos, 2011) and the disabled/non-disabled participation rate differential varies cross-nationally (Pagan, 2009). Low participation rates are costly for the individuals concerned in terms of economic and psychological well-being, for governments in terms of lost output and tax revenues, and increased welfare payments, and for society in terms of the impact of social exclusion and discrimination on civic participation and public life. Due to these factors, it can be observed on the increment of the Financial Assistance for person with Disabilities who incapable of work from 2017-2019 provided by the Malaysian Government as represented in Table 1.0

Table 1.0 Financial Assistance for Person with Disabilities Who Incapable Of Work From 2017-2019

	Number of Recipients	Amount (RM)
2017	57,318	134,170.8
2018	63,091	180,010.3
2019	72,568	211,317.3

Referring to Table 1.0, the amount of financial assistance for PWD who incapable of work were almost double from RM134,170.8 to RM211,317.30. To reduce the too much dependency on financial assistance SAY LEAD program were proposed to identify potential for disabled people to become self-employed or to start and run their own businesses. SAY LEAD is Selangor Youth Community's project under Entrepreneurship Selangor that aims at bridging the gap within the entrepreneurship ecosystem for disabled entrepreneurs. The first of its kind, SAY LEAD is an entrepreneurship league for disabled entrepreneurs to obtain sustainable incomes through businesses. The link between Entrepreneurs with disabilities (EWD) and the SAY LEAD is discussed in this study as Unit Perkhidmatan OKU UiTM (UPO UiTM) is a strategic partner of the project and MOU were signed in between both parties. This link is critical for improving the living conditions and rights of EWD particularly in Selangor.

Each year, Department of Social Welfare gives grants worth RM2,700 (*Geran Pelancaran*) for EWD to start up their businesses plus RM450 per month for Disability Worker Allowance (EPC) (Welfare, 2021). However, several challenges identified among them which must be carefully observed by all stakeholders in improving the economic status of disabled persons. To mention few, mentality of the participants who are too dependent on the handouts, lack of business compliance to the authorities by the entrepreneurs and lack of commercialization opportunities due to low confidence on the products by consumers. As a result, it is critical for the government and many stakeholders involved in disability issues to recognize the significance of the SDG in strengthening the rights of these minority groups and allowing them to participate fully in society.

Literature Review

Entrepreneurship is considered a vital component in the process of economic growth and development. Organizational performance, growth, and development may depend on entrepreneurship to a considerable extent (Antoncic et.al., 2011). This phenomenon can be studied from an individual perspective by analyzing the characteristics and functions of the individual entrepreneur (ByGrave et. al., 1991), the differences between individual entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs (Gartner, 1990) or the collective process of the discovery, evaluation, and exploitation of opportunities (Shane et.al., 2003). The importance of entrepreneurs grew significantly throughout the last decade. Entrepreneurship is a process that consists of revitalizing existing companies, revenue growth, profitability enhancement, and pioneering the development of new products, services, and processes (Davidsson,2005). Innovation is at the heart of the entrepreneurial spirit (Lumpkin et.al,2001). Generating new ideas, transforming these ideas into a profitable business, creating innovative processes, and producing employment are among the many roles taken on by (Gelaidan et.al., 2017). There is also the important question of whether entrepreneurship can be encouraged through education (Sanchez et.al,2018). Education at all levels plays a vital role in the evolution of an

entrepreneurial society (Ivanov et.al., 2012). Enterprise and entrepreneurship-related initiatives are key elements in the portfolio of activities that develop graduate employability (O’Leary, 2015). Many universities are investing in entrepreneurship training programs with the aim of promoting entrepreneurship among their students. Aside from gaining the knowledge required to run a business, educational support can be a stimulating factor that motivates individuals to start their own businesses by enhancing their level of self-confidence (Wilson et.al., 2007). Literature highlights the significant contribution from policies regarding entrepreneurship education, the establishment, and effectiveness of entrepreneurship centers and technology transfer offices, business incubators, and university incentives to graduates’ intentions to start new ventures (Zahari et.al., 2018). However, the results of previous studies are inconsistent. Some of these studies have reported a positive impact of entrepreneurship education because its participants acquire skills, knowhow, and a better entrepreneurial attitude (Dotson et.al., 2013).

The objective of this research is to explore the importance of entrepreneurship education for the improvement of entrepreneurs with disabilities who attended entrepreneurship program. From the program, we will be able to analyze what are the challenges and obstacles faced among EWD participants and identify the significant relationship between the program coaches and EWD entrepreneurship knowledge, skill, and ability.

Methodology

For the purposes of this study, the data are kept confidential without public access. The information was collected by the quantitative technique and the views of the population of the samples were collected using a questionnaire. The primary respondents consisted of a group of 5 Entrepreneurship coaches and 12 disabled entrepreneurs. Surveys and questionnaires are the tool used. The questionnaires focus on 4 main issues consists of management, technology and digitalization, engagement and innovation which formed seven (7) modules. These modules are divided into three (3) phases, and the final step is a private pitching session for only the final Entrepreneurs in front of DYTМ Raja Muda Selangor and other important stakeholders. The top three winners will receive a two-year SAY LEAD PRO program. The flow of the SAY LEAD program is in Fig 1.0. It consists of two phases.

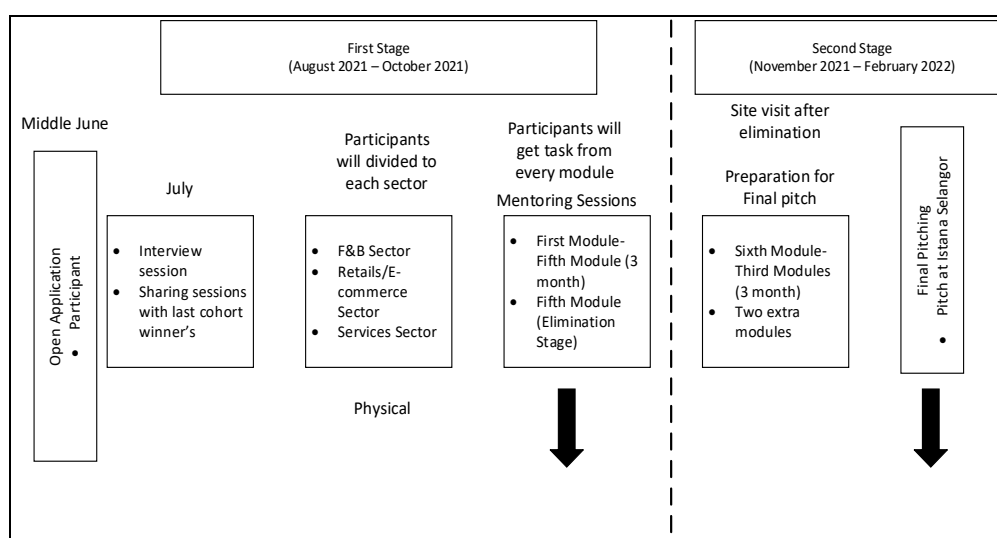


Figure 1.0: Say Lead Program Process

First stage of the program started with the application process in August 2021. Approximately 30-40 EWD applicants were received from JKM and some from applicants applied directly to the program. The selection of the applicants was based on these criteria:

- (i) EWDs applicants was born in Selangor or currently living in Selangor for the last 5 years and from age 18 to 40 years old.
- (ii) Registered with Department of Social Welfare (JKM) as differently abled and currently receiving Disability Worker Allowance (EPC)
- (iii) EWDs have any businesses either properly registered or not, and unable to scale up or financially sustain the businesses.

Based on the criteria above, 20 EWDs were selected and undergoes first stage as detailed in flow chart in Figure 1.0. All 20 EWDs attended orientation on the 11th of September 2021.

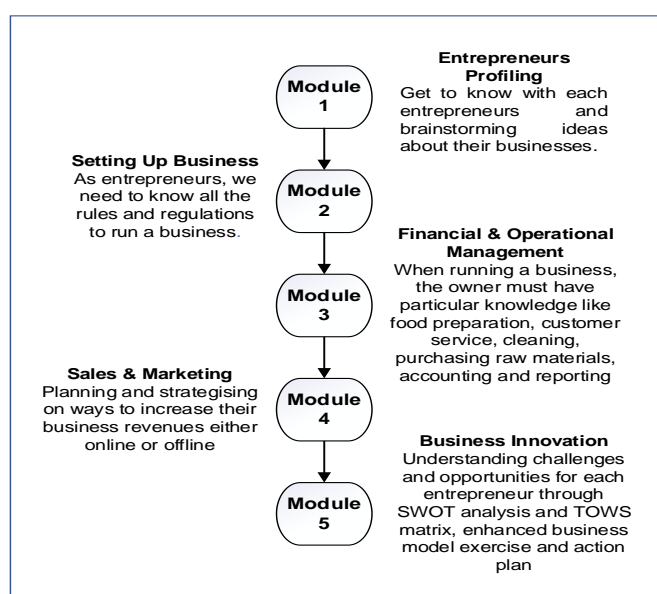


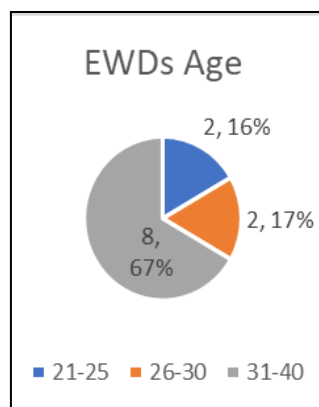
Figure 2.0: Flowchart of stage 1 modules

Figure 2.0 represents the flow chart of the first stage modules consists of module 1 through 5 which were conducted fully online, and five coaches were expected to participate in the session assisting the EWDs. 7 hours is needed to complete each module and was done biweekly. In module 1, EWDs profiling were made. Every EWDs is unique. During this process, the EWD personal understanding of definition of Disability were made. The identification of EWDs based their personal responsibility for their start-up. Profiling was made based these criteria: Responsibility, Creative and Innovation, Flexibility, Skilled Organization and Risk taking. Personal responsibility is the desire to control resources and utilize them to achieve their goal and their commitment were also tested as this is also another quality of entrepreneurial profile. Creativity and novelty are also included in the program since creative and innovative entrepreneurs often come up with new and productive ideas that turn into successful start-ups which not only makes them great leaders but also great motivators. In module 2, the program includes the procedures of setting up business and the rules and regulations to run a business. Module 3, include the financial and operation management. EWDs participants were exposed to knowledge in running business. By coaching and mentoring, EWDs has also been advised on how to enhance business by applying business

model exercise and the important of action plan. Module 4 emphasize on the sales and marketing strategies and ways to increase EWDs business revenues. And finally, module 5 exposed EWDs to challenges and opportunities for each entrepreneur through SWOT analysis and TOWS matrix, enhanced business model exercise and action plan. From August 2021 to November 2022, among the task given to EWDs was to prepare a business proposal and assessment of the final EWDs were made by mentors who assessed EWDs self-improvement before and after program, business improvement as overall, individual commitment (such as the numbers they attend classes), and their business potential to grow, Since this entrepreneur education program concept is more towards competitive and prestige league, based on the data, most of the EWDs who made to the final stage (2nd stage) are physical disability group. This met the main objective of the SAY LEAD program to produce Selangor Disability Entrepreneurs icons. Second stage which commenced from November 2021 till February 2022,12 final EWDs participants were selected. During this stage, coaches and mentors had a site visit to the 12 final EWDs participants business location and will give advised accordingly on how to improve based on another 2 modules. All the modules lesson still via online learning. Face to face sessions were done during first stage. Once completed all the required session, the final EWDs participants will conduct pitching in front of Yang Mulia Raja Muda Selangor, YB Puan Rodziah Binti Ismail, Selangor Entrepreneurship Exco and with other successful entrepreneur be the judge of the final pitching. The winner of the pitching is awarded with in-kind grants as to enhance their existing business strategies and many more.

Result and Discussion

The process of the research divided to three steps. First is the demographic analysis of the EWDs respondents. The second step is the survey and analysis on the perception of the EWDs of people with Disability and their expectations towards the Entrepreneurship program via online and face-to-face and the thirds steps is the survey and analysis of the coaches participates in the program.



Demographic Study

The main instrument used in this project is the questionnaire. The result obtained from 12 respondents who are EWDs.

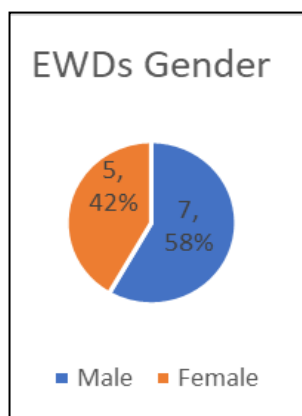


Figure 3.0: EWDs Gender

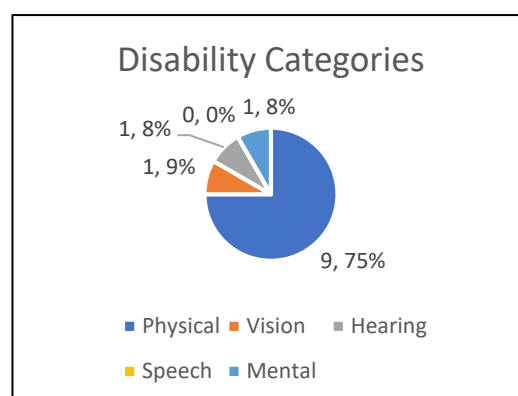


Figure 4.0: EWDs Age

Figure 5.0: EWDs Disability Categories

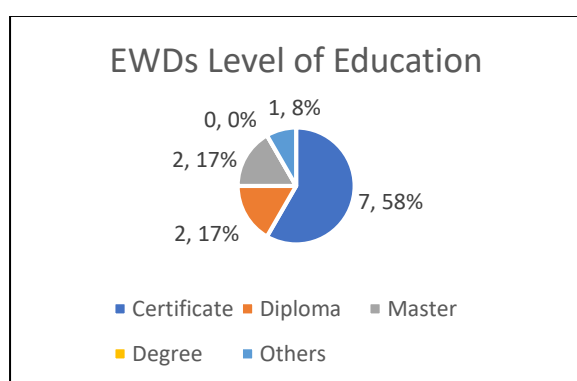


Figure 6.0: EWDs Level of Education Categories

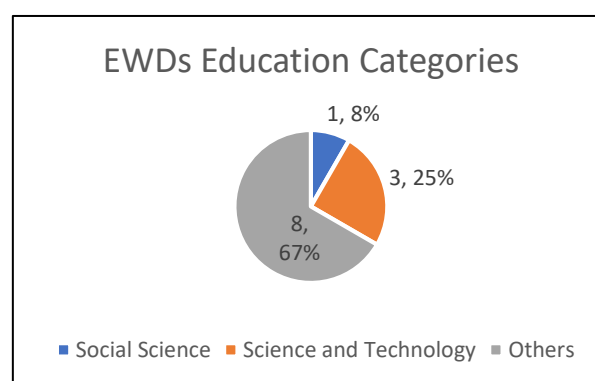


Figure 7.0: EWDs Type of Education Categories

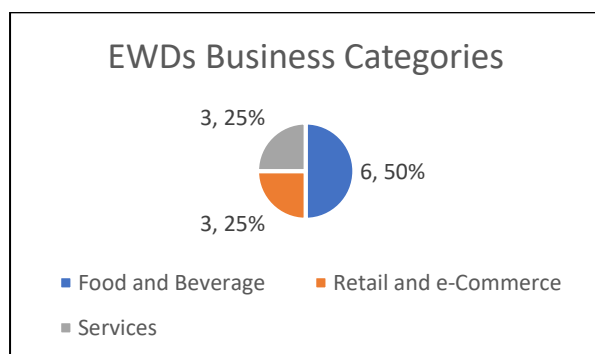


Figure 8.0: EWDs Current Business Categories

Figure 3.0 till Figure 8.0 represents the demographic survey or background survey of the finalized 12 EWDs. 58% of the fin EWDs are female and 42% are male with majority of the EWDs at the age range of 31 years till 40 years, which contributes to 67%. 16% and 17% are at the age range of 21-25 years and 26-30 years. From the 12 EWDs, 75% (9 EWDs) were having Physical Disability. Physical disability is defined as physical limitations or disabilities that inhibit the physical function of one or more limbs of a certain person. EWDs with vision, hearing, and mental disability each with one participant. For education background survey, 7 of them or 58% with certificate, one with other category, two are Diploma holders and two with master’s degree with 67% declared not belong to Social Science nor Science and

Technology education background. 25% of the finalized EWDs having Science and Technology education background and only 1 or 8% with Social Science education background.

EWDs perception and expectations

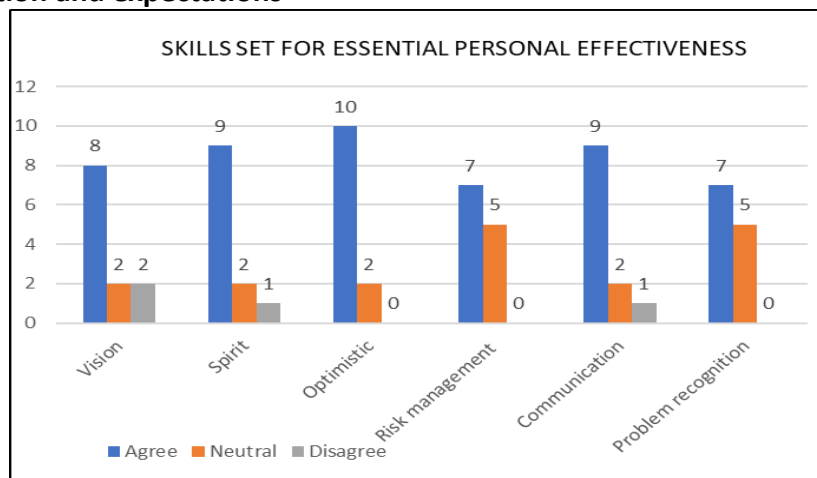


Figure 9.0: Skills set required for personal effectiveness

Figure 9.0 represents the survey of skills set for essential personal effectiveness required by EWDs. Majority of the participants agree that vision, spirit, optimistic, risk management and communication skills are very much important to improve own personal effectiveness. However, only 7 out of 5 EWDs agree problem recognition skills is important.

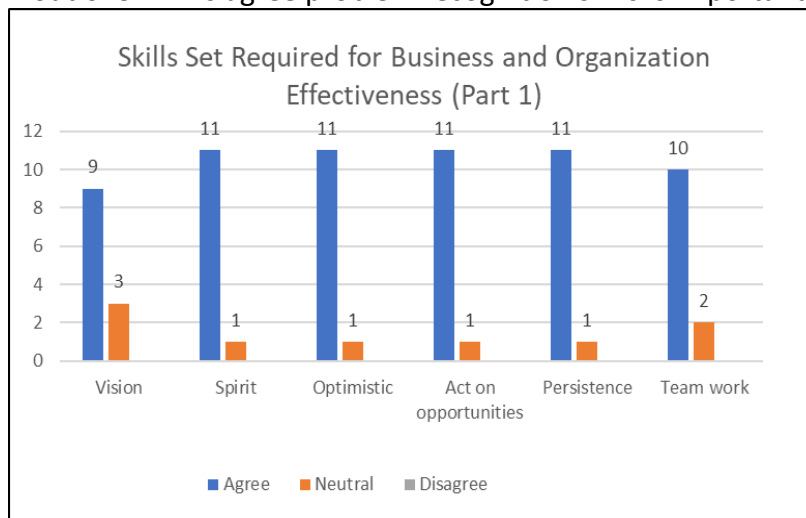


Figure 10.0: Skills set required for business and organization effectiveness (part 1)

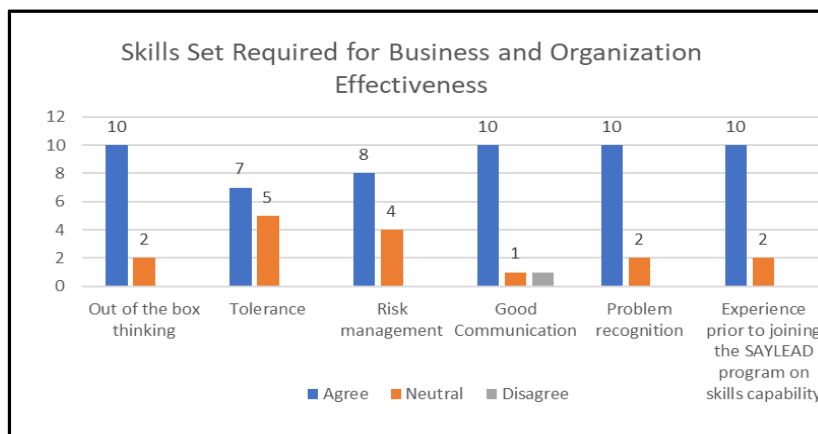


Figure 11.0: Skills set required for business and organization effectiveness (part 2)

However, at the end of the program, majority (10 out of 12 EWDs participants) agrees that all skill stated in Figure 10.0 and Figure 11.0 are very important skills for business and organization effectiveness. Based on survey on the participant experience prior to joining the program, 80% agree that all the skills stated are very much important to build and maintain the current business management. The entrepreneurship education program was done 7 hours per day via online learning from coaches and it was done biweekly. Based on the survey obtained from EWDs participants, 10 out of 12 or 83% of them agrees that the application of digital technology is very useful for digital marketing or online marketing. As this is the common ways in the digital era to connects with potential customers via internet and other forms of digital communication, the advantages of good communication technique and strategies, creates a network culture with other organizational environments and therefore increase EWDs product marketability as presented in Figure 12.0.

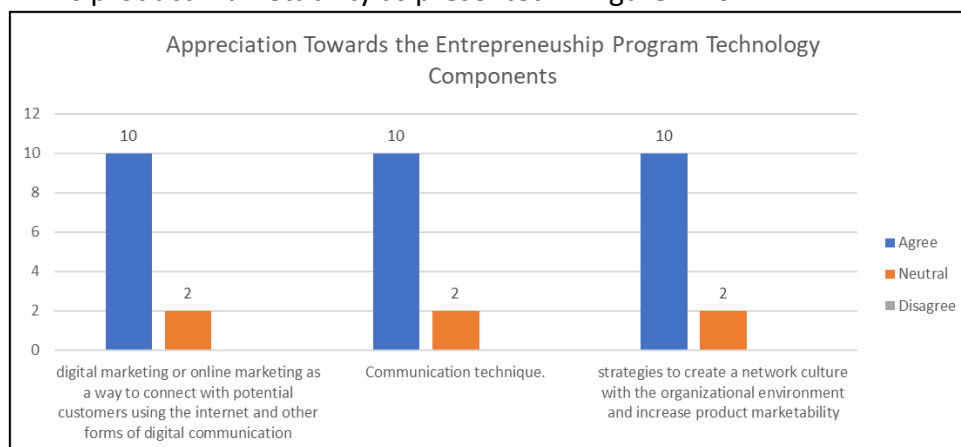


Figure 12.0: EWDs appreciation towards the technology components in entrepreneurship education program Say lead program coach perceptions towards the program and EWDs

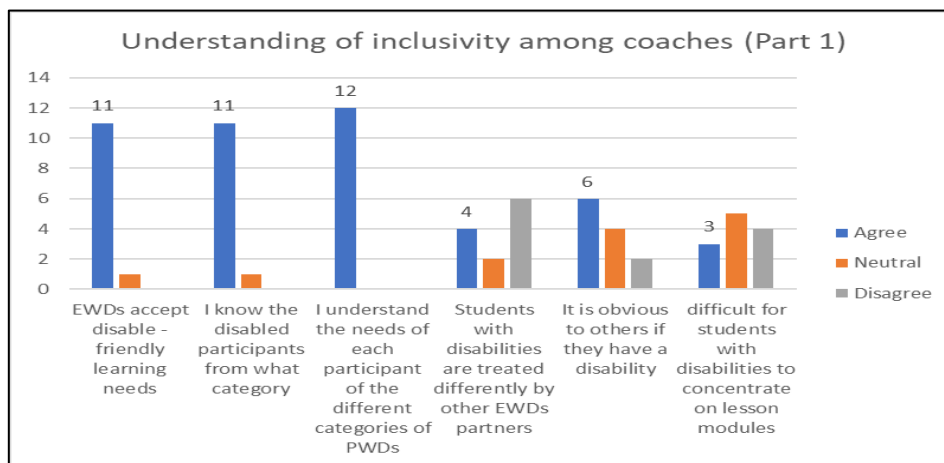


Figure 13.0: Entrepreneurship education program coaches understanding of inclusivity (part 1)

The final part of the survey was the coaches understanding of inclusivity towards EWDs as presented in Fig 13.0-14.0. Most of the EWDs agreed that the entrepreneurship education program with online learning with the coaches helps a lot for the disability. This is since it minimizes the movement or time for the EWD to travel compared to the travel which required fully physical attending classes. consists of online learning. By spending 7 hour per day and biweekly throughout the program the coaches are familiar with the disability categories and the individual needs for EWDs with different categories. However, part of them felt that some EWDs have difficulty to concentrate on lesson modules since it requires 7 hours of online learning.

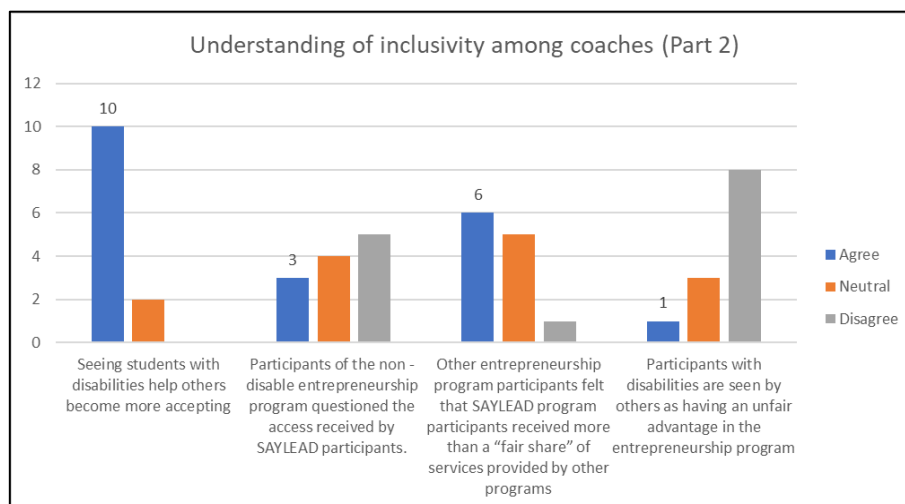


Figure 14.0: Entrepreneurship education program coaches understanding of inclusivity (part 2)

Conclusions

Based on the data obtained during the SAY LEAD program, this study increases the involvement of entrepreneurship research such as "disabled entrepreneurship." This study could provide an overview of the factors that influence the entrepreneurial attitude during the program. Moreover, in this case, we have discovered that participants with computer skills have a greater advantage than others especially the usage of media social as marketing

tools whereby fast technological development means that computing abilities are essential in almost all business projects and it catalyzes entrepreneurial initiatives.

Acknowledgment

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