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**PHASE 1 REPORT**

**PROGRAM TITLE**

**EMPOWERING PERSON WITH DISABILITIES FOR BETTER  
CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN MALAYSIA**

**SUB-PROGRAM TITLE**

**Development of Guided Self-Help (GSH) Rehabilitation Counselling  
Module to Enhance Self-Esteem and Soft Skills among People with  
Disabilities in Malaysia**



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## **PWD Needs Analysis Report**

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### **Introduction**

Past research revealed that most persons with disabilities (PWDs) tend to have low self-esteem, lack of soft skills, lack of behavior functionality, and lack awareness of their legal rights and relevant laws concerning PWD. This phenomenon has led to many negative consequences in their life including limited career opportunity. Drawing on rehabilitation and multicultural counselling literature, this proposed study aims (a) to assess the current level of self-esteem, soft skills, functionality, and legal awareness, needs for intervention, and work-life challenges among PWDs; and (b) to develop a guided self-help rehabilitation counselling module to empower PWDs' in Malaysia via a website or phone app platform.

The first phase of the research involves conducting a need analysis survey for persons with disabilities (PWD). The main purpose of this need's assessment is to identify what are their needs, determine the severity of their needs and pinpoint the type of assistance they require to increase their quality of life. The responses gathered from this survey will ensure prioritized, focused and response planning when coming up with the guided self-help rehabilitation counselling module.

### **Procedure**

After obtaining University of Malaya Research Ethics Committee's (UMREC) approval on 19 January 2021, the survey was sent to participants via google form. Responses were gathered from January to March 2021 and a total of 219 PWD completed the survey. The survey was divided into five sections which are (a) demographic details; (b) information and communications (ICT) use; (c) career needs; (d) use of prosthetic limbs; and (e) legal rights.

### **Findings**

Most of the participants are females ( $N=125$ , 57.1%), Malays ( $N=177$ , 80.8%), Muslims ( $N=189$ , 86.3%) and have some form of physical disability ( $N=137$ , 62.6%). The mean age of is 34.91 years old and standard deviation value is 10.51. In addition, majority of the participants has a high school diploma ( $N=59$ , 26.9%), are unemployed ( $N=53$ , 24.2%) and have household income ranging from RM1,000 and below ( $N=65$ , 29.7%). The demographic details of the participants are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Demographic profile

No.		Demographic Details	Frequency	Percentage %
1	Gender	Male	94	42.9
		<b>Female</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>57.1</b>
2	Age Group	17 – 22	25	11.4
		<b>23 – 28</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>21.5</b>
		29 – 34	37	16.9
		<b>35 – 40</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>21.5</b>
		41 – 46	32	14.6
		47 – 52	15	6.8
		53 – 58	10	4.6
		59+	6	2.7
3	Ethnicity	<b>Malay</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>80.8</b>
		Chinese	13	5.9
		Indian	11	5.0
		Others	18	8.2
4	Religion	<b>Islam</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>86.3</b>
		Christian	15	6.8
		Hindu	10	4.6
		Buddhist	5	2.3
5	Marital status	<b>Single</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>60.7</b>
		Married	76	34.7
		Widow/Widower/Divorced	10	4.6
6	Household Income (RM)	<b>1,000 and below</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>29.7</b>
		1,000 to 1,999	58	26.5
		2,000 to 2,999	34	15.5
		3,000 to 3,999	19	8.7
		4,000 to 4,999	11	5.0
		5,000 and above	32	14.6
7	Residential area	<b>Urban</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>60.7</b>
		Rural	86	39.3
8	Disability category	Visual	40	18.3
		Hearing	19	8.7
		<b>Physical</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>62.6</b>
		Learning	6	2.7
		Mental	7	3.2
		Speech	2	0.9
		Multiple disabilities	8	3.7
9	Current occupation	Public servant	37	16.9
		Private sector employee	45	20.5
		Student	30	13.7

Table 1 (cont.)

10	Highest level of education	<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>24.2</b>
		Working part time	12	5.5
		Others e.g., self-employed	42	19.2
		<b>UPSR</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4.6</b>
		<b>PMR/PT3</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>10.0</b>
		<b>SPM</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>26.9</b>
		<b>STPM</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>5.9</b>
		<b>Diploma</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>11.0</b>
		<b>Degree</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>22.4</b>
		<b>Others (e.g., Certificate, Master, PhD)</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>19.2</b>

As for part B (use of ICT), most of the participants stated that there is a need to develop a specialized website for self-empowerment and career advancement for PWD ( $N=193$ , 88.1%). However, they prefer a phone app instead of a website ( $N=153$ , 69.9%). Most of them agree that the necessary content for the website or phone app should include important information, videos and a live chat option. Table 2 summarizes the responses acquired from Part B (use of ICT) of the survey.

Table 2: Use of ICT

No.	Questions		Frequency	Percentage %
1	Familiarity with Microsoft Office	<b>Word</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>93.6</b>
		Excel	142	64.8
		PowerPoint	130	59.4
		Outlook	58	26.5
		Teams	44	20.1
2	Use of Smartphone	<b>Yes</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>96.8</b>
		No	7	3.2
3	Phone Software	<b>Android</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>84.5</b>
		iOS	34	15.5
4	Need for website for career and self-empowerment	<b>Yes</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>88.1</b>
		No	26	11.9
5	Preferred platform	Website	66	30.1
		<b>Phone App</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>69.9</b>
6	Content needed for website	<b>Information only</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>75.8</b>
		Interactive games	74	33.8
		<b>Video</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>68.9</b>
		Podcast	85	38.8
		<b>Live chat</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>59.8</b>

Table 2 (cont.)

7	Content needed for phone app	<b>Information only</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>73.1</b>
		Interactive games	87	39.7
		<b>Video</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>68.9</b>
		Podcast	94	42.9
		<b>Live chat</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>64.8</b>

In terms of career needs (Part C), most of the participants stated that they need more information to improve their self-confidence (85.8%) and relationship with others (77.2%). In terms of soft skills, they need more information to enhance their communication skills (80.4%), self-confidence (79.5%), creativity (68.5%) and problem-solving skills (68.5%). They stated that they would be interested in lectures, communication activities and teamwork activities to improve their self-esteem and soft skills. As for career empowerment activities, the participants would like more workshops to improve their interview skills, personal and career development as well as more information about job vacancies.

In terms of suggestions, the participants suggested to include more Technical and Vocational Training (such as sewing, fishing, farming, art and music, hairstyling, massage therapy, cosmetology and make-up artist courses), Business management courses (such as project management, public relations, customer service, marketing and investment skills), Sports and physical therapy (archery and swimming), Financial assistance (PWD scholarships, welfare payments and money management skills) and Emotion management skills. Table 3 presents the summary of the responses attained from Part C (career needs) of the survey.

Table 3: Career Needs

No.		Questions	Frequency	Percentage %
1	Info needed for self- empowerment	Self-esteem	154	70.3
		Self-efficacy	164	74.9
		<b>Self-confidence</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>85.8</b>
		Self-concept	129	58.9
		<b>Relationship with others</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>77.2</b>
2	Soft-skills needed to enter into the working world	<b>Communication skills</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>80.4</b>
		<b>Self-confidence</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>79.5</b>
		Critical thinking	124	56.6
		<b>Creativity</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>68.5</b>
		Leadership skills	129	58.9
		Teamwork	145	66.2
		<b>Problem solving skills</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>68.5</b>
		Time management skills	141	64.6

Table 3 (cont.)				
3	Interesting Self-esteem activities	Interactive games through phone or computer	97	44.3
		Physical games	86	39.3
		Arts and crafts	96	43.8
		<b>Lecture</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>51.1</b>
		Writing activities	72	32.9
		<b>Communication activities</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>58.4</b>
		<b>Teamwork activities</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>51.1</b>
4	Interesting Soft skills activities	Interactive games through phone or computer	95	43.4
		Physical games	83	37.9
		Arts and crafts	93	42.5
		<b>Lecture</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>53.0</b>
		Writing activities	69	31.5
		<b>Communication activities</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>59.4</b>
		<b>Teamwork activities</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>53.9</b>
5	Interesting Career empowerment activities	Formal letter writing (job application)	122	55.7
		Resume writing	125	57.1
		<b>Interview skills</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>60.7</b>
		Career fair/carnival	103	47.0
		Guidance and counselling	110	50.2
		<b>Personal and career development workshop</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>62.6</b>
		Information about higher education	70	32.0
		<b>Information about job vacancy</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>61.2</b>

In terms of Part D (use of prosthetic limbs), only 10% ( $N=22$ ) of the participants use prosthetic limbs, mostly prosthetic leg ( $N=13$ , 59%). Though most of them agree that their prosthetic limbs help them in their daily work ( $N=18$ , 81.8%), more than half of them aren't satisfied with their prosthetic limbs ( $N=12$ , 54.5%). Reasons for their dissatisfaction are due to function (too heavy, not waterproof, not user friendly), suitability (wrong size socket) and quality (easily damaged). Most of them would like more information about the proper use of their prosthetic limbs. Table 4 summarizes the responses obtained for Part D of the survey.

Table 4: Use of prosthetic limbs

No.	Questions	Frequency	Percentage %
1	Are you using prosthetic limbs		
	Yes	22	10.0
	<b>No</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>90.0</b>
2	Type of prosthetic limbs		
	<b>Prosthetic leg</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>59.1</b>

Table 4 (cont.)

	Prosthetic arm	2	9.1
	Others	7	31.8
3	Source of prosthetic limb (funded by)		
	Funded by an organization	7	31.8
	<b>Funded by SOCSO</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>45.5</b>
	Self-funded	4	18.2
	Others (partial funding)	1	4.5
4	How long have you been using the prosthetic limbs?		
	less than 1 year	2	9.1
	<b>1 to 2 years</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>27.3</b>
	2 to 3 years	2	9.1
	3 to 4 years	3	13.6
	4 to 5 years	5	22.7
	more than 5 years	4	18.2
5	How many times did you replace your prosthetic limb?		
	<b>Never</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>27.3</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>27.3</b>
	2	5	22.7
	5	4	18.2
	more than 5 times	1	4.5
6	Are you satisfied with your prosthetic limb?		
	Yes	10	45.5
	<b>No</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>54.5</b>
7	Does the prosthetic limb help you in your daily work?		
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>81.8</b>
	No	4	18.2
8	Do you have enough info about your prosthetic limbs?		
	Yes	11	50.0
	No	2	9.1
	Maybe	9	40.9

Lastly, in Part E (legal rights), a great bulk of the participants would like to know about their legal rights ( $N=204$ , 93.2%). They admitted to not knowing much about the PWD Act 2008 ( $N=119$ , 54.3%). Besides that, they would like for the government to improve access to facilities/ infrastructure ( $N=198$ , 90.4%), public transportation ( $N=174$ , 79.5%) as well as provide more education opportunities ( $N=187$ , 85.4%) and medical care for PWD ( $N=164$ , 74.9%). The suggestions for improvement for the PWD Act 2008 include stricter enforcement of the PWD Act 2008 to better protect the rights of the group, more job opportunities, special education and access-friendly facilities. Table 5 summarizes Part E (legal rights) of the survey.

Table 5: Legal rights

No.	Questions	Frequency	Percentage %
1	More info on PWD's legal rights		
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>93.2</b>
	No	15	6.8
2	Knowledge of PWD Act 2008		
	Yes	100	45.7
	<b>No</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>54.3</b>
3	PWD Act 2008 needs changes		
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>68.5</b>
	No	69	31.5
4	Infrastructure/facilities needs improvement		
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>90.4</b>
	No	21	9.6
5	Public transportation needs improvement		
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>79.5</b>
	No	45	20.5
6	Access to education needs improvement		
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>85.4</b>
	No	32	14.6
7	Medical care needs improvement		
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>74.9</b>
	No	55	25.1

The suggestions for improvement can be divided into four sections which are improvement to the infrastructure/facilities, transportation, education and medical care for PWD. In terms of infrastructure/facilities, the participants recommended to include more parking, public toilets, wheelchair accessible paths, ramps and disability friendly furniture at the workplace for PWD. Whereas in transportation, the participants suggested for more special seating in public transportation, to ensure that these special seating are not misused by able-bodied people, more ramps, more public transport in rural areas, as well as subsidized or free public transport tickets and toll fees for PWD. As for education, the participants suggested to include more financial assistance (scholarships or loans), build more disability training centers, more quota for PWD to enter into universities, free transport to school and more accessibility friendly facilities in schools and universities. While for medical care, they would like to have a specialized customer service counter for PWD in hospitals (so they do not have to wait long



to visit the doctor and are able to obtain information easily) and more financial assistance to bear medical costs (e.g., medicine, medical fee, prosthetic limbs, physical therapy, vitamins and supplements).

## **Discussion**

This survey successfully gathered the responses of 219 PWD. They have provided their feedback on the elements that needed to be included in the self-help rehabilitation module and activities. Nonetheless, the survey did not include the preferred language for the website/app. Hence, it is decided to develop the website and phone app in dual language (English and *Bahasa Malaysia*). In spite of the fact that most of the participants preferred a phone app (69.9%), the researchers decided to build both a website and phone app for PWD as there was a small number of participants that did not have a smart phone (3.2%). Hence, all youth with physical disabilities will have the opportunity to access the website and obtain relevant information regarding self-empowerment and career advancement.

One of the findings from the survey was to include a live chat option. However, due to budget constraints, the researchers will not be able to include it on the website and phone app. Nevertheless, researchers will include important information and pre-recorded videos on the website and phone app as requested by the participants. Though, most of the participants had some form of physical disabilities (62.6%), only 22 (10%) of them used prosthetic limbs. As such, responses obtained for the use of prosthetic limbs are limited due to small sample size. Despite these limitations, this survey provided sufficient information from a large sample size in which the researchers can use as a foundation when developing the website and phone app.

## **Conclusion**

The findings of this survey will be used to develop a guided self-help rehabilitation module for self-empowerment and career advancement among youth with physical disabilities. Subsequently, this module will be incorporated into a website and phone app.

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