

# **SELF-IMPROVEMENT FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES: A COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT ENDEAVOUR**

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## **Abstract**

People with disabilities are those who have limitations in communicating with other individuals. Society's negative view of people with disabilities still provides limitations, especially in terms of employment, so empowerment in improving the quality of their lives needs to be carried out. This research aims to provide an overview of empowerment for people with disabilities. This research is a literature review and this method is research that uses secondary data. Based data was obtained using the help of the Publish or Perish search tool with the keyword "Empowerment of People with Disabilities" on Google Scholar with a maximum number of results of 100 and 8 articles with high citations and only 6 articles will be taken. The research result concluded that empowerment of people with disabilities requires good cooperation from various parties, including the government, organizations of people with disabilities, families, the surrounding environment, and even the people with disabilities themselves. Things that can be done to improve the quality of education for people with disabilities are providing education, mentoring, training, social assistance, business capital, and empowerment.

**Keywords:** *Empowerment; People with Disabilities; Personal Quality*

## **Abstrak**

Penyandang disabilitas adalah mereka yang memiliki keterbatasan dalam melakukan komunikasi dengan individu lain. Pandangan negatif masyarakat terhadap penyandang disabilitas masih memberi keterbatasan terutama dalam hal pekerjaan sehingga pemberdayaan dalam meningkatkan kualitas diri perlu dilakukan. Tujuan penelitian

ini adalah untuk memberi gambaran mengenai pemberdayaan pada penyandang disabilitas. penelitian ini adalah literatur review dimana metode ini merupakan penelitian yang menggunakan sumber data sekunder. Data based diperoleh dengan menggunakan bantuan alat pencarian referensi Publisg or Perish dengan kata kunci “Pemberdayaan Penyandang Disabilitas” pada Google Scholar dengan maximum number of result 100 dan akan diambil 8 artikel dengan high cites dan hanya 6 artikel. Hasil penelitian menyimpulkan bahwa pemberdayaan terhadap penyandang disabilitas memerlukan kerja sama yang baik dari berbagai pihak baik dari pemerintah, organisasi-organisasi penyandang disabilitas, keluarga, lingkungan sekitar, bahkan para penyandang disabilitas itu sendiri. Hal yang dapat dilakukan untuk meningkatkan kualitas diri penyandang disabilitas adalah dengan melakukan edukasi, pendampingan, pelatihan, pemberian bantuan sosial, pemberian modal usaha dan pemberdayaan.

**Kata Kunci:** *Pemberdayaan; Penyandang Disabilitas; Kualitas Diri*

## **A. Introduction**

People with disabilities in Indonesia are still underestimated and undervalued because they do not have the physical perfection to do a certain job or activity (Fischer, 2007). The average person with a disability has an underprivileged and backward family background (Elder & Lubotsky, 2009). People with disabilities are those who have limitations in communicating with other individuals (Buchholz et al., 2020). The term disability is better known by terms that develop in society with other terms such as disability, tuna, people who are impaired or lose the ability to maintain their lives, people with disorders, and other terms (Suharto et al., 2016). Some factors that cause disability include accidents, disasters, conflicts, diseases, certain health conditions, etc (Hemingway & Priestley, 2006).

The negative view that develops in society towards people with disabilities still provides limitations, especially in terms of employment (Martin & Honig, 2020). Discrimination, marginalization, stigma, and violence against people with

disabilities are serious problems (Sayce, 1998). One of the right solutions to deal with these problems is to empower people with disabilities so that they can create a climate and a prosperous society for people with disabilities (Albrecht & Devlieger, 1999). The physical and mental limitations of people with disabilities, when compared to society in general, need to get empowerment or activities that are positive to increase income or hone abilities because often these limitations make people with disabilities feel hopeless (Unit, 2005). The demands of various aspects of life make people with disabilities productive so that they can add value to themselves and contribute to society and government (Hammel et al., 2008).

This research will assist in identifying concrete ways to empower people with disabilities (Wass & Safari, 2020). Self-improvement is key to giving them the confidence, autonomy, and independence to overcome the challenges they meet (Hizi, 2018). Self-improvement can be an effective tool in overcoming stigma and discrimination against people with disabilities (Silverman & Cohen, 2014). By emphasizing their potential and abilities rather than limitations, this research hopes to change people's perceptions and create a more inclusive environment (Belon et al., 2014).

This research can help identify factors that limit the access of people with disabilities to education, employment, and community life opportunities (Hammel et al., 2015). As such, empowerment efforts focus on ensuring equality and equal opportunity (Harpur, 2012). Self-improvement can have a positive impact on the mental and emotional well-being of people with disabilities (Greenglass & Fiksenbaum, 2009). By helping them develop social, coping, and self-adjustment skills, this research can contribute to the improvement of their psychological well-being (Maor et al., 2022).

The findings of this study can be used to develop a more effective inclusive education model (Robiyansah, 2020). This includes learning strategies, specialized support, and school policies that support the optimal development and empowerment of disabled students (Field, 1996). The results of this study can provide

a basis for better policy changes at the government and community levels (Van Aalst et al., 2008). A better understanding of the needs and potential of people with disabilities can lead to changes in policy-making that support inclusivity and empowerment (Trani et al., 2011).

Self-improvement often involves the use of assistive technology (Garcia et al., 2019). This research can stimulate innovation in the development of technologies that can help people with disabilities overcome their barriers, such as accessibility software or adaptive assistive devices (Boot et al., 2018). This research can be a tool to educate the public about the diversity and abilities of people with disabilities (Mateos-Sanchez et al., 2022). By highlighting their achievements and potential, this research can help change society's perceptions and attitudes towards people with disabilities (Esmail et al., 2010).

By exploring these aspects, this research creates an important contribution to empowering people with disabilities and creating a more inclusive and diversity-friendly society. Based on this explanation, this literature review research aims to analyze and describe the effectiveness of empowerment programs for people with disabilities in improving their quality of life.

## **B. Method**

This article uses the descriptive qualitative method; a research method that uses qualitative data, to be presented descriptively. This type of research is a literature review, and this method is research that uses secondary data sources. Obtained data uses the *Publish or Perish* reference search tool with the keywords "*Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities*" on Google Scholar, with a maximum number of results of 100. There will be 8 articles with high sites and only 6 articles that can then be analyzed.

## **C. Results and Discussion**

A disability is an impairment or defect that indicates a lack of function that can be objectively measured and seen where there is a loss or abnormality in one part of a person's body (Verbrugge & Jette, 1994). These conditions often make people with disabilities

receive inappropriate treatment, negative stigma, and discrimination so people with disabilities are often victims of bullying, ostracised, low education, and limited employment opportunities(Forster & Pearson, 2020).

The results of research conducted by Siregar and Purbantara state that Panggungharjo Village can change the discriminatory stigma on people with disabilities to take more meaningful actions(Siregar & Purbantara, 2020). Where people with disabilities are the subjects of development by taking an active role in cultural and arts programs. However, they are still unable to achieve economic independence due to the view that people with disabilities still have limitations to work. The role of the government of Panggungharjo Village, Bantul Regency, Yogyakarta Province in dismissing discrimination against people with disabilities by channeling village funds in collaboration with BUMDes to empower people with disabilities, by involving them as staff or employees of work units and artists for Kampoeng Matraman tourism. This empowerment has succeeded in changing the perspective of the community towards people with disabilities and increasing their independence because they have the opportunity to work and earn income.

Other research results such as research conducted by Andayani and Afandi state that empowerment is long life(Andayani & Afandi, 2019). The purpose of advocacy is to change the perspective and perception of policymakers in higher education to make universities inclusive and friendly to people with disabilities. Furthermore, the role of parents, teachers, and neighbors can foster the independence of persons with disabilities, especially access to higher education. Then this empowerment activity must be participatory. This shows that UIN Sunan Kalijaga is one of the universities with the largest number of students with disabilities in Indonesia and the first university to have a special center that serves students with disabilities, namely the Disabled Service Centre (PLD). In particular, the empowerment carried out uses six types of approaches, namely learning by doing, problem-solving, self-evaluation, self-development and coordination, self-selection,

and self-decision. Meanwhile, the mentoring process is carried out in three stages, namely socialization and engagement, intervention (empowerment and mentoring), and termination and evaluation of the program.

The results of further research conducted by Luthfia state that empowerment needs to be carried out by the government and organizations in addition to providing direct social assistance (Luthfia, 2020). The government needs to take basic income security more seriously for a long-term solution. This shows the government's efforts to embrace organizations of persons with disabilities to alleviate the needs of persons with disabilities during the pandemic through social assistance. However, this is only temporary. Meanwhile, what people with disabilities need is guaranteed fulfillment of their needs during a pandemic. This can be done by organizing empowerment. Some of the empowerments initiated by persons with disabilities during the pandemic are cloth masks, transparent masks for communication, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), tissue holders, and so on. The role of the government is to facilitate regulations, equipment, raw materials, and funding.

The results of research conducted by Baturangka et al. state that the empowerment carried out by the Manado City Social Service has several roles including facilitative, educative, and technical roles which are quite good although still not optimal (Baturangka et al., 2019). This can be seen from the uneven training and social assistance received by people with disabilities. The role of Manado City Social Service as a facilitator is still not optimal. This is shown by the uneven social assistance provided, even though the Manado City Social Service has implemented a Productive Economic Enterprises (UEP) program fulfillment in providing business capital strengthening. In addition, the fulfillment of medical equipment is still missing. Then, the role of education is to increase knowledge in improving physical, mental, spiritual, and social abilities. Furthermore, the technical role aims to improve the quality of data verification and validation. However, data collection

is still not optimal due to the availability of the latest data, which affects the empowerment process.

The results of Wulansari and Prabawati's research state that Malang Kota Baru Station provides facilities for the disabled according to the compliance factor, namely there is a disabled toilet, a 10° slope ramp, a health post, there is no special disabled parking and waiting room, ramp elements, there is a hollow on the terrace, there is no special staircase to get on and off the train for the disabled (Wulansari & Prabawati, 2021). The smooth routine factor still has complaints from passengers who are uncomfortable with the stairs facility to get on and off the train. Performance and impact factors, good performance from the station in assisting activities, positive impact for disabled when their facilities are fulfilled easier when doing activities, negative impact when facilities are not fulfilled they have difficulty doing activities at the station. The research suggestion is that a special disabled parking and waiting area be provided, ramp elements be given iron handles and not exceed the maximum slope limit, the hollows on the terrace be equal, and stairs to get on and off the train. This shows that Implementation is carried out quite well seen from criteria such as regulatory compliance, smooth routines, and expected performance and impact. But in this case, there are still obstacles that occur which make the implementation still not fully successful in providing convenience or accessibility for people with disabilities at Malang Kota Baru Station. The level of compliance has been carried out by Malang Kota Baru Railway Station as the implementor and service employees in carrying out their duties and obligations by providing accessibility for persons with disabilities in the form of special toilets with signs/signage, there are ramps/stairs ramps, there are health posts. However, there is accessibility that has not been provided such as special disabled parking spaces, special disabled waiting rooms, elements on disability ramps, and so on.

The results of Rachmawati and Muhtadi's research stated that the increased welfare and independence of persons with disabilities (Rachmawati & Muhtadi, 2020). The welfare and

independence seen are that they are no longer dependent on family or other people and the increase in skills in people with disabilities. These skills not only make people with disabilities have skills but also able to control themselves from insecurity and build communication with others. This shows that empowerment in the form of a cafe for people with hearing impairments has a positive impact on improving the welfare and independence of people with disabilities. In addition, people with disabilities can control their emotions, self-confidence, and communication skills with cafe visitors.

From some of these studies, we can conclude that efforts to empower people with disabilities have been carried out in the community either by individuals, agencies, or other community groups. Empowerment carried out in the economic, social, educational, and health fields has proven to be able to increase independence in persons with disabilities so that they are ultimately able to live a quality life.

#### **D. Conclusions**

The study concludes that empowering persons with disabilities requires good cooperation from various parties, including the government, organizations of persons with disabilities, families, the surrounding environment, and even persons with disabilities themselves. Things that can be done to improve the quality of persons with disabilities are education, mentoring, training, providing social assistance, business capital, and empowerment. This research has many limitations, for other researchers can continue this research to analyze and evaluate in more depth and can develop new empowerment models by involving technology and seeing the impact on stigma and public perceptions of people with disabilities, or they can compare with studies from other countries related to participation and public policies towards people with disabilities.

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