AN ASSESSMENT AVAILABILITY OF PHYSICAL FACILITIES PROVISION THAT SUPPORT AVAILABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY FOR PERSON WITH DISABILITIES AT UNIVERSITI TUN HUSSEIN ONN MALAYSIA

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DEDICATION

This research is especially dedicated to my supervisor,

PROF. MADYA DR. ROZILAH BINTI KASIM

Thanks for patience, continuous guidance and support

To my co supervisor

PROF. DR. MOHD IDRUS BIN MOHD MASIRIN

Thanks for help and support in this research

To both of my parents,

my father, NG HOCK and my mother, TEO YIK LAN

Thanks for the spiritual support

To my beloved friends,

Thanks for everything
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Last but not least, I would like to show my appreciation both of my parents for always praying for me and giving me inspiration and strength to achieve my goals.
The effectiveness of availability and accessibility physical facilities for Person with Disability (PWDs) in higher education institutions (HEIs) shall comply with the standard provision like American Disability Act 1990 (ADA 1990) and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) respectively in wide ranging civil rights laws that prohibit, under certain circumstances, discrimination based on disability. In Malaysia, the provision that supporting physical facilities for PWDs are Person with Disabilities Act 685, Malaysia Standard (MS) and Universal Design for Learning (UDL). Information on difficulties facing by PWDs and views from stakeholders/facility managers are needed to improve the accessibility and availability physical facilities PWDs in HEIs. The consideration of equal accessibility to outdoor environments is still lacking. Discrepancies between the provided physical facilities and provision cause the problems with poor accessibility. The purpose of this study is to assess the physical facilities for PWDs in UTHM. This study has three objectives, first, to determine the physical facilities provision that supports availability and accessibility for PWDs at UTHM. Second, is to evaluate the difficulties encountered by PWDs to access the physical facilities. Third, to access the Stakeholders’ view on the means through which the physical facilities for PWDs can be addressed. Thus, this study adopted qualitative method with documents review, observation with checklist, measurement, and photography. Besides that, interview and focus group discussion which involved 18 PWDs and 10 stakeholders in UTHM help to explore the daily difficulties faced by PWDs and to know how the stakeholders addressed the difficulties facing by person with disabilities in UTHM. Additionally, upgrading of existing PWDs facilities need to be undertaken by the facilities management department as it is the main demand from the stakeholders. Finally, the knowledge and awareness on the rights and needs of PW Ds facilities need to be enhanced either from the stakeholder and the facility managers.
ABSTRAK

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<tr>
<td>CBR</td>
<td>Community based Rehabilitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRPD</td>
<td>Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>DDA</td>
<td>Disability Discrimination Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DU</td>
<td>Disability Units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM</td>
<td>Facilities Management</td>
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<td>HEIs</td>
<td>Higher Education Institutions</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICIDH</td>
<td>International Classification of Impairments, Handicaps</td>
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<tr>
<td>IEP</td>
<td>Inclusive Education Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JKM</td>
<td>Social Welfare Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEB</td>
<td>Malaysia Higher Education Blueprint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOHE</td>
<td>Ministry of Higher Educational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS</td>
<td>Malaysian Standard</td>
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<tr>
<td>MWFCD</td>
<td>Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>NEP</td>
<td>National Education Philosophy</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGOs</td>
<td>Non-governmental organizations</td>
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<td>PEMANDU</td>
<td>Performance Management and Delivery Unit</td>
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Research

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) cannot refuse a student admission simply because the student has a form of disability, yet HEIs will not admit a student based only on the fact that he has a disability (Abidin, 2011). The number of students with disabilities who attend HEIs is increasing every year (Higher Education Statistic, 2017). In verse, HEIs has to make sure the availability and accessibility for PWDs to manage their social life, lectures, and at times - assignments as well based on the equality rights of PWDs to access all facilities (Law of Malaysia; Person with Disabilities Act 685, 2008). Education is important to everyone included PWDs. The lack of avail and access in HEIs limited mobility and burden social life of PWDs. Therefore, PWDs always suffer in poverty, political and social including the waived right to access equitable and quality education (WHO, 2011a). Availability and accessibility in the HEIs is often associated with PWDs, the lack of avail and access will dismiss the rights of PWDs towards accessing to the physical facilities and their discrimination of equal participation in the activities in HEIs.

The significant global scene was identified when states and the United Kingdom, the disability movement has been continuously involved through the American Disability Act 1990 (ADA 1990) and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) respectively in wide ranging civil rights laws that prohibit, under certain circumstances, discrimination based on disability. The United Nations (UN) established the Human Rights Council in 1995. In 1999, through the World Health
Organization, the UN replaced the International Classification of Impairments, Handicaps (ICIDH) with the International Classification of Functioning and Disability (ICF), which was concerned with the function in participation and social integration of persons with disabilities. There was a shift from the medical model with its focus on the impairments, to the social model with the focus on social barriers and discrimination. In May 2007, the UN declared the Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) as the first international law for the protection and promotion of human dignity of people with disabilities in all societies, with signatories and ratification by many countries around the world. International Association of Universities, 2008 rules most of the developed countries to practice equity in HEIs to increase the enrolment for PWDs (Gale & Parker, 2013).

In Malaysia, Law of Malaysia, Person with Disabilities Act 685, 2008, Malaysia Standard - MS1184:2003 and MS1183:2003 and Universal Design for Learning (UDL), inclusive curriculum, the provision of supporting services as well as infrastructure. Meanwhile, MOHE with Educational Act, 1996 and Malaysia Higher Education Blueprint 2015-2025 (MEB 2015-2025), Chapter 4: Equality Policy and Practices, MEB 2015-2025 stress on equitable access education for all, therefore, seeks to provide students with disabilities with greater opportunities to access tertiary education. PWDs have equal opportunity in access to education from pre-school to higher education as has been stated in the Persons with Disabilities Act 2008. The strategies emphasize Special Educational Need (SEN) in the Policies and Action Plans for PWDs (Department of Special Education, 2011). This is stated in National Education Philosophy (NEP) reinforced in the Education Act 1996.

Previous studies have shown that PWDs encounter difficulties during application further education in HEIs. The lack avail and access in HEIs disadvantaged PWDs attendance, retention, survival and academic completion rates (Croft, 2010). Equity issues in HEIs have drawn the low enrolment and high quit graph of PWDs (Bauman et al., 2005). The low enrolment and high quit rate PWDs in HEIs attract the attention of policymakers and HEIs stakeholders (Foreman et al., 2001). Nevertheless, there has been evidence of discrepancies within such disability movements and legal reformations. Report shown there is no good coordination between department and faculties in universities focusing on admission and special education need (SEN) (Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, 2011). This reflects that legal and policy statements have not enforced the availability and accessibility of
physical facilities for PWDs. However, in some countries such as the US, comprehensive studies have been made to continuously improve laws/amendments for better educational provisions and availability and accessibility facilities for PWDs in actual settings (Christ & Stodden, 2015). In Malaysia, there have been many studies regarding educational provisions and facilities for PWDs, particularly after the MS 1183: 2003 and related legislations were enacted. However, if there is no further action, these laws cannot ensure that the problems faced by students with disabilities will be solved (Abdullah, 2016). The government has tended to formulate or reform legislations and policies without taking into consideration sufficient empirical and comprehensive specification in providing the physical facilities PWDs. Known little about specific discrepancies between the legal essence and the actual situations with regard to educational provisions and facilities (Peter, 2013). There was unfortunately no comprehensive and empirical study focusing on existing availability and accessibility issues in education institutions. Additionally, there has been evidence reflective of no further concern by the state and others in society towards educational provisions and facilities for PWDs over the past decade (Peter, 2013).

The other government agency that looks into providing special education to students with disabilities is the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (MWFCD). Through its Social Welfare Department (JKM), learning and skills training services are implemented in collaboration with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based rehabilitation (CBR) centers (Yap, 2014).

In addition, NGOs and the private sector plays an important role too in this field of education as there are non-profit learning and care centers (example, Malaysian Care Community Services, Kiwanis Centre) that provide early intervention, learning, rehabilitation and training programs for children with disabilities.

A good building design in HEIs supposed to fulfill availability and accessibility to cater to all of the requirements needed for the purpose of the principal education for all. Building design must integrate all of the requirements according to the act and standard practices in Malaysia, i.e. functional, user, performance and statutory requirements in order to achieve the design goals (Watt, 2012).

Built environment needs to be accessible to the entire user either by the able bodies or by the disabled ones which is also called as the PWDs. The needs of PWDs in the development cannot be ignored (Jayasooria et al., 1997). However, access and
facilities provided for this group are often unable to meet their needs (Soltani, et al., 2012). As in Malaysia, it is a mandatory for all public buildings to provide accessibility facilities for the PWDs since the requirements to fulfill the Malaysian Standard Codes of Practice for Disabled Persons (MS) are stated in the Uniform Building (Amendment) By-Laws (UBBL) 1991. Yet, the implementation of these codes of practice is always questioned by the user who feels that access and facilities provided are always not fulfilling the PWDs needs. Complaints and comments are still viewed, written and heard in mass media, highlighting the issue. (Kamarudin, 2007 et al., 2012)

1.2 Problem Statement

Scholars often argue the barrier of PWDs is not a person attributes but a lack of availability and accessibility physical facilities that bound social mobility PWDs (Schulze, 2010). PWDs who study and work in UTHM face the difficulties due to the noncompliance of the availability and accessibility built environment (Nur, 2011). The difficulties will lead to the poor achievement either in study or work performance.

Availability and accessibility for PWDs have improved but reluctance among architects & owners to invest in facilities for user friendly because effect cost or aesthetic quality. The stakeholders might overlook the need of the PWDs as they always categorised as minority and no worth in investment. Discrimination happen where local authority officers tend to conceive disability, medically rather than environmentally being impairment as the problem to be overcome rather than the social or environmental barriers (Harrison & Dalton, 2015).

The pressure of demographic and changing of cultural patterns leads Elderly in Japan & Singapore to be living apart from their families independently (Asiah, et al., 2014). In Malaysia, the statistics of population for the PWDs and elderly are reported to be increasing. But report showed the availability and accessibility still in lack (Kamarudin, 2007). The lack of availability and accessibility leads the PWDs live depending on families or assistant and live no life independently. In MOHE, report shown that more of the public universities with PWDs (Higher Education Statistic, 2017). In UTHM, the amounts of PWDs were unpublished since year 2012 until 2017 due to the lack awareness of the stakeholders in UTHM. (Refer Table 2.6) It reflected
the view of stakeholders addressing the difficulties of PWDs in UTHM. PWDs who study or work in UTHM did not assess their right as PWDs.

There is always issues accessibility of built environment in Malaysia that legislation implementation and enforcement for PWDs are not well integrated and implemented (Yusof & Jones, 2016). PWDs and others who are with awareness right of PWDs have increasingly concern and questioned the effectiveness of these legislation and standards with disabilities in Malaysia as being unsatisfactory or ineffectual in their implementation and the design outcomes achieved due to the obvious lack of availability and accessibility. There are complaints to MOHE regarding the lack of availability and accessibility in universities that discriminated the right for PWDs to access the quality education (MOHE, 2017).

PWDs and stakeholders in UTHM shall aware and implement the Rights, Equality, Educational Provisions and Academic Buildings Facilities for Students with Disabilities in Higher Institution Malaysia need to priority to deliver educations for all. Equity aspiration means for PWDs occupy the friendly social and build environment with availability and accessibility physical facilities for PWDs.

Facility managers involved in service design on physical facilities for PWDs is very important to eliminating or mitigating barriers for PWDs. Facility managers well planned towards the physical environment for PWDs on spatial arrangements and finishes, lighting, acoustics, surfaces, handrails, ramps, steps, doorways etc. Besides that facility managers are very important to ensure the information such as accessible formats, tactile signage, clear notices and website for PWDs. Facility managers must be well verse in delivery efficiency communication with PWDs in writing, by telephone, face to face, and with assistive technology. Besides that, Facility managers must practice standard provision for PWDs. Management policies, procedures such as Malaysia Standards, Universal Design, Disabled Person Policy, and Person with Disabled Act 685 must be enforced by facility managers. The enforcement and implementation the regulations and rules that disadvantage some people must be audit and manage by facility managers. Facility managers must look into the matter and solve the negative attitudes such as prejudice, stereotypes and assumptions to PWDs.

The higher education system in Malaysia is one that has been molded by various historic, social and political factors. Among the developments and changes that have taken place over the last couple of years, limited attention has been placed on addressing issues of access, retention and participation of PWDs even though the
enrollment PWDs in HEIs keep increasing as 140 PWDs from year 2012 to 2015 (Higher Education Statistic: Higher Education Sector, 2012 – 2015). This is notwithstanding the fact that they have been identified in various governmental policy documents as being historically disadvantaged and deserving of special attention.

It is within this context that some tertiary institutions in Malaysia have established so-called Disability Units (DU) to offer specialized services to their students with disabilities in order to facilitate access and integration of these students. Special Education Department, MOHE holds the primary responsibility to provide education for PWDs in Malaysia. The Performance Management and Delivery Unit (PEMANDU) in the Prime Minister's Department is tasked to oversee the implementation and to assess its progress in relation to the policies on education of PWDs. The question that arises is whether these units play a role in ensuring access and participation of PWDs or not and how they are viewed by different role players within the institution as well as students. UTHM shall have a Disability Units or related unit to handle the special need for PWDs. This study showed the actual compliance measurement and specification on seven (7) physical facilities PWDs in UTHM. In future, Centre of Excellent for Facility Management in UTHM shall look into the availability and accessibility physical facilities for PWDs and able to facilitate the facility managers or stakeholders to deliver the efficient physical facilities to PWDs.

1.3 Research question

More and more tertiary institutions, however, seems to focus on the mainstreaming and inclusion of students with disabilities. When faced with matters related to disability access and inclusion for staff and students, tertiary institutions are asking themselves the following questions:

i) Do the physical facilities provisions in UTHM support PWDs?

ii) Why do PWDs encounter difficulties to access physical facilities provision in UTHM?

iii) How the stakeholders’ view on the means through which the physical facilities provision for PWDs can be addressed in UTHM?
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Pitt and Tucker (2008) Both the alignment and collaboration and integration of non-core services which include the ones related to the location and premises are needed to maintain, manage and operate the business completely to facilitate the basic or one can say core objectives of the organization

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