

Independent and Successful Women with Disability: Lesson Learned from West Sumatera Province

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Abstract. Law No. 8 of 2016 concerning people with disabilities in Article 1 states that people with disabilities are every person who experiences physical, intellectual, mental, and / or sensorics limitations for a long period of time who in interacting with the environment may experience obstacles and difficulties to fully and effectively participate with other citizen based on an equal right. Women with disabilities have equal rights with women without disabilities. However, they often experience discrimination because they are not considered independent. They work to make ends meet and improve social skills to be independence. The lack of diverse job opportunities for women with disabilities makes them choose to work in the business sector even though there are women with disabilities who have careers in the government sector. The existence of support, equal opportunity and room for participation are factors that encourage women with disabilities to be empowered. The elimination of discrimination against gender and disabilities will provide great opportunities for women with disabilities to step forward, be empowered and creative. This research will discuss how women with disabilities to be empowered and survive from discrimination they experienced so that they success in career, daily life and how women with disabilities participate in economic development, especially in the family economy. The purposes of this research are to identify the factors that enable women with disabilities to be success, to explore the role of "social milieu" (family, friendship, community) and to provide support to women with disabilities. This type of research is descriptive-qualitative research or case study type, which is a type of research that describes the state of an object or event without an intention to draw general conclusions. Qualitative method is "a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behavior. In collecting data about the respondent's determination, the researcher uses the life history method with narrative data analysis. The result of this research is that there is a role model for other women with disabilities to survive from the discrimination they experienced. Then the results of the next research on the journey of women with disabilities who are able to survive from the discrimination they received so that they are successful in their careers in the public sector are divided into 4 topics. The first topic is life before they become people with disabilities. The second topic talks about accident causing their physical disability. The third topic is about how these participants accept the transition from person without disability to person with physical disability and how they overcome obstacles when they become people with physical disabilities. The fourth topic talks about the participants' lives to survive and succeed in building their career at public sector.

Keywords: Women with disabilities; discrimination; families

1 Introduction

People with disabilities who are viewed from the socio-cultural aspect are essentially social beings who have more potential to contribute and play an optimum role in all aspects of the life of the nation, state and society. People with disabilities have great potential to become agents of social change for development. In addition, people with disabilities also have the potential to excel at local, regional, national and international levels. Demographically, the number of people with disabilities continues to increase.

However, this condition has not yet been institutionalized with a service system that is in favor of the basic needs of people with disabilities. Data obtained from WHO (2011) states that the number of people with disabilities in the world in 2010 was 15.6 percent of the world's population or more than 1 (one) billion. The BPS data for 2020 shows that 197,582 people in Indonesia are people with disabilities.

Table 1. Percentage of Population Age 10 and over by Region Percentage of Population Aged 10 and Over by Province and Level of Difficulty

Province	Percentage	
	Non- Disability	Disabilities
(1)	(2)	(3)
Aceh	90,02	9,98
North Sumatra	91,96	8,04
West Sumatra	90,58	9,42
Riau	91,86	8,14
Jambi	90,56	9,44
South Sumatra	91,00	9,00
Bengkulu	91,01	8,99
Lampung	92,34	7,66
Bangka Belitung Islands	92,47	7,53
Riau Islands	93,53	6,47
DKI Jakarta	92,71	7,29
West Java	91,83	8,17
Central Java	91,38	8,62
DI Yogyakarta	91,85	8,15
East Java	90,60	9,40
Banten	93,82	6,18
Bali	90,43	9,57
West Nusa Tenggara	90,60	9,40
East Nusa Tenggara	90,40	9,60
West Kalimantan	91,75	8,25
Central Kalimantan	91,96	8,04
South Kalimantan	91,97	8,03
East Kalimantan	93,69	6,31
North Kalimantan	92,39	7,61
North Sulawesi	88,10	11,90
Central Sulawesi	88,56	11,44
South Sulawesi	89,78	10,22
Southeast Sulawesi	91,33	8,67
Gorontalo	88,29	11,71
West Sulawesi	92,24	7,76
Maluku	92,24	7,76
North Maluku	92,92	7,08
West Papua	92,70	7,30
Papua	91,40	8,60
Total	91,44	8,59

Data source: SUPAS 2015

Based on the 2015 Intercensus Population Survey (SUPAS), the population in West Sumatra Province reached 5.48 million people in 2019, then the number of people with disabilities in this province based on 2015 SUPAS is $9.42\% \times 5,480,000 = 516,216$ people. The prevalence rate of people with disabilities in West Sumatra according to the results of the 2018 Basic Health Investigation (Riskesmas) is higher than the national prevalence. The share of children with disabilities aged 5-17 years is 5 percent while at the national level it is 3.3 percent.

Percentage of people with disabilities in the adult population aged 18-59 years is 33 percent, while for the national population it is 22 percent. The high prevalence of disability in West Sumatra which exceeds the national level indicates that the number of people with disabilities in this province tends to increase from year to year. This increase is usually caused by many factors such as higher rate of accidents, nutritional deficiencies related to poverty, degenerative diseases such as stroke, arthrosis, diabetes mellitus, and natural disaster as well (Kusumastuti et al. 2014).

Disability causes poverty: because people with disabilities face many obstacles and barriers in various aspects of life, such as difficulties in accessing education, health, and decent work as a source of livelihoods. It affects their ability to provide their daily needs adequately. Many of them have to depend on others to provide it. People with disabilities, especially women and children, are more vulnerable to discrimination, harassment and sexual violence. Women with disabilities are often considered as very weak and always depend on others. In fact, there are still many women with disabilities who are still passive and lack of initiative to develop themselves. They are completely dependent on others. It happens because they did not get attention from their parents since they were born or on the contrary parents were too protective.

Therefore, they grow up with the stigma that they are unable to take part in community's lives. (Komardjaja, 2013). As Damartoto points out, women with disabilities experienced triple discrimination that are they are women, people with disabilities, and some of them are poor. They are poor in terms of economy, social, politic, culture and life (Shintiya, 2011). It is very difficult for women with disabilities to live a life that is discriminated against from many aspects. They are excluded because of various factors that do not support the existence of women with disabilities. Having a different body condition with other people is always a very difficult to accept.

This situation is experienced by people with disabilities and women with disabilities in particular. Physical and other limitations may become obstacles in doing activities when compare to people without disabilities. But make no mistake, apart from all these things they also have various strengths and talents to be proud of. Similar to people without disabilities, in general they have rights and competence to be success and have a bright future. The factors that encourage women with disabilities to be empowered are support, equal opportunities and participation, and inclusion. Eliminating gender inequalities and disabilities will provide great opportunities for women with disabilities to progress, be empowered and be creative.

Therefore, it is necessary to conduct research on how women with disabilities can overcome the multiple discrimination they face. Therefore, the problem of this research is what factors enable women with disabilities to be independent and successful in pursuing careers in the public sector. The title of this research is "Independent and Successful Women with Disability: Lesson Learned from West Sumatera Province.

Formulation of the problem

The problem of this research is what factors enable women with disabilities to be independent and successful in pursuing careers in the public sector.

Research objective

- a. To identify the factors that enable women with disabilities to be success.
- b. To explore the role of "social milieu" (family, friendship, community) and provide support to women with disabilities.

2 Methods

The type of this research is a descriptive-qualitative research or a case study, which is a type of research that describes the state of an object or event without the intention of making general conclusions. Qualitative methods are research procedures that produce descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behavior.

In collecting data on the determination of respondents, researcher uses the method of life history with narrative data analysis. Data were collected using semi-structured interview method. The researcher identified 3 participants. The first participant Nola (not her real name) is woman with disability who Runs a knitting business and is the owner of the business. The second participant Linda (not her real name) is woman with disability working as a dentist. The third participant is Nadia, woman with disability working as civil servant of the Ministry of Law and Human Rights (Menkumham) in the city of Bukittinggi.

3 Results

There are many factors that influence the transition process of a person without disabilities to a person with a physical disability.

3.1 Life before becoming a person with physical disability

The first participant named Nola. She was born in Payakumbuh on January 19, 1980. Amak (her mother) is a homemaker. During her time in secondary school to college, Nola was a person without disability and had no special needs, had normal physical growth like most people. Nola is known as a quiet but cheerful child. In addition, Amak (her mother) also said that Nola is an active child. It makes her rarely gets sick and has many friends. Like most girls she likes to hang out and play with her peers.

In 2001 she had a car accident due to flat tire. She was on her way home from visiting her sick grandmother in Payakumbuh. She had to undergo surgery four times and doctors informed her that she becomes totally paralyse because her spinal cord was no longer functioning since it was crushed by the car door. Since that accident, she has only been laying down on her bed. Her mother had to help her to eat.

“When I was young until I was in the college, I really liked to hang out with my close friends. When I was in college, I had friends who like to eat. We were looking for a cozy place to hang out with good and cheap food. The main thing is to have fun. My life changed in 2001 when I had accident when visiting my grandmother who was sick at my village. The accident

happened in Bukittinggi. I had a flat tire. I was shocked and thought to commit suicide when the doctor told me that I am totally paralyzed. But Amak (my mother) always support me."

Different from the first participant, the second participant, Nadia (34 years old), was born healthy but when she was 8 months old she was infected the polio virus which caused her legs to become paralyzed and she could not stand at all. Both parents were sad because of their poor economic situation made them to choose traditional medication to cure her. But, it was not effective and her legs were getting smaller. Nadia is currently working as a civil servant at the Ministry of Law and Human Rights (Menkumham) of Bukittinggi City.

Nadia started her education at the age of 12 years old due to her family is poor and the school was not accessible for student with disability. Due to lack of understanding of the schools regarding disability, Nadia was rejected by several schools because she was considered troublesome for other students and teachers. It was very difficult for Nadia to continue her study to common junior and senior high school because the rejection. Her family had to approach and lobby the school management so that Nadia can continue her study to common junior high school and senior high school, not the special school (SLB).

The situation got better when she wants to study at university. Despite there were challenges, it was not as hard as the process to enrol at primary and high schools due to better understanding about disability. Nadia admitted to university in 2013. She got support from her friends and lecturers who understand about her disability. She finished her study and got a law degree.

"When I was 8 months old, I was infected with got the polio virus, so my legs got smaller. My parents were very sad. They were so poor and could not afford medical treatment so that I was only treated with traditional medicine. My parents blamed themselves for what sins they have done to get a daughter whose legs are paralyzed.

I was also late to get my education. I was 12 years old at that time. I have a strong desire to study and was a stubborn person as well. Eventually, I was admitted to a school by my parents. Many schools that all of students without disability rejected me. I was considered troublesome for other students. The school facilities were not available for me. There were some reasons of rejection from these schools. In the end, my parents sent me to a primary school for students with disabilities (SDLB).

People were underestimate me and thought that I am odd, not as competence as other children without disabilities in getting education. In fact, the State guarantees all children of the nation to get at least 9 (nine) years of education. Fortunately, my families were able to endure and face challenges so that I can go study to higher education level. The obstacles in college were not as hard as before because I got support from friends who had better understand on disabilities issue."

The third participant named Linda was born on September 6, 1986. Currently, Linda works as a dentist at the Regional General Hospital (RSUD) of South Solok Regency. Linda is the 4 fourth children of five siblings. Linda's parents are well respected in the community because they are well-known religious leader in the Padang Pariaman Regency. Linda's life as a child was as exciting as any other child. Linda's parents do not differentiate between girls and boys in terms of getting an education. According to her parents, if she can go to higher school, her parents will be sent to the school. Linda received a good education from her parents, both the religious teaching and sciences, so that she managed to finish her study at Baiturrahmah University, Faculty of Dental Sciences.

Linda really enjoyed her childhood to adolescence. Linda's parents were very disciplined about education, both religious and academic education. All of their children earned

bachelor's degrees. Buya and Umi do not discriminate their children's education. They believe that all their children must have knowledge for living in the world and the afterlife.

"Buya and umi were very disciplined in educating the five of us. Our extended families are respected people in our neighbourhood."

3.2 Transition from People without Disability to People with Physical Disability

There were many reactions to Nola's condition from her surroundings. Many people showed their sympathy while others concerned about their future due to incidents that happened to her family. Nola's parents also concerned about her future after the incident.

"At that time, I started to feel useless, because I had been bedridden at home for four years. I only troubled Amak (mother), so the intention to commit suicide kill myself was repeated. But Amak continued to strengthen me. Amak (mother) suggested me to listen to religious lectures and Al Quran recital when I was I always alone at home. Since then I started to be strong again," said Nola.

It was different story for Nadia. She had her physical disability when she was a toddler. She was more mentally prepared to deal with her disabilities compare to other participants. However, Nadia was lack of self-confidence to socialize with her peers. Her surroundings and family alienated her for protection. It made Nadia could not have access to education and to socialize with her surroundings. She got rejected when she wanted to enrol to junior and senior high school. It happened because the schools have not ever admitted students with disabilities yet and concern about the smooth of learning process.

"I used to be considered weird by society because I walked around ngesot, using hands with a small bench to sit on. At first, I was hurt where I was considered as a weird person. In fact, I just like another human being. I have thoughts and feeling. So do others. The only thing that doesn't work of my body parts is my legs. I always get discriminated from the surroundings. Bullying from friends was my daily menu. My older and younger siblings always fight for me. They are my strength to fight against discrimination that I got."

Poor economic and bad social environment will cause physical, psychological, intellectual, or sensorics disorders. It may be temporary or permanent if it lasts for significant period of time, which limits the ability to perform one or more important activities in daily life. (Ishtiaq, Chaudhary, Rana, & Jamil, 2016; Fasina & Ajaiyeoba, 2003)

Linda had a disability after giving birth to her second child. When the doctor told her that she has paraplegic, she was very shock. She never thought that she will have physical disability and have to use wheelchair for the rest of her life even though the doctor said that she will be able to walk one or two steps through therapy. Her life was crashed. There is no future even thought her husband and extended families showed their support. She was not confident of herself. She locked herself in her room resulting in her two children were raised by her parents in law. Fortunately, she bounced back and got her confidence back for her families and children, thanks to endless support from her husband and extended families.

3.3 The Rise and Success to Pursue Career in The Public Sector

The self-confidence determines the success of these 3 participants to rise from their helpless condition. Nola began to believe in herself since joining the Indonesian Association of People with Disabilities (PPDI) and the Indonesian Association of Women with Disabilities (HWDI) in Padang. She did not feel alone anymore and found many friends who have special needs or with disabilities like herself. Herself confidence rose after she mastered her knitting skills.

"I often went to the hospital to check pressure ulcer (the wound caused by being bedridden for a long time). At that time, I saw a nurse at Padang Public Hospital (RSUD) learning how to knit at her break time. I was interested and found knitting is quite easy to learn."

She then made knitting as a business since 2015 and tried to join association of the small and medium enterprises (UKM) in Padang. As the first step, Nola registered with the village office where she lived to be submitted to the Tourism Office.

"At that time, I was not confident because other business groups already had featured products. There were even some Micro Small Enterprises (SMEs) that had run their businesses, while I just started a business in knitting. I was still learning. I also got rejected when I was to participate in a course on knitting because they thought I was not competent to follow the class due to the limitation I had."

Nowadays, she has received all kinds of knitted products on demand from users such as bags, shoes, hijab (veils), accessories and several other types of products. Some of her knitted products have been sold to other cities and abroad, such as to Finland, Australia, and New Zealand via the internet, which were ordered by some of her acquaintances who have migrated abroad.

According to Nola, she gained her success because support from extraordinary people in her life. One of them is Amak Suriati (62), a strong woman who stands by her side willingly.

"Amak (mother) is a woman who played an important role in my life because she has encouraged me to stand up and keep on fighting," she said. I would like to encourage other friends with disabilities to believe in yourself. We are not alone. Despite there are people who hate us, there are many more who care about us."

Nadia had a different experience. Nadia met an activist of women with disabilities, the late Siti Nurjudiah, in 2013 through social media. She introduced Nadia to the Indonesian Women's Association (HWDI) and the Indonesian Women's Coalition (KPI) in the West Sumatra region. It changed her mind set and boosted her self-confidence as an individual with disability.

"After graduating from high school in 2014, I started to be active in various organizations of women with disabilities while seeking for a job. It was very difficult to find a job for people with disabilities. Being a person with a disability since I was born, I often got bullied. It was my daily menu. People tend to underestimate and made me feel insecure and have low self-esteem. The stigma saying that people with disabilities are a burden to family and surrounding community that do not have access to people with disabilities. People with disabilities are considered as sick people and have to stay at home. We will bother others when we want to do activities outdoors. At the beginning, I accepted the stigma and blame myself. Why am I different? God is not fair! Nevertheless, I still wanted to do outdoor activities just like the others. I want to go to school and work just like the others. At first, my family did not support me. Finally, they gave their support because I insist. Parents of children with disabilities tend to be overprotective sometimes. They want to protect their children. Unfortunately, it obstructed their children to develop and reach their potential."

Nadia's mindset changed after joining an organization of people with disabilities and other NGOs. It opened her insight. All human beings are equal. It is our deeds that differentiate us in the eyes of God. Nadia received a scholarship for a short course at University of Sydney from the Australian government after joining a women's organization. Nadia had a different experience there. According to Nadia, so far people with disabilities especially women facing more discrimination, physical and sexual violence.

Their rights are ignored and not fulfilled by the government even though the Law No. 8 of 2016 protects the fulfillment of the rights of people with disabilities. Article 53 verse 1 and 2

of Law No. 8 of 2016 obligate the central government. Local government, state-owned enterprises (at local and national level) to employ at 2% of people with disabilities of total employees. Nadia passed the selection to be the candidate for civil servants (CPNS) at the Ministry of Law and Human Rights in 2019.

Linda, a dentist, rose from depression for the sake of her children, husband and extended families. Linda set her life back. She continues her service as a dentist at the Talunang Community Health Center (Puskesmas) in South Solok Regency. She began her service as a dentist in 2015 as a temporary doctor (PTT). She became paralyzed and suffering from weak limbs after giving birth to her child in 2016. She participated in the selection of candidate for civil servants and passed it with the highest score in 2018.

Unfortunately, she had to face another problem. The head of Solok Selatan Regency issued a decree to annul her acceptance as CPNS because she is an individual with disability. This decree deprived her rights to get employed. This case got attention from the central government. After a long struggle, she regained her rights back on July 22, 2019.

4 Discussion

The results of the research regarding the journey of women with disabilities who can survive from the discrimination they suffered from and succeed in their career in public sector are divided into four topics. The first topic is life before they become people with disabilities. The second topic talks about accident causing of their physical disability. The third topic is about how these participants accept the transition from people without disabilities to people with physical disabilities and how they overcome obstacles when they become people with physical disabilities. The fourth topic talks about the participants live to survive and succeed in building their career at public sector

Physical disability can be caused by many things. The first participant in this research became paraplegic due to an accident experienced in 2001. At that time the participant was on her way home from visiting a sick grandmother in Payakumbuh. Doctor said she became completely paralyzed because the spinal cord was no longer functioning due to being crushed by the car door. The second participant was born healthy, but when she was 8 months old she was infected with the polio virus which caused both her legs to be paralyzed and unable to stand at all.

While the third participant, became physically disabled after she gave birth to her second child. Individuals who have physical disabilities have their own story. They become people with disabilities due to disease, traffic accident and accident at workplace. This may cause individuals to suffer from physical disabilities or non-genetic disabilities (they were not born as people with disabilities). All of these non-genetic disorders are not experienced by the individual from birth, but because of accidents or suffering from certain diseases. This is a new process and problem for individuals in living their life because they have to adjust to the new body conditions. Lack of one part of the body can affect health in terms of motoric skills and individual physical conditions (Feist & Feist, 2006).

As time goes by, the three participants who initially did not accept their physical disabilities and were called physically disabled, started to accept themselves as people with physical disabilities gradually. The first participant learned to knit as her livelihood. Her works has been exports to New Zealand, Singapore and Malaysia. The second participant managed to continue her education to college degree, even though at the beginning many

schools rejected. With her persistence she completed her study and university and got opportunities to study at Sydney University as recipient of short course scholarship from the Australian government. The third participant rose and continued her duties as a temporary (PTT) doctor at Talunan Health Center in South Solok Regency and eventually became a dentist at the Regional General Hospital with the status of Civil Servants (PNS).

The long process of dealing with physical disabilities caused the three participants of this research to have different feelings. It happened when they understand that they are different from people without disabilities. Participants reported that they initially felt sad about their disability. In addition to feeling sad, all three participants shared their response to their disability in the form of feeling confused. The first and third participants were confused because they could not walk as usual. While the second participant did not experience it because she had a physical disability since she was a child. What the second participant that to deal with was the discrimination in getting education at the age of 12.

In general, the characteristics of people with physically disabilities, are having abnormalities in the muscular and skeletal system normal intelligence, in the sense that they can follow the same lessons as children without disabilities (Astaty, 2009). The main obstacle for people with physical disabilities in their study is the presence of motoric disorders. However, academically they can follow the same lessons as individuals without disabilities.

According to Pratiwi (2014) people with physical disabilities start to develop the self-concept of individuals who are disabled, useless and become a burden to others. They will feel different from other people because of their physical form. The presence of individuals with physical disabilities who are not accepted by parents and alienated from society will damage a person's personal development (Pratiwi, 2014). Physical activities that cannot be carried out by people with physical disabilities will cause emotional problems such as irritability, anger, low self-esteem, shyness, and frustration.

All three participants admitted that they were better after being able to overcome every obstacle and isolation from parents and society that they experienced by not giving up easily and continuing to look for strategies. Negative prejudices such as disappointment and despair that they used to feel have disappeared and turned into motivation to prove that they can be a better person and just like most other people. Optimistic individuals are individuals who always expect good results to occur in their lives even though the circumstances are difficult (Snyder, 2002).

Optimism makes individuals continue to believe that individuals can achieve the desired goals, while pessimism doubts their abilities (Baumgardner & Crothers, 2010). The trust in the three participants to be able to continue their lives made the second participant able to continue her studies to college, the first participant became the owner of her business and the third participant became a dentist. The picture of optimism can be explained through two concepts of optimism. The first is all three participants have positive perspective on the incidents they experienced.

Participants sincerely accept every incident in their life as a gift and consider it as part of process of growing up. Optimistic individuals are individuals who always have a positive outlook on their future (Seligman, 2006). All of them have positive thinking in looking at the future, and all three participants try to make their wish of having better future come true. When dealing with problems, optimistic individuals use problem-focused coping strategies where they are active and focused on solving problems and can manage problems using various means, can overcome the bad things that happen to them, take the bright side on every incident and learn a lesson from bad situation (Snyder, 2002).

5 Conclusion

The role of the family is very important in providing support to women with disabilities which fosters self-confidence, then knowing their rights. The desire to make their families happy is the biggest motivation for women with disabilities. They need a sense of safety, including surviving humiliation and ridicule. There is the need to feel loved including by their spouse, by their family, by their friends and neighbors and the community. They also need to feel respected which includes the need to work. They need self-actualization so that can live independently, not depending on others.

All participants have had capability to live better even though there are challenges to be faced. For example, the public facilities have not inclusive yet. There are many obstacles for people with disabilities, especially women with disabilities in economy, education, social-culture and regulation.

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