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Special Issue on Disability Studies



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Guest Editor's Note

Aida Mokhtar

This Special Issue of *Intellectual Discourse* contains seven articles on the theme of disability studies. The goal of the Special Issue is to create awareness of research studies on the area of disability. The inclusion of persons with disabilities in various areas such as education, healthcare, access to buildings and information meets the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which are fundamental to the focus of the articles. The scope of the theme is wide as it encompasses several perspectives namely the extra costs of having a disability, advertisements and their depiction of inclusion and persons with disabilities, the inclusiveness of Malaysian urban cities, parenting children with hearing impairment, an examination of stress in parents of children with autism, the costs of different types of caregivers and the design of a speech delay screening mobile application for Malaysian parents.

The first article by Ruzita Mohd Amin and Nur Syuhada Md Adros attempts to fill in the research gap on the extra costs of having a disability in Malaysia that is absent and affecting the recommendations on the suitable amount of monetary assistance that should be provided to the disabled community. The paper undertakes a preliminary analysis of the extra costs of having a disability, by using the staff of International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) as its sample. The standard of living approach is adopted, and the extra costs are calculated by dividing the estimated coefficient of disability variables by the estimated coefficient of income. This paper analyses the extra costs among households containing one person with disabilities, and also across different severity levels, according to types of disability, gender, and residential area (i.e. urban or rural).

Aida Mokhtar and Souhaila Ahmed Elyass Hussain in the second article delve into the realm of advertising by Apple and its embrace of messages relaying on the inclusion of persons with disabilities from a cultivation theory perspective. The theory espouses the phenomenon that prolonged viewing of television could fashion audiences' worldview by making them believe the images projected are accurate depictions of reality. Premised on this perspective, the video advertisements are important to examine. The study scrutinises selected Apple's video advertisements using critical discourse analysis (CDA) that provides a multidimensional understanding of messages using Fairclough's 3D model. The study generates a framework for brands to use as a guide when incorporating advertising images on the inclusion of PWDs by amalgamating several key factors.

The third article by Nur Amirah Abd Samad and Asiah Abdul Rahim is entitled, "The Anticipation of Malaysian Urban Cities to be Inclusive and Accessible by 2030". Malaysia, in the Malaysia Urban Forum (MUF) 2019 aims to realise the vision of the World Urban Forum (WUF) 2018 theme of 'Cities 2030, Cities for All: Implementing the New Urban Agenda' that is in line with Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). The methodology compares the establishment of notable Inclusive and Accessible Cities with their planning strategies of implementing Universal Design. Findings and results will determine the inclusive city's strategies from each case study documented and device a framework for the projection of the cities' inclusivity. Conclusively, this study would determine the anticipation of Malaysian urban cities to be Inclusive and Accessible in 2030 by strategising action plans and coming up with a framework for ten (10) year planning.

The fourth article by Mastura Badzis and Rabi Garba Idris contains a study that aspires to delineate parental practice and experience in dealing with behavioural problems of their children with hearing-impairments in a Special School in Kano State, Nigeria. The study employed a qualitative case study design in which interviews and observation were used to collect the data. The findings accentuated several major themes and categories of parental practice and their experiences, which have to do with counselling children with hearing impairment.

The fifth article by Nadzirah Ahmad Basri and Nik Nur Wahidah Nik Hashim examined stress in parents of children with autism in Malaysia.

The researchers uncover differences in parental stress between parents of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) children (n=21) and Typically Developed (TD) children (n=41) in Malaysia. The study also compares the ages of parents of ASD children with parents of TD children with stress as a variable in these parents. The results indicate that the 30-35-year-old age group among ASD parents was significantly found to be more stressed compared with parents of TD children of the same ages. Implications of the findings regarding support and intervention for families with ASD are also discussed.

The costs of different types of caregivers in Malaysia were examined by Haliza Hasan, Syed Mohamed Aljunid and Amrizal MN. The study aimed to estimate the cost incurred by caregivers' children with disabilities from Pahang, Terengganu and Kelantan who participated in Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) (Centre-Based and Home-Based) and the cost of seeking alternative rehabilitation solutions. The results depict that the median direct and indirect costs, excluding medications and alternative care were nearly four times as high in Home-Based compared to Centre-Based (RM2,376 (11,228) vs. RM608 (739) ($p = <0.001$). Both groups of caregivers spent a significant amount of resources on alternative rehabilitation. The high costs incurred for alternative rehabilitation is a major economic burden to the family.

Finally, Siti Asma Mohammed, Nur Faizah Azahari and Wan Nur Shahirah W.A. Sayuti contributed the seventh paper which has two objectives. First, their paper analyses the existing screening system or application for speech delay in children. Second, the paper proposes a mobile application designed for Malaysian parents to help them detect speech delay in their children. A qualitative expert review was used to design and build the application. The screening application proposed is for early detection and to urge parents to seek for early intervention through appropriate assessments. The paper emphasises that early detection in speech delay is critically important to increase the chances for improving speech and communication skills. Henceforth, a speech delay screening tool is needed for parents to pursue proper treatment for their children.

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