



Activities and Issues of Career Transition Program for Students with Learning Disabilities (SLD): An Initial Review

**Rohaizat binti Ibrahim^{1*}, Nabilah Abdullah², Mohd Hanafi Mohd Yassin³,
Ciptro Handrianto⁴, Ahmet Serhat Uçar⁵, Ary Kiswanto Kenedi⁶**

^{1,4}Sultan Idris Education University, Malaysia

²Universiti Teknologi Mara, Malaysia

³Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Malaysia

⁵Anadolu University, Turkey

⁶Universitas Negeri Padang, Indonesia

*Email: rohaizat82@yahoo.com

Article Info

Article History:

Received: May 29, 2021

Revised: June 5, 2021

Published: July 2021

e-ISSN: 2623-2324

p-ISSN: 2654-2528

DOI:10.5281/zenodo.5055147

Abstract

Students with Learning Disabilities (SLD) have the equal rights to perceive services for improving their knowledge, skills, and attitudes for their future career. The aims of this study is to identify activities and issues of career transition program faced by students with learning disabilities in various situations. The method used in this study is qualitative by using conceptual approach as initial review several previous research. The study shows that several activities of career transition program have been conducted to prepare students with learning disabilities to working situation, such as (1) Psychometric exam; (2) Collaboration of stakeholders; (3) Program information; (4) Vocational education; and (5) Social relationships. Some issues have been highlighted related to career transition program, such as: (1) Career choices; (2) Experience; (3) Preference; (4) interest; and (5) Parent`s consideration. The conclusion of this study that it is needed the improvement in career transition program to provide opportunities to students with learning disabilities obtaining appropriate job. It is recommended to stake holders and policy maker to have a look the phenomena and issues related to career transition program. They should be more involved to find out the solution to carry out the quality life for students with learning disabilities.

Keywords: Activities, Issues, Career Transition Program, SLD

INTRODUCTION

Education institution plays an important role of preparing students to success for the next levels (Apriana, Kristiawan, & Wardiah, 2019). Every student has equal right to obtain any information to their future career. School institution needs to be more involved in attention for career development program of students after high school, including Students with Learning

Disabilities (SLD). The development of activities to enhance student`s participations on career program planning is one of the polices that should be highlighted in education department (Morningstar, Lombardi, Fowler, & Test, 2017). Career ready initiatives should be considered by educational reforms to not only develop student`s academic skill but also non-academic skills such as critical thinking, self-monitoring, motivation, and engagement (Handrianto, Rasool, Rahman, Musta`in, & Ilhami, 2021). These skills are needed by students in their life after secondary schools. The initiatives have to provide spaces for students with learning disabilities by organizing framework to ensure they are ready to gain their next level career.

Career transition program gains significant attention in 21st century because the growing population must be followed by the human capital development (Gong, Ramkissoon, Greenwood, & Hoyte, 2018). Students with learning disabilities have to be provided the opportunities for them to learn some skills to improve their quality life. A lot of studies have been conducted related to career transition program for students with learning disabilities. However, several activities and issues in career planning program for SLD are still in remaining inquiries. The aims of study are to identify the activities of career planning program for SLD and highlight some issues related to career transition program for SLD. It is part of initial review study by searching relevant background materials and previous studies which may have potential effects to the topic in this paper.

METHODOLOGY

The method used in this study is qualitative by using conceptual approach to review several previous research. According to Rukajat (2018) this methodology is also called documentation studies in qualitative research by using data collection techniques information from scientific sources to reveal events, phenomena, and contradictions between variables to be analyzed in research. Several previous studies related to activities and issues of planning career transition program for student with learning disabilities had been searched, verified, analysed, and synthesized in this paper. Some similar concepts were summarized to obtain clear explanation and conclusion related to the topic discussed in this paper.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Activities in Planning Career Transition Program

In 1996, taxonomy of planning career transition program for SLD known as transitional design was developed by Kohler. Kohler emphasized five important activities, namely: (1) student self-development; (2) parental involvement; (3) program structure; (4) collaboration between agencies; and (5) SLD centered design. However, Kohler (1996); Kim and Turnbull (2004) have identified that parental involvement is an important aspect in designing SLD career program. The review also found that SLD needed guidance from those around them (relatives, friends, professionals and the community) to help SLD identify their strengths, needs and interests. This action has limited the involvement of SLD in designing their work. Thus, Michael and Ferrara (2005) increased added value by emphasizing SLD centered activities. This aspect helps SLD to form the work template that they want.

Furthermore, the Center for Change in Transition Services (2007) made the activities of designing SLD work more specific, namely (1) the appropriate age to take the work interest test; (2) the desired job information; (3) the field of work provided for SLD; (4) the positions offered; (5) collaboration with employment agencies; and (6) developing the SLD design plan. He added that the design that was fostered needed to be centered on SLD by using psychometric tests. Indirectly this helps in identifying information related to SLD, namely academic, social, behavioral, daily life, motivation and self-advocacy skills to make it easier for them to get a job (Kellems & Morningstar 2009).

Shifrer, Callahan, and Muller (2013) also listed 4 activities in designing SLD work, namely (1) providing job opportunities that are in accordance with SLD information; (2)

entrepreneurial activity or self-employment; (3) perform work activities listed in the Work Social Safety Incentive; and (4) establishing relationships with employment agencies. However, Curtis, Rabren, and Reilly (2009) have expressed an opinion that the activity of designing this work is not only focused on getting a job. They also proved that the activity of choosing the field of education can help SLD continue their studies at a higher level. In fact, SLD also earns a salary and a more stable life.

Therefore, Brien (2011) highlighted seven main activities in designing SLD work in secondary schools. These activities include (1) developing literacy, language, math and technology skills; (2) identify the interests, efforts and needs of SLD; (3) identify the desired field of education; (4) accessing information and educational services provided to SLD; (5) fostering social relations; (6) providing education and training options to SLD; and (7) fostering relationships with educational services needed by SLD.

Riehle (2011) studied the design activities carried out by The Project Search. The Project Search is a private educational institution that offers training and education programs to SLD to help them continue their studies in higher education and find employment after graduation. There were 9 activities that were carried out to ensure the success of SLD's work plan. First, SLD must be exposed to a true learning environment (Handrianto & Salleh, 2019). This situation can give SLD an idea to study and work with disabled and not disabled people. Second, the SLD design system needs to be oriented towards vocational education to provide SLD with market skills. Third, collaboration with interested parties such as education and employment agencies is also a guide in the design of SLD's work. Fourth, SLD needs to provide various information in the field of available education to them. Fifth, the time period for forming the SLD work plan is also fixed and does not change. Sixth, all SLD data are up to date. Seventh, SLD design activities need to grade, reduce slippage rates, provide an environment that supports the development of SLD education, achieve design goals and can ensure SLD design. Seventh, makes them independent. Eighth, the design of SLD needs to always have follow-up support to ensure they achieve the desired goals. Ninth is an agreement made between SLD and education and industry agencies.

Meanwhile, Crudden (2012) also emphasized that SLD should be given assessment and development skills to ensure their successful design of career planning. Among the activities reserved for assessment and SLD's work development skills are (1) Problem solving activities; (2) Socialize; (3) Daily life; (4) Activities in vocational education; (5) Work skills; and (6) Interest. He added, this work planning activity needs to be given as early as SLD age to make it easier for them to identify themselves.

The study by Hamblet (2014) specifically focused on SLD's work design activities towards further education. It found that there are 9 activities that need to be included in the design of SLD while in high school, namely (1) The involvement of SLD's environment; parents, teachers and education agencies; (2) Examine the latest information on educational services available for SLD; (3) Support activities for independent SLD; (4) Proficiency in information and communication technology; (5) Provide documentation about their education; (6) Identify with self-efficacy; (7) Learning explicitly and strategically; (8) SLD self-help activities to make educational transitions; (9) Make transitional programs such as excursions.

Several activities of career transition program for students with learning disabilities have been discussed by previous studies. There several activities that have impacts for SLD planning to obtain their future jobs. As a formula, the activities can be summarized as shown in table 1.

Table 1. SLD`s Activities for Career Planning Program

Activity	Source
Psychometric Exam/Work Interest Exam	Hamblet (2014); Crudden (2012); Brien (2011); Kellems dan Morningstar (2008); Center for Change in Transition Services (2007); Kohler
Stakeholder collaboration	Hamblet (2014); Riehle (2011); Cordon dan Callahan (2008); The Center for Change in Transition Services (2007); Kohler (1996).
Information of Education Program	Hamblet (2014); Riehle (2011); Brien (2011); Cordon dan Callahan (2008); Center for Change in Transition Services (2007); Kohler (1996).
SLD Centered Planning	Hamblet (2014); Center for Change in Transition Services
Vocational Education	Riehle (2011); Crudden (2012).
Ages	Center for Change in Transition Services (2007).
Academic Achievement	Brien (2011).
Strengthening Social Relationships	Crudden (2012).

Based on previous studies, the majority of scholars emphasize on psychometric testing activities. Psychometric testing is part of a holistic system that assists in collecting SLD profile information. It added that complete and comprehensive profile information will be able to help in developing the potential of SLD. Next, studies regarding career planning are discussed to ensure that SLD career education programs are developed comprehensively and systematically (Cobb, 2009).

Issues of Career Transition Program

The fundamental issue in career transition education programs is the difficulty of SLD to make educational field choices that suit themselves (Trainor, Smith and Kim 2012; Stang, Carter, Lane, & Pierson, 2009; Stafford 2005) in fact, many studies on this selection issue were conducted in The 1980s and 1990s however are still applicable to this day as the number of SLD experiencing this problem is increasing over time (Flexer, Daviso, Baer, Queen, & Meindl, 2011; Miceli 2008; Test, Fowler, Richter, Mazzotti, White, Walker, Kohler, & Kortering, 2009).

In the beginning, the study of selection problems among special education students was conducted by Sigafos and Dempsey (1992). The purpose of the study was to look at the behavior of special education students when making food choices of interest, namely milk, juice, cakes and biscuits. The results of their study found that special education students chose more than one given food item. The results of this study clearly prove that they have diverse interests.

A study to identify the selection phase for secondary school special education students was conducted by Hossler and Gallagher (1997). The study found that there are three phases, namely the propensity, search and selection phases. The inclination phase is the phase that combines personality or inclinations to build a pathway of learning improvement (Handrianto, Salleh, & Chedi, 2020). During this phase, there are a handful of students who choose to enter the field of vocational education, the academic field or the world of work. The search phase begins when students begin to search for additional and alternative

information for their field of education including general information about the alignment of students with the desired course, school location, school excellence and so on. The last phase is the selection. In this phase, students begin to make decisions about the school and courses they want to study. However, the steps in this phase are often neglected in career education programs thus causing students to have difficulty in making decisions about their selection. In this regard, the study suggested that a comprehensive career education program be given attention as early as the age of special education students.

Norani (1999) conducted a study to identify career choices among special education students. A total of 99 special education students were selected to answer the questionnaire provided. As a result, special education students choose jobs that are oriented to their parents' work rather than their own preferences and interests. Based on these findings, he concluded that this was due to the absence of formal career education programs for special education students.

Norani, Khalida, and Noraishah (2001) also conducted a study on the career of the disabled. A total of 476 disabled people consisting of 222 visually impaired, 163 hearing impaired, 298 physical disabled, 53 mentally disabled and 10 speech impaired were selected as a sample in this study. Then, 4 job categories are listed namely professional, semi - professional, non -professional, skilled and unskilled. The design used was a qualitative study using an interview instrument. The results of the study showed that most people with disabilities are involved in skill areas and the lowest in non-professional areas. Therefore, this study had proven that the field of education that provides skills is more suitable for the SLD group.

However, Hoffman (2008) conducted a study related to the selection of SLD route after high school. One of the important findings obtained in this study was that 75% of the study participants successfully chose the same path as the goals they built during their time in junior high school. These findings prove that SLD exposed to career education programs have the ability to make a clear choice of field of education.

Abdul Hanit (2010) listed three main reasons why secondary school students including SLD face problems in the selection process, namely: (1) SLD has interests in various fields, interests are not clear and there are also among those who do not have an interest in learning and working; (2) SLD did not make a perfect choice of field of education and as a result they could not identify their interests, abilities, personalities because the field of education they chose was not in line with their personal characteristics; and (3) SLD lack knowledge and lack information about the field of education that they end up facing self -identity problems.

In addition, Hairunnaja (2010) argued that the selection process becomes difficult as a result of having to face the conflict between the wishes of parents with their own wishes. He added that in this situation, SLD will follow the wishes of their parents only. Therefore, a planned career education program needs to be created to help SLD plan and select vocational education fields that suit their interests and abilities. Thus, the next section will discuss the variables that have been identified in developing the SLD career education program.

Table 2. Issues of Career Planning Program for SLD

Authors	Issues in Career Planning Program				
	Choices	Experience	Preference	Interest	Parent`s Consideration
Trainor, Smith & Kim (2012)	✓				
Stang et al. (2009)	✓				

Stafford (2005)	✓		
Flexer et al. (2011)		✓	
Miceli (2008)		✓	
Test et al. (2009)		✓	
Sigafoos & Dempsey (1992)	✓		
Hossler & Gallagher (1997)	✓		
Norani (1999)		✓	✓
Norani, Khalid and Noraishah (2001)	✓		
Hoffman (2008)	✓		
Abdul Hanit (2010)	✓	✓	✓
Hairunnaja (2010)			✓

Table 2 shows that the issues of career planning program for students with learning disabilities from previous literatures. It has five constructs of issues in program planning for SLD such as: choices, experience, preference, interest, and parent's consideration. Numerous studies highlighted that student's choice is the greatest issue for SLD. They face difficulty to choose their career program because they have lack of information from parents, teachers, and communities. Experience is placed as the second issue because students have less confident level to design the career planning due to the lack of experience. Preference and interest are also the issues for SLD to design their career program because they want to get passionate job for themselves. However, the issue of parent's consideration plays important role for SLD to design their career because they recognize that family is the closest environment for them.

CONCLUSION

Students with learning disabilities need supports from their environment to obtain stable career for their future. They need certain activities to improve their career and expect the issues to be settled. The study is part of initial review related to activities and issues of career planning program for students with learning disabilities. Several previous studies have been explored, analysed, synthesized regarding these matters. Some activities have been applied in career planning program, namely: Psychometric exam; Collaboration of stakeholders; Program information; Vocational education; and Social relationships. There five issues need to be settled in career planning of SLD namely: choices, experience, preference, interest, and parent's consideration. This study requires for following research to find out the empirical data related to these activities and issues to help the government to set up new policy regarding students with learning disabilities.

REFERENCE

- Abdul Hanit. (2010). *Program Perkembangan Kerjaya Remaja*. Terengganu: Penerbit Universiti Malaysia Terengganu.
- Apriana, D., Kristiawan, M., & Wardiah, D. (2019). Headmaster's Competency in Preparing Vocational School Students for Entrepreneurship. *International Journal of Scientific & Technology Research*, 8(8), 1316-1330.

- Brien, K. O. (2011). *An Investigation of the Academic Preparation of Students with Disabilities Planning to Attend a Four Year College or University*. Doctoral Thesis, University of Maryland.
- Center for Change in Transition Services. (2007). *Secondary Education and Transition*. NCSET.
- Cobb, J. M. (2009). Transition-Aged Learning Disabled Students: How to Prepare them for Work and/or Postsecondary Education. *Career Planning and Adult Development Journal*, 18(1), 49-60.
- Crudden, A. (2012). Transition to Employment for Students with Visual Impairments: Components for Success. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness*, 1, 389-398.
- Curtis, R. S., Rabren, K. & Reilly, A. S. (2009). Post-school outcomes of students with disabilities: A quantitative and qualitative analysis. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 30(1), 31-48.
- Flexer, R., Daviso, A., Baer, R., Queen, R. & Meindl, R. (2011). An Epidemiological Model of Transition and Post school's Outcomes. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals*, 34(2), 83-94.
- Gong, B., Ramkissoon, A., Greenwood, R. A., & Hoyte, D. S. (2018). The Generation for Change: Millennials, Their Career Orientation, and Role Innovation 1. *Journal of managerial issues*, 30(1), 82-6.
- Hairunnaja, N. (2009). *Membimbing Remaja Memilih Pendidikan Dan Kerjaya*. Kuala Lumpur: PTS Publication Sdn. Bhd.
- Hamblet, E. C. (2014). Nine Strategies to Improve College Transition Planning for Students with Disabilities. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 46(3), 53-59.
- Handrianto, C., Rasool, S., Rahman, M. A., Musta'in, M., & Ilhami, A. (2021). Teachers' Self-Efficacy and Classroom Management in Community Learning Centre (CLC) Sarawak. *Spektrum: Jurnal Pendidikan Luar Sekolah (PLS)*, 9(2), 154-163.
- Handrianto, C., Salleh, S. M., & Chedi, J. M. (2020). The Correlation between Teaching-Learning Quality and Students' Motivation to Study in Yogyakarta's Bimbel. *Spektrum: Jurnal Pendidikan Luar Sekolah (PLS)*, 8(4), 527-537.
- Handrianto, C., & Salleh, S. M. (2019). The Environmental Factors that Affect Students from Outside Java Island to Choose Yogyakarta's Bimbel. *International Journal of Environmental and Ecology Research*, 1(1), 27-32.
- Hoffman, A. (2008). *Examining the plans of youth with disabilities to enrol in a 2- or 4-year college or university*. Doctoral Thesis, University of Maryland
- Hossler, D. & Gallagher, K. S. (1997). Studying Student Choice: A 3-Phase Model and The Implications for Policy-Makers. *College & University*, 62(3), 207-221.
- Kellems, R. & Morningstar, M. E. (2009). Tips for Transition. *Career Development and Transition*, 1, 1-30.
- Kim, K. K. & Turnbull, A. (2004). Transition to Adulthood for Student with Severe Intellectual Disabilities: Shifting Towards Person- Family Interdependent Planning. *Research & Practice Person with Severe Disabilities*, 29(1), 53-57.
- Kohler, P. (1996). *Taxonomy for Transition Programming*. Arlington: Department of Education.
- Miceli, M. A. (2008). *The Associations among Youth Characteristics, Secondary School Experiences, and Enrolment in Two-and Four-Year Colleges among Youth with Disabilities* (Doctoral dissertation).
- Michael, A. C. & Ferrara, L.D. (2005). Promoting Post-School Success for All: The Role of Collaboration in Person-Centered Transition Planning. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation*, 16(4), 287-313.

- Morningstar, M. E., Lombardi, A., Fowler, C. H., & Test, D. W. (2017). A College and Career Readiness Framework for Secondary Students with Disabilities. *Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals*, 40(2), 79-91.
- Norani. (1999). Kerjaya Orang Kelainan Upaya. *Campaign 99 Conference Proceeding*, hlm 212-220.
- Norani, M. S., Khalida, A. & Noraishah, B. (2001). Job Opportunities for Special Needs Population in Malaysia. *Jurnal Pendidikan*, 27, 77–85
- Riehle, E. (2011). High School Graduation of Students with Disabilities: How Long Does It Take? *Exceptional Children*, 77(4), 409-434.
- Rukajat, A. (2018). *Pendekatan Penelitian Kualitatif (Qualitative Research Approach)*. Deepublish.
- Shifrer, D., Callahan, R. M., & Muller, C. (2013). Equity or Marginalization? The High School Course-Taking of Students Labelled with a Learning Disability. *American Educational Research Journal*, 50(4), 656-682.
- Sigafoos, J. & Dempsey, R. (1992). Assessing Choice Making Among Children with Multiple Disabilities. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 25, 747-755.
- Stafford, A. (2005). Choice Making: A Strategy for Students with Severe Disabilities. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 37(6), 12-17.
- Stang, K., Carter, E., Lane, K. & Pierson, M. (2009). Perspectives of General and Special Educators on Fostering Self-Determination in Elementary and Middle School. *Journal of Special Education*, 43, 94-106.
- Test, D. W., Fowler, C. H., Richter, S. M., Mazzotti, V., White, J., Walker, A. R., Kohler, P. & Kortering, L. (2009). Evidence-Based Practices in Secondary Transition. *Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals*, 32, 155-128.
- Trainor, A. A., Smith, S. A. & Kim, S. (2012). Four Supportive Pillars in Career Exploration and Development for Adolescents with LD and EBD. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 48(1), 15–21.