Employers Perspective Towards People with Disability Using Disability Confidence Framework Study Case: Contact Center at Sparkling Indonesia & Future Bank

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Abstract

Issues towards diversity, equity, and inclusion currently become a main focus and big agenda both for government and corporate. One of the inclusion strategy encouraged by employers in corporate world is the inclusion towards people with disability at the workplace. The current problem, many employers lack of disability confidence knowledge, means that how the employers enhancing their understanding about people with disability, removing all barriers, and created a strong business case for hiring people with disability and deliver a significant impact at the workplace. Therefore, an exploratory study required to be conducted with the scope of two companies who has world-class contact center and also become a pioneer or role model in terms of their lead towards disability employment in contact center industry. In collecting the data, this study conducted semi structured in depth interviews with ten informant as the representative of the management, with qualitative thematic analysis methodology. The results came up from this study stated that employer’s broadened perspective, employer’s full support, and disability confidence or the employer’s confident level in hiring and employed people with disability are the important factors to create disability inclusion is truly happened at the workplace.

Keywords — People with Disability, Employers, Contact Center, Inclusion, Disability Confidence

1. INTRODUCTION

Diversity and inclusiveness are currently the company’s strategic goals to create a positive work climate for employees and organizational progress. Diversity and inclusivity are two different aspects but become a unified whole within an organization, this is because after understanding the importance of diversity, then the organization must also learn to understand that inclusiveness is an attitude and strategy to ensure that everyone is included and no one is left behind. excluded only because of differences between them \cite{1}, there are even other opinions say that inclusivity is a solution to the problem of discrimination in the workplace \cite{2}. This is also in line with Angood's statement regarding diversity and inclusiveness practices including gender, religion, race, age, language differences, socio-economic status, cultural background and disabilities. This is further strengthened by the opinion of Mahasin that overall organizational success is not only determined by leadership and organizational culture, but is also determined by diversity and inclusiveness. Based on the opinions from empirical studies regarding the dimensions of diversity and inclusion mentioned previously, one of the interesting and main ideas in this research is how a company or organization can realize the concept of diversity and inclusion by employing People with Disabilities (PwD), especially in
the mainstream work environment where workers with disabilities can work together with workers who do not have disabilities.

The definition of person with disability or a person with a disability is someone with physical limitations, mental disorders, intellectual disorders and sensory disorders so that when interacting with other people they will experience obstacles and can prevent their participation from being equal to others in social life [3]. The Indonesian labour market has experienced quite good developments in recent years with the average unemployment rate decreasing by five percent or at 6.8 million. This development also seems to have a positive impact on the availability of employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Even though the average level of unemployment fluctuates from time to time, as stated by Syiaranamual and Larasati, in the 2016 - 2019 period there were around 500,000 jobs created, however, the number of people with disabilities in the workforce is namely those aged 15 years and over who participated in the labour market decreased by around 1.4 million people. Then in the same period the unemployment rate for people with disabilities also decreased in percentage from 4.2% to 2.8% and this means a reduction in the average figure. Unemployment of people with disabilities is because they have dropped out of the labour market, not because of an increase in jobs available for people with disabilities.

The subject of this research is the multinational Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) company which is Sparkling Indonesia and the national private banking company which is Future Bank. These two companies have world-class contact center/customer service which have received many awards and also one of the pioneer in contact center industry in hiring people with disability, Sparkling Indonesia has Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) consist of four pillars values; multigenerational, gender, culture, and disability. Meanwhile, Future Bank has one of the best contact center in the world, also known as a pioneer in the customer service industry that employs people with disabilities and has received an award from the Ministry of Social Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia as one of the companies committed to continuing to empower people with disabilities who they place in the contact center division. This is become the company’s effort to improve the welfare of people with disabilities and emphasizes the company's concern and solidarity in implementing the basic principle of inclusiveness, namely No One Left Behind.

Recently there has been a movement toward employers embracing the advantages of a diverse workforce, including hiring people with disabilities [4]. This movement is partly informed by the social model of disability, which focuses on social oppression, environmental barriers and challenges the notion of the medicalization and individualistic accounts of disability [5] [6]. Many governments are now working on improving the employment rates of people with disabilities. One approach to doing so is by increasing employer’s disability confidence i.e., knowledge and understanding on how to include people with disabilities [7].

The framework of disability confidence is to explain how disability discomfort is influenced by stigma and discrimination. Secondly, reaching beyond the comfort zone is about awareness training, gaining knowledge about people with disabilities, sharing personal experiences and business cases to minimize existing biases. Third is a broadened perspective which includes challenging the stigma and stereotypes that arise and only focuses on the
abilities of people with disabilities. Then the final stage is disability confidence where a positive work environment and a culture of inclusion has been created [8]. Statistical data shows that there are more and more people with disabilities in the workforce even though they have not been accommodated well, so much of the current research looks at it from the perspective of people with disabilities alone, not from employers, therefore employers' perceptions of disabled workers are important to be researched in an in-depth exploratory manner regarding employer's behavior and the behavior behind it when employing workers with disabilities, especially in the contact center industry in Indonesia. Therefore, the research questions that will be focused on in this study are as follows:

1. What motivates employers in the Customer Service/Contact Center division at Sparkling Indonesia and Future Bank to employ people with disabilities?
2. How do employers in the Customer Service/Contact Center division at Sparkling Indonesia and Future Bank manage people with disabilities so that their inclusion can occur?

2. RESEARCH METHOD

By paying attention to the formulation of the problem and the goals to be achieved, researchers apply qualitative research methods, namely a form of research that investigates social conditions with the aim of understanding and interpreting how respondents answer about what they experience in their lives in the world [9]. The qualitative method used by researchers aims to explore the behavior, views and experiences of respondents who will later become research subjects. Qualitative research methods are more oriented towards exploration and discovery (discovery oriented) and do not intend to test theories [10].

Based on the topic and research objectives, the researcher used an in-depth interview method to gain a more in-depth understanding of the topic that he wanted to research. In-depth interviews are a tool used to obtain data, generally for qualitative research because the method is open, discovery-oriented, which allows the interviewer to explore the informant's feelings and perspectives about the research topic [11].

2.1. Sample and Recruitment

This paper purposively sampled employers who intentionally hire people with disabilities. The planned informants in this research are Heads of Customer Service/Head of Contact Center or Heads of Human Resources/People and Culture, from industries such as multinational companies and national private companies operating in the banking sector, all of whom are members of the Indonesia Contact Center Association (ICCA) [12]. Then the planned number of respondents was ten people, this number was sufficient because the researcher had reached data saturation. Data saturation in question is a condition where the researcher has been able to determine the pattern of the research that has been carried out [13]. This is indicated when the interview confirms previous interview answers. So, the researcher decided to stop and just use ten informants [14].
2.2. Data Collections & Analysis

Interviews followed a semi-structured format and were conducted from November 2022 to March 2023 by a researcher [15]. The duration of each interview between 15 minutes and 45 minutes. and herewith the following informants’ characteristics from both companies:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Informant</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Company</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IS1</td>
<td>Commercial and Development Director</td>
<td>Sparkling Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IS2</td>
<td>Public Affairs, Communications, and Sustainability Director</td>
<td>Sparkling Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IS3</td>
<td>Head of Contact Center</td>
<td>Sparkling Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IS4</td>
<td>Head of Organization Capability and Talent</td>
<td>Sparkling Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IS5</td>
<td>Contact Center Sales Manager</td>
<td>Sparkling Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IS6</td>
<td>Customer Care Operation Manager</td>
<td>Sparkling Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB7</td>
<td>Executive Vice President Contact Center and Digital</td>
<td>Future Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB8</td>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>Future Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB9</td>
<td>Senior Manager BPO</td>
<td>Future Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB10</td>
<td>Operational Manager BPO</td>
<td>Future Bank</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim by researcher and then continue with open coding, the thematic approach was used, along with our research question and with disability confidence framework to guide the analysis [16]. The first thing to do is to conduct the first coding which gather all information from the transcript and categorized it to build the theme. Searching for and finding themes is stage that researchers must carry out after the coding process is carried out. This stage can be carried out if all the data that has been coded is arranged in such a way and the different codes have been grouped. Braun and Clarke explain that at this stage researchers need to sort and compile all data extracts that have been given codes that have the potential to match the theme being searched for The essence of this stage in this thematic analysis is to look for appropriate themes, with the aims to answer the research questions [17].

Braun and Clarke state that the theme review stage can be carried out if a set of themes that have been designed and evaluated require changes and must be corrected immediately. In this stage, based on existing evidence, researchers will find themes that do not have sufficient data to strengthen existing statements or are also caused by the data being very diverse. There are themes that have a correlation with each other, but there are also other themes that may have to be separated into different themes. Researchers at this stage already have an idea about the different themes, whether there are similar meanings, and show that the themes can represent the meaning of the data that has been collected [18].

The strategies used to enhance the trustworthiness and rigor of the findings included using rich, descriptive accounts with quotes reflective of the range of participant experiences. The researcher is verified the application of the themes to the transcripts and the accuracy of
the extracted quotes, which helps to ensure the reliability of the coding framework [19]. Peer debriefing was used, which involved having discussions after each interview, along with formal team discussions after the completion of all the interviews. Doing this helps to enhance the trustworthiness of the findings [20].

3. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The motivation of employers at Sparkling Indonesia and Future Bank in employing people with disabilities is influenced by factors both internal to the company and external to the company. The motivation of the two companies emerged at the Broadened Perspective stage, where at this stage the level of understanding of the two companies in viewing the importance of employing people with disabilities was due to encouragement from internal and external factors [21]. At Sparkling Indonesia, the internal factor that encourages the employment of people with disabilities is the mandate of the pillars of diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI), one of the pillars of which emphasizes the empowerment of people with disabilities with a target of ten percent of the total number of employees by 2030. Meanwhile, at Future Bank The internal factor that drives the company to empower people with disabilities is because of the concept of inclusivity they have, namely no one left behind [22]. Another finding that is different from Sparkling Indonesia's Customer Service where they are driven by a mandate from management and organize themselves or in-house in the process of disbursing candidates with disabilities up to the recruitment process, Future Bank whose Customer Service is managed outsourced is technically assisted by third party companies or BPOs that recruit Contact Center Agent positions so that when the recruitment includes candidates with disabilities who meet the minimum criteria set by Future Bank, they will be accepted as employees [23].

Thus, from the results of the analysis and discussion in this research, the informants at Future Bank provided an understanding to the researchers that in this context it could be said that Future Bank Customer Service is nice to have in recruiting people with disabilities and this is reinforced by all the informants' statements that at Future Bank does not have a specific target for recruiting people with disabilities, but if from a BPO company when they recruit employees for Future Bank, there happens to be a candidate with a disability who meets the criteria, then the Management of Future Bank can recruit people with disabilities [24]. The motivation for the two companies which is driven by external factors is compliance with Law number 8 of 2016 regarding one percent representation of people with disabilities in private companies [25]. Briefly, based on the explanation above, the first research question has been answered regarding the motivations of the two companies in recruiting people with disabilities in their Customer Service divisions [26].

Based on the discussion previously presented, assisted by the disability confidence framework, we can answer what Sparkling Indonesia and Future Bank look like in managing people with disabilities so that their inclusion can occur [27]. From the results of data analysis and discussions, the informants already understand how they manage people with disabilities in the workplace. In the framework of disability confidence theory from the initial stage to the final stage, all these stages were passed by both companies. All these stages reflect the management of people with disabilities from the condition that management does not know
where they should look, how to recruit, what type of disability will be recruited, what their employment status will be like, what training needs to be prepared, what accommodation and facilities will be provided. need to be prepared, remuneration given, and so on. All these things appear in the findings expressed by informants at both Sparkling Indonesia and Future Bank, although there are several differences, including regarding the recruitment process where Sparkling Indonesia is managed in-house, they look for people with disabilities themselves through collaboration with the Center for Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities (BBRVPD) so that they get several trained candidates who will later be interviewed. Then, because it is managed in-house, the employment status of employees with disabilities was initially an internship and then changed to a contract employee who was directly contracted by Sparkling Indonesia. Meanwhile, at Future Bank, because their customer service is managed outsourced, they get candidates with disabilities from third party companies or BPOs that collaborate with Future Bank, and regarding their employment status, they are employees who are contracted by third party companies or BPOs, not directly contracted. By Future Bank. So, a common thread can be drawn which is the difference in management between the two companies, especially in terms of employment status, namely direct contract employees at Sparkling Indonesia and outsourced employees at Future Bank. Regarding the management of self-development for people with disabilities, if you look at the results of the analysis of the disability confidence theoretical framework at the broadened perspective stage, both companies already understand the importance of focusing on the abilities of people with disabilities. This can be seen from the statements of informants at both companies who stated that they also provide opportunities for their employees with disabilities to be able to compete in the Best Contact Center Indonesia event in the Best Agent Disability category, both of which also succeeded in becoming one of the winners in the event.

Different remuneration management is in providing additional incentives. Sparkling Indonesia does not provide special incentives, while Future Bank provides special incentives in the form of additional transport money for employees with disabilities. However, the other components are almost the same regarding basic salary, annual bonus, food allowance, and so on. Based on this description, the second research question, namely about management, has been answered because both companies finally succeeded in reaching the disability confidence stage.

This case study aims to explore employers’ perspectives towards people with disabilities using the Disability Confidence Framework. The study focuses on two companies with world-class contact centers, namely Sparkling Indonesia and Future Bank, which have emerged as pioneers in leading the disability employment movement in the contact center industry. Through semi-structured, in-depth interviews with ten management representatives from both companies, qualitative data are collected and thematically analyzed. The research seeks to understand employers’ perspectives on the presence of people with disabilities in the workplace, the extent of support provided, and the level of confidence in the abilities of people with disabilities in the work environment. This study is expected to provide deep insights into key factors influencing disability inclusion in the workplace, as well as highlight best practices and challenges faced in implementing the Disability Confidence Framework within the context of the contact center industry.
4. CONCLUSION

The two companies, namely Sparkling Indonesia and Future Bank, have the same motivation, namely creating a work environment that supports inclusion of people with disabilities, especially in their customer service division. Employer’s motivation is driven by internal and external factors. Internal factors include the existence of a philosophy of diversity, equity, and inclusion within the company. Then the external factor is the existence of law number 8 of 2016 regarding one percent representation of people with disabilities in private companies. Although it is realized that employing one percent of people with disabilities as an effort to carry out the mandate of Law number 8 of 2016 is not easy for both companies. Sparkling Indonesia and Future Bank face their respective challenges in realizing disability confidence, namely achieving a culture of inclusion, and eliminating negative stigma and stereotypes towards people with disabilities within the company. Disability confidence can be realized due to good and systematic management starting from searching for candidates with disabilities, determining job specifications, determining qualifications, the selection process, to employment status. In achieving the goal of creating an inclusive work environment, companies must go through a series of processes until disability confidence occurs, starting with disability discomfort, reaching beyond comfort zone, broadened perspective, and finally achieving disability confidence. The essence of a series of disability confidence framework processes is to enrich employers’ views and experiences regarding the importance of an inclusive work environment for employees with disabilities. As an illustration, companies that have no previous experience and interaction with people with disabilities do not know how to start an inclusion program for people with disabilities. With this experience, the company is more confident in achieving the target of representing people with disabilities who work in Sparkling Indonesia Customer Service and Future Bank Customer Service. The findings in the context of disability confidence that occurred among customers of Sparkling Indonesia and Future Bank, there are similarities and there are also differences and this is normal because the two service companies operate in different industries even though the research carried out is in the same division, namely Customer Service division.

5. SUGGESTED

This research certainly has limitations. So, if there are plans to conduct similar research in the future, here are some suggestions that future researchers should pay attention to:

1) This research is limited to a small scope, namely there are two companies in the customer service industry in Indonesia which are the research subjects. Future research can be scaled up by increasing the number of research subjects so that the perspective regarding inclusion of people with disabilities obtained from employers will be richer, especially in the customer service industry.

2) This research is limited to only one customer service industry, it is hoped that further research can be carried out in various industries, so that the book will know to what extent inclusion of people with disabilities has been implemented by companies, both private and state-owned companies.
3) Future research also could explore how inclusion for people with disabilities compares between state-owned enterprises (BUMN) and state institutions and private companies. The results of this research will be very interesting because both have different targets for representation in the workplace, where according to the mandate of Law number 8 of 2016, BUMN and state institutions are advised to have two percent representation, while for private companies the representation is one percent.

6. REFERENCES


