Leadership and Disability in Asia in the Light of Obstacles and Insights: A Case Study Report

Kim Cheng Patrick Low * Beata Borowska-Beszta **[1]

1* Full Professor, PhD & Chartered Marketer, Dean of Construction Technologies, Infrastructure and Management/ Director, Scientific Center, Kazakh Leading Academy of Architecture & Civil Engineering: KazGASA and Kazakh American University: KAU, Almaty Kazakhstan (26 May 2017 to 2 Jan 2018)/ currently Visiting Professor, University of South Pacific, Fiji, e-mail: patrick_low2003@yahoo.com

2**Assoc. Prof., PhD, Head of Chair of Disability Studies, Faculty of Education Sciences, Nicolaus Copernicus University, Lwowska Street 1, 87-100 Torun, Poland e-mail: borbesz@umk.pl borbesz@wp.pl

Abstract

When we discuss leadership, we often discuss leadership in terms of leadership for the abled bodies; we ordinarily forget or talk less about people being disabled. In this paper, the authors discuss leadership and the disability issues. In essence, they examine the notion of how and in what ways can leaders do for persons with disabilities and for the leaders with disabilities to enable them to develop.

Introduction

Many theories of leadership come from or are anchored in Western theories of leadership. Perhaps, as it is often said that history is ordinarily written by the victors; this mirrors the fact that many Asian countries except for the Kingdom of Thailand has been conquered and colonized for several centuries by the Western powers. These Western powers include chiefly Britain, France, Germany, Holland and Spain with the latecomer United States in the Philippines though the Portuguese were the first Europeans to come to Asia, after arriving in Goa in India in the fifteenth century, and then capturing Melaka in 1511, causing the collapse of the then Malaccan Sultanate founded by Parameswara in 1401. (Parameswara ruled Malacca under the reign name, Sultan Iskandar Shah). Even China endured the utter disgrace of the cutting of the Chinese melon by the European powers during the Anglo-Chinese Wars in what was dubbed as the Opium Wars, beginning in 1824 onwards (Low, 2013, 2018).

That being the case, it seems that when we talk of leadership, we are often referring to leadership for persons without disabilities; and we ordinarily forget or talk less about leadership for and of the disabled. Hence in this paper, we would like to talk about leadership and the disabled, that is, how and in what ways can leaders do for people with disabilities and for the disabled leaders as well as?

It is worthy to note that when examining business and society, among other things, Lawrence and Weber (2008, p. 48-50, also cited in Low, 2013, 2018) spoke of social responsibilities and how corporate social responsibility began; more so, thus, the issue of leadership should be discussed in relations to the disabled people to make it more complete.

Defining Leadership and Disability

Leadership

Leadership is "about creating the climate or culture where people are inspired from the inside out" (Wilson, 2008 p. 9, also cited in Low and Ang, 2012, p.99). "A caring leader acts in a kind, empathetic way towards his or her people and environment. (S)he tries to do them as little harm as possible and also enable them to attain happiness and live well in the conducive environment. Love or compassion has to start from the top for society, the people at the top setting the example and the followers would feel its positive effects" (Low and Ang, 2012, p.99).

Leadership is the ability to influence one's people or followers (Maxwell, 1993; Low, 2013; 2018). "Having followers, leaders influence and persuade their people. Managers have subordinates" (Low, 2013; 2018). Leadership is "responsibility" which leaders need to carry out and they need to care for their constituents (Maxwell, 1993; Low, 2013; 2018).

Leaders must be "empathetic" (Maginn, 2005, p. 43-44) and "consistent role models" to lead the changing mind growth, change and innovation among their people (Lawson and Price, 2003; Tan, 2005). So to change behaviour consistently throughout an organization (nation), it is not enough to safeguard that people at the top are in line with the new ways of working; role models at every level should "walk the talk" (Lawson and Price, 2003, Maginn, 2005) in being empathetic and supporting the disabled people.

Disability

We endeavour not to discuss the theories of the leadership and the history of theoretical models of disabilities for e.g. medical model, rehabilitation model, social model or interface model as pointed Smetlzer (2007), because at the end of the day, the acid test of leadership is about delivering the goods and getting results, that is, helping and growing the disabled people, support their independence and really enabling them to participate own lives as autonomous beings. We ground our analysis on the biopsychosocial model of disability biopsychosocial as described in *International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF)* launched by World Health Organization (WHO) in 2001.

The International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF), precise that disability is an "umbrella term for impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions. Disability refers to the negative aspects of the interaction between individuals with a health condition (such as cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, depression) and personal and environmental factors (such as negative attitudes, inaccessible transportation and public buildings, and limited social supports)"(World Report on Disability 2011 p.7).

This model "aims to merge the medical and social perspectives on disability by applying a multi-dimensional, relational and interactive approach, and is the current framework of disability used" (Norderyd 2017 p. 7). In biopsychosocial model of disability "human functioning is described at three levels: body, activity, and participation. The term disability comprises impairment as well as limitations and restrictions in activities and participation, while etiology is only partly accounted for. Problems with functioning are not etiology dependent. Interacting within these parameters, the biopsychosocial framework, as manifested in the ICF and the child and youth version ICF-CY, also incorporates environmental and personal factors. As such, the ICF framework illustrates the consequences of a health condition; it describes life as it is lived. The arrows are bidirectional and represent the mutual interaction between the different dimensions. The biopsychosocial framework of disability is operationalized in the ICF and ICF-CY classifications" (Norderyd 2017 p. 7).

Speaking of disability we should be aware of various dysfunctions related to developmental disabilities present since birth, disabilities acquired in early adulthood or during entire life until old ages, caused by various external or internal factors. It is also important to understand the complicity of the developmental disability phenomena as physical, sensory, intellectual or emotional-behavioural (Schalock& Kiernan, 1990). Undoubtedly, successes in adult life of disabled people are rooted in childhood. Saad Eissa (2017) analyzes the social capacities in children and adults with autistic spectrum disorders indicating the role of early intervention in entire support, that has impact on later phases of life of youngster with autistic spectrum disorder (ASD).

In addition, as Kirenko (2007) writes, "the number of people with disabilities is constantly increasing, caused by diseases, injuries and congenital disorders" (Kirenko, 2007 p. 5). There is different psychological situation is in a case of persons who became

disabled in youth and/or adulthood. Much depends of wise support of the environment and significant others, that may be teachers, supporters, mentors etc. who will help while the adaptation to living with the disability and still keeping important life goals (Borowska-Beszta 2012).

In this regard, the authors would highlight the Confucian idea that the leader is always humanistic in his/her approach in treating his people and has truly gained the devotion of his (her) followers (Sheh, 2010). That is another way of how humanism can be established – by upholding human rights and human justice. Leaders must have compassion and care for (Low, 2013, 2018) not only for the able, but also the disabled, and the leaders of the disabled.

Leaders indeed must serve; they must care for their constituents (Maxwell, 1993; Low, 2013; 2018).

Method

Case Study

The aim of the case study was to get the knowledge of the concept of leadership and disability as the opinion(s) of 34 academics from 3 Asian countries: Singapore, Kazakhstan and Malaysia. The research was undertaken in 2016 - 2017. The data collection was started from 7 December 2016 to 8 August 2017 as a study leaned on the concept of case study by Bassey (1999), Dul & Hak (2008) and Strumińska-Kutra & Koładkiewicz (2012); The data collection thus took an 8-month period.

Project Design

The authors of the article formulated 2 research questions about the obstacles in leadership for persons with disabilities and for the disabled leaders being active in disability environments.

- *What obstacles do they face?*
- *How and in what ways can leaders help and assist the disabled/ disabled leaders to grow?*

The authors asked focus group participants also questions about issue related to leaders without disabilities about people with disabilities:
- *What obstacles do they face?*
- *How and in what ways can leaders help and assist the disabled to grow?*

The above is examined; and the issues are discussed more in the light of leaders helping the disabled rather than that of helping the able leaders of the disabled per se.

Sampling and Ethical Consideration

The purposive sample was recruited at the respective countries, and email was used to follow up after the interviews to confirm or clarify issues of discussions. Two of the first author colleagues – key informants (coming from the educational and academic field) approached one of the researchers and gave their opinion, information and suggestions about potential informants, after they knew that the authors were researching on leadership (leaders) and the disability issues as well. The informants, all from the educational or academic field, were 34 persons of both genders from 3 Asian countries: Singapore, Kazakhstan and Malaysia.

Specifying the participants of the case study, purposive sample consisted of 16 Singaporeans, 10 Kazakhstanis and 8 Malaysians. The 16 Singaporeans consisted of 8

males and 8 females and the 10 Kazakhstanis consisted of 5 males and 5 females. The 8 Malaysians consisted of 4 males and 4 females. Thus, all the countries' samples carry equal gender representation. All informants were from the age group of 40 to 50 years of age. Sekaran (2000, p. 296-7) has indicated that, the "sample sizes between 30 and 500 could be effective and appropriate for most research. Qualitative studies typically use small sample sizes because of the intensive nature of such studies''. The sample size of 34 was decided because of various aspects including costs of the research, time accessibility and limited personal resources. Of importance are the criteria in selecting these informants; chiefly, the informants were: (1) citizens of the indicated above countries. (2) at least 21 years of age, and have at least worked a minimum of five years. Furthermore (3) informants should be living in the respective above countries for, at least, the past five years. All informants were then assured of their anonymity and confidentiality; and they readily volunteered much information and express oral consent for the data collection (Green & Bloome, 1997).

Data Collection

The data was collected from 7 December 2016 to 8 August 2017 as 34 face-to-face interviews, according to suggestions by Borowska-Beszta (2005, 2013), Creswell (2009), Flick (2010), Jemielniak (2012a, 2012b).

Data analysis

The data was analyzed as qualitative analysis of verbal content suggested by Mayring (2014) in search of general content commonly expressed and highlighted by informants. The authors had in mind analysis following the theory-oriented differentiation of the problem based on Mayring (2014). The author writes "content analysis, according to our definition, is characterized by two features: rule-bound procedure and the theoretical orientation of the interpretation." (Mayring 2014, p. 59). Mayring (2014) continues, that "theoretical orientation means, then, the tapping of this experience in order to achieve an advance in knowledge. What this entails concretely is that the issue in the focus of analysis must be defined precisely in advance, viewed within the context of current research on the topic, and as a rule divided into sub-issues"(Mayring, 2014 p. 59).

Results

Obstacle No. 1: Fewer people with disabilities are made leaders

Clearly, not many disabled people have been appointed to leadership positions. The authors observe that not many let alone few disabled have been appointed to leadership positions. And this being the case, it is difficult for the disabled to bring authenticity, integrity, uniqueness and/ or added value to their workplaces, communities and society (West, 2015). Besides, disabled people are seen to need help, presumed not to be able to do things for themselves let alone be at the helm of their own cultural and creative lives as directors, producers, managers and administrators (Verrent, 2016). Women with disabilities, in fact, offer tremendous potential for leadership and the ability to transform communities and societies yet they are one of the most marginalized, under-served populations in the world (Ashoka, 2013). In terms of employment, never mind about leadership of the disabled, more needs to be done. In the United Kingdom (U.K.), for example, one area of diversity that is often neglected is disability. And the U.K. Government research shows that disabled people make up 19 percent of the U.K. population yet the difference between the employment rate of disabled people and the whole population in the U.K. stands at 33 percentage points (Higginbottom, 2016).

Employers are clearly missing out a large pool of talents because they still feel that disabled people are risky hires and consider the potential cost that can be linked with them (Higginbottom, 2016).

- How and in what ways can leaders help and assist the disabled people / disabled leaders to grow ?

Whatever the case may be, "*disabled who have the drive and necessary competences should be made leaders to lead the disabled people*" (24 respondents' inputs; mentioned 24 times). These fit in with what West (2015) contended, that is, people who are disabled and/ or those who live with the disabled can be empowered influential leaders who bring authenticity, integrity, uniqueness and added value to their families, communities, leadership positions, workplaces and society. "*The disabled leaders understand the disabled well.*" (24 respondents' inputs; mentioned 24 times). This Social Model of Leadership (SML; West, 2015) acknowledges that disabled people are apt to have developed many core empowerment and leadership skills which include empathy, emotional intelligence, communication, planning; strategising and rapport building. Besides, they have an appreciation and awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses and continuing professional development needs. One would thus strongly infer that their personal experiences with the disabled can make them more empathetic, understanding and give better leadership to the disabled.

Interestingly too, some may also argue that from the spiritual perspective, that is, the religious or even the spiritually-inclined need to learn from the wisdom gained or hard-earned lessons through suffering that people with disabilities have. People with disabilities can extend spiritual insights into physical, emotional and social suffering that the church or the religion desperately wants to hear (Deuel, 2016).

Train or empower more disabled, making sure that they have the necessary skills to lead and be good leaders. In this regard, Enabling Wales Project is moving in the right direction (see https://www.ldw.org.uk/media/277933/enabling-wales-easy-read-leaflet.pdf).

Obstacle No. 2: National leaders appear to be caring more for themselves/ different values held

"*Some of the (national) leaders appear to be caring more for themselves; or in fact, they are acting more for their self-interests.*" "*They are non-serving – or even non-caring – in their orientations and attitudes.*" (25 respondents' inputs; mentioned 25 times). These coincide with Low and Teo's (2015) study, that is, some leaders are basically bad leaders, they are incompetent leaders or non-leaders. Some may have misguided values (Allio, 2007; Low and Teo, 2015); they do not hold any values of compassion and care for the disabled. Some may simply hold task-oriented goals rather than being really concern for their people, the relationships factor or care for the disabled.

Some leaders purely choose their own interests above all else; they deliberately act in ways that serve their own reasons (Allio, 2007; Low and Teo, 2015). These leaders prefer hard power. Machiavelli is their mentor (Allio, 2007). In *The Prince*, based on reflections of his patron, Cesare Borgia, he advocates the practice of power as a tool and considers cultivation of fear to be more important than love. This, to the authors, seems to be the effects or aftermath of the Soviet (*Alash Orda*) tradition or style.

- How and in what ways can leaders help and assist the disabled people/ disabled leaders to grow ?

Leaders need to espouse service values. They should and need to really serve the disabled, and be serving and having service-before-self attitude and mind growth.

Instead of having a fixed or trapped mind, leaders need to have an expanded or "mind growth" (Low, 2012). It is not about mind-set for mind-set is set or cast; it is all about being open and having "mind growth" (Low, 2012) as well as aiming for continuous improvement.

Leaders, as suggested by Gaudiano and Hunt (2016), need to educate themselves. In the United States context, for example, numerous organizations and websites exist where one can learn more about employees with disabilities, and how to make the workplace more inclusive and welcoming. Once can check out the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy and their Job Accommodation Network; the American Association of People with Disabilities (AADP); and Cornell University's Yang-Tan Institute on Employment and Disability; and/ or explore the history of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Obstacle No. 3: They stress more on task-oriented goals

"*Some leaders are more concerned for the tasks or goals.*" "*These leaders may just be so concerned with the goals.*" (25 respondents' inputs; mentioned 25 times). (Thus, these leaders practice more of McGregor's (1957; 1960, 2006) Theory X. They are more concerned with the bottom-line as well as the economic performance, growth and prosperity of their respective nations rather than really care for the disabled and/ or leaders of the disabled let alone able followers (Low and Teo, 2015). "*Leaders must have the brains, get the job done but they must also have the heart to care for the disabled.*" (25 respondents' inputs; mentioned 25 times). The two respondents also highlighted that "*there are no provisions for grab bars for the disabled and ramps for the wheelchairs in buildings and buses*" (19 respondents' inputs; mentioned 19 times). This is more applicable to leaders of developing or growing economies such as Indonesia and the former Soviet states.

- ▪ How and in what ways can leaders help to grow and assist the disabled people/ leaders of the people with disabilities?

Leaders must mind or care for the soft aspects; the people concern. At the end of the day, people of whatever sorts are assets (Maxwell, 1993) to the organization (nation).

Obstacle No. 1: The fight facing the facts

As mentioned by Allio (2007), some leaders fight or struggle facing the facts; among the many historical examples are Procter & Gamble's denial of toxicity in its Rely Tampons, Perrier's rejection of evidence that its bottled water-contained benzene, and Coca Cola's refusal to accept responsibility for illness produced by contaminated Cokes drunk by schoolchildren in Belgium.

Granted that leaders don't fight against the facts, leaders tend to see that people with disabilities are a type of underrepresented minority and that this group is often overlooked when discussing Diversity and Inclusion (Gaudiano and Hunt, 2016). And this is a big issue and obstacle here; disability is not understood to be synonymous with leadership (Verrent, 2016), and people seldom talk about the disabled being leaders; hence able persons are ordinarily made leaders for the disabled.

Solution: Leaders can help and assist the disabled people to grow by facing the facts squarely

In Kazakhstan – and for that matter, Central Asian countries such as Uzbekistan, the Soviet past and legacy still exists. There is this lingering mind-set that frames disabilities as illnesses to be either treated or if not, hidden away. During the Soviet era, disabled children and adults were often sent away to special schools or institutions, where they had little interaction with the outside world. Even if they were not sent away, physical barriers would often prevent them from leaving their homes. People with disabilities were rarely seen in public. This is although changing today (Witte, 2017). And in Malaysia, the societal lack of knowledge and misconceptions about disability has resulted in stigma against people with disabilities and limited their access to their rights to be a part of society (Indramalar, 2017).

Although it is not just about money, but more of changing the general population's attitude, leaders still need to do more. They need to spearhead, fund and/ or encourage public education which is needed to raise awareness of disability issues among the populace. In the Singapore case, a sizeable number of Singaporeans still feel uncomfortable interacting with the disabled and that the disabled suffer being shut out from society (Tan, 2016).

Interestingly, the data from 16 Singaporean interviewees revealed that "*most people look at what the Government can or may do; but they ask little of what they themselves can do – such as the changing of mindsets and attitude towards the disabled.*" One 2016 survey relevantly showed that many Singaporeans remain uncomfortable interacting with the disabled; and to change mind-set, there is a need to create opportunities for interaction between the people and the disabled. Singaporeans support the idea of inclusion but do not walk the talk, a survey has uncovered. Only one in 10 Singaporeans is confident of interacting with special needs children (Tai, 2016). Changing the mind-set of the people and general public is not an easy task. Nonetheless, more needs to be done to promote inclusion.

And there is undeniably some urgency in this, because the number of young children diagnosed with developmental conditions, such as autism, speech and language delays and global developmental delay, has increased in the past decade (Tan, 2016).

Business leaders too or for that matter, all leaders need to be more caring and be inclusive towards people with disabilities. It is said that being inclusive can create significant revenue growth. In U.S.A. alone, people with disabilities control an estimated $544 billion in annual disposable income (Gaudiano and Hunt, 2016). Globally, when one includes family and close friends of disabled individuals, the market reaches 2.3 billion people who control an incremental $6.9 trillion in annual disposable income. Hence individuals with disabilities represent a substantial and largely untapped market opportunity (Gaudiano and Hunt, 2016).

In Kazakhstan, improving access to employment is one of these key first steps that leaders can adopt. Witte (2017) highlighted that in April 2014, there were 90,300 disabled people working in Kazakhstan, according to the Ministry of Healthcare and Social Development.

Obstacle No. 2: "Not Proactive"

All 10 Kazakhstani interviewees spoke of, "*more needs to be done.*" Interestingly, according to an expert at the Kazakhstan Confederation of Disabled People, Zhadrasyn Saduakassov (cited by Witte, 2017) pointed out that the number of physical barriers

remaining for disabled people is "unsatisfying," with many ramps that are "like roller coasters". Some of these ramps are "unusable or even life threatening", he said, citing a then-Ministry of Health and Social Protection report.

In Kazakhstan, the problems of accessibility in the urban environment for people with hearing and visual impairment are hardly considered (Witte, 2017). There is a need to increase accessibility of public transport for disabled people, look into their low wages, and bear in mind the necessary facilities in the workplace as well as rebuilding with access in mind (Witte, 2017).

And in Malaysia, it is believed that access to school and universities for young people with disabilities remains low – many schools, for instance, still do not provide access and facilities for students who use wheelchair or programs and trained personnel to assist children with learning disabilities (Azizan, 2015).

(Some of these) leaders are "not proactive"; leaders need to be pro-active (Covey, 1989; Low, 2017). "They believe that they have done enough for the disabled and for the leaders of the disabled." (two respondents' inputs; mentioned 17 times). What more, there are not enough planning and programs (follow-up) for the disabled. Proactive leaders and people, taking the initiative, are not reactive; instead they are hands-on, practical and "responsive" ("Be proactive"; Covey 1989, Habit 1). "Two persons in the same position may attempt or tackle the job in very different ways. One takes control, starts new initiatives or enterprises, generates constructive change, and leads proactively. The other tries to maintain, get along, conform, keep his head above water, and be a good guardian of the status quo. The first tackles issues head-on and works for constructive reform. The second 'goes with the flow' and passively conducts business as usual" (Low, 2017); in most ways, they are retired. And "in most cases, they really don't want to rock the boat" (two respondents' inputs; mentioned 11 times).

Solution: Leaders can help and assist the disabled people to grow by being proactive, and 'not retired'; they can act based on the suggestions or recommendations of the disabled.

It is interesting to note these suggestions by a disability rights activist. Here, in this regard, in Kazakhstan, Yussupjanov (2016) spoke of "making (even) the polling stations during elections fully accessible for voters with all types of disabilities, not just wheelchair users". And as a visually impaired person, Yussupjanov (2016) attested that "tactile paving, information and ballots in braille, sound devices for accessibility, and large-print ballot papers would go a long way towards helping people like me cast my vote. Visual aids for hearing-impaired people and wheelchair-accessible booths are also necessary." But more importantly, Yussupjanov (2016; *italics authors' words*) highlighted the need for "in-depth training for electoral commission officials (*or for that matter, government leaders*) on how to communicate with and assist people with all types of disabilities."

What is also proactive is this move made by the Government of Kazakhstan in 2015 when the Republic ratifies the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on January 20. With the grand, multi-year Kazakhstan 2050 Strategy aiming to improve quality of life in the country generally, Future Without Barriers focuses on Kazakhstan's disabled citizens, to ensure they aren't left behind as the country begins to embody its middle-income status and progress toward joining the world's 30 most developed countries, the goal of the 2050 strategy (Witte, 2017).

Obstacle No. 3: Lack of 'solid' promotion or caring for and supporting the disabled people

It's more of a sizzle instead of the steak itself. There is indeed *"a lack of 'solid' promotion and/ or deep caring for the disabled"* (two respondents' inputs, mentioned 11 times), and in some countries, it is just a cosmetic touch to show that the leaders care for the disabled.

A case in point is that the United Nations estimates that around 10 percent of the world's population live with some form of disability. However, most economies, including Malaysia's, have yet to achieve a representative rate of employment for people with disabilities (PWDs). In Malaysia, data from 2015 stated that out of the one million workers working in the public sector, only 3,741 (less than 0.4%) comprises PWDs (Esvary and Siaw, 2016).

Solution: Leaders can help and assist the disabled people to grow by deep care/support and fulfilling the content component, and not just the sizzling part.

They can do more for the employment of the disabled people as well as ensuring that they are not short-changed or paid lowly by their employers. The role of employment discussed by Żuraw (2008) in the context of proper vocational education and Dykcik (2010) emphasized the values of employment for disabled people. Furthermore, the various types of employments are aptly suitable for disabled people (Nadolna & Piocha, 2009). The authors indicate, the division into basic 3 types of employment suitable for disabled people as: employment in ordinary workplaces, forms of supported employment and running own business or agriculture. The authors emphasize that disabled people planning to run their own business requires specific competences, especially "knowledge in the field of marketing and management, accounting, tax settlements and others"(Nadolna & Piocha, 2009). In our opinion competencies mentioned above and proper education need to be supported by leaders.

They can also promote the participation of the people with disabilities in physical activity and sports as mentioned by Sahaj (2013), Niedbalski (2015a, 2015b). Particularly so, Niedbalski (2015b) highlighted the other advantages of participation in sports activities by disabled people as their route to social integration. The author described the concept of social integration of the disabled people, in which crucial role is played by sports activity.

Obstacle No. 4: Cutting the budget or less provisions for the disabled people

At times, "leaders also cut the budget(s) and these may affect the well-being of the disabled"; *"they were upset and they have to seriously re-adjust and these affect the disabled very much."* (16 respondents' inputs; mentioned 16 times). These match with what was highlighted by O'Hara (2016), the Norfolk County (U.K.) case. She cited these:

> Martin needed multiple hospital visits a year as well as regular visits from district nurses. Then he began receiving a personal budget and used it to access the gym and go on short holidays. The result has been fewer trips to the hospital and improved health, wellbeing and confidence.
> Martin's needs remain unchanged, but Norfolk county council has now cut his personal budget, leaving him extremely worried that his physical and mental health will deteriorate. Without help from the personal budget, he is more likely to end up turning to expensive NHS hospital visits.

Note that the above applies to a developed economy, but what happens when it comes to resource allocation in short-of-money or short-of-resources developing or growing economies such as in former Soviet states, in countries such as Uzbekistan and others

where the priorities are more on economic development and the overall welfare of the ordinary people in which case, it excludes the disabled and their being take care of.

Solution: Leaders can help and assist the disabled to grow by having greater budgetary provisions for the disabled.

There should not be talk only with little actions; budgets should be there, and not be cut or reduced. Interestingly so, it should be noted that the (servant) leader every time empathizes, at all times accepts every one as they are. "*Leaders carve their names in the disabled's heart when they accept the disabled as they are*." (These were expressed by all 16 interviewees – Singaporeans; and were mentioned 20 times.) More budgets should thus be allocated for the disabled; and when allocated not cut.

Indeed people grow taller when those who lead them empathize or understand and when they are accepted for what they are, even though their performance may be judged critically in terms of what they are capable of doing. Leaders who identify and who fully accept those who go with them on this basis are more likely to be trusted. (Greenleaf & Spears, 2014).

In conclusion, a special justification for increasing the earnings of people with disabilities is what Stańko (2009) writes about "the work is treated by the disabled as an important and ennobling activity in life" (p.2). The author continues that "for many disabled people are a condition for recognizing their fullness, ensuring respect and dignity in the environment and contributing to the development and welfare of society. Work - to enable self-realization - must be sensible and valuable. It must provide a perspective of development, satisfaction and the opportunity to improve" (p.2) In our opinion, the leader may help a lot by paying attention to the aspect of valuable work what means also work properly paid for the disabled employees. A good apprenticeship was initiated this February 2018 on the North American ground by the Alaska state authorities in the US, which ensured equal minimum wage for the disabled people and without disabilities, thus employees with disabilities would not earn less than $ 9.84 per hour. The Alaska's workforce, said: "They deserve minimum wage protections as much as any other Alaskan worker." (Entralgo, 2018 p. 1).

Insights

  ▪ *Leaders must cut down or reduce impression management*
"*I believe some of our leaders are basically doing impression management to impress their higher-ups.*" "*Some are more concerned with their careers, impressing their bosses.*" (15 respondents' inputs; mentioned 18 times). There is certainly a need to cut down and reduce impression management of some leaders.

All of us all try to impress others – to put our best foot forward, to attempt to be a witty conversationalist, and to secure people's liking for us. Impression management is very critical in the development and maintenance of social relationships, but it is vitally central to effectiveness as a leader. However, success in social relationships and success as a leader needs a delicate or slight balance of impression management. Leaders need to be aware and they too need to monitor and control how they appear to others, but they also want to be straightforward and "authentic." (Riggio, 2013).

Leaders, overall, need to be sincere and really show that they care and act for the disabled and the leaders of the disabled. It all boils down to their own value of integrity, and leaders need to be true to themselves (Low and Ang, 2013). Confucius once said, "Man's existence lies in his integrity. A man without integrity can exist merely through his luck."

(Confucius of Analects VI: 19, cited in Low and Ang, 2012, p. 101).

- *Leaders must act more in employing the disabled*

In Malaysia, all 8 interviewees (mentioned 10 times) spoke that "*leaders must act more in employing the disabled people*".

In this connection, Starbucks Malaysia opened the chain's first ever coffee channel in the world to employ hearing-impaired baristas. Conscious of the underrepresentation of the deaf community in Malaysia, Starbucks worked together with the Society of Interpreters, for the Deaf (SID) to give an avenue of employment for this community while simultaneously raising the public's awareness of their contributions (Esvary & Siaw, 2016). More of such initiatives, collaborations and actions need to be made.

- *Leaders make more funds available and have budget allocations for the development of the disabled*

In humanism (the Confucian way), a successful leader should be more humane or compassionate. And a benevolent person gives love, and is indeed an admirable person. He who is kind or munificent is supreme (Low, 2013; 2018).

"A leader who cares must focus much on human beings and values (such as benevolence) as they do on systems and processes" (Low and Ang, 2012, p. 105). More humane, compassionate or "human-orientated/ practicing *ren*" (Low and Ang, 2012, p. 105), leaders should make more funds offered or accessible and have budgets allocations for these soft side (the training, development and growth as well as the sustainability of the disabled) rather than just the hard aspects such as infrastructure developments; and/ or heavy reliance on Non-Government Organisation or NGOs and charitable as well as self-help organizations.

Note that the training, development and sustainable growth of the disabled can critically help the community to attain a peaceful and harmonious platform or environment for business sustainability and societal well-being.

- *Leaders must have more of a "mind growth" change*

Leaders must care for their people (Low and Ang, 2012) and have awareness programs and/ or training to change the people's mindsets and attitudes towards the disabled. Compassion ("*ren ai*") makes a person (leader). For Confucius, Virtue is something to be desired highly. But why virtue is underscored? When virtue is applied, one enjoys a clear conscience. And a clear conscience is like a soft pillow, and one sleeps well. "A gentleman finds peace of mind in virtue and he covets it" (Confucius cited in Chew 2000, p. 8, also cited in Low, 2013; 2018).

"There is a Chinese saying that goes, "learning is like rowing upstream; not to advance is to drop back."… In essence, what is stressed here is the fact that a successful leader must not only continue to learn, but needs to widen his or her visions and horizons." (Low and Ang, 2012, p.100).

While raising the awareness of the people, leaders too need to widen their visions and horizons as well as to have a "mind growth" (Low, 2010), and leaders of developing or growing economies should be more concerned for the tasks as well as for the people (They should be both high-task and high-people orientated, especially for the disabled.) National development and progress should also incorporate more budget provisions, taking care, assisting, having (better) facilities and catering to the needs of the disabled and the leaders of the disabled.

- *Leaders call for and adopt a more proactive stance*

It will certainly be remarkable for leaders to explore the human side of disabilities. For many leaders, coming into contact with a disabled individual can feel awkward. The best way to overcome that discomfort is to learn about different types of disabilities and recognize that disability is just a different type of ability. Organizations like Diversability and Positive Exposure offer great information and organize some exceptional events (Gaudiano and Hunt, 2016).

Leaders should also open their eyes and heart for a mind-changing experience understanding and interacting with the disabled; and these can be the more proactive attitude endeavoured, strived and espoused by leaders.

In our modern society, the disabled and elderly face greater challenges when competing in the job marketplace; they need to be actively cared for. And leaders thus need to be (more) proactive or walk their talk in helping the disabled and leaders of the disabled.

In the Singapore example, Dignity Kitchen, since its inception in October 2010, is the Republic's first hawker training school for disabled and disadvantaged people (Dignity Kitchen, 2016); and this is a good step towards helping the disabled to secure in-depth knowledge on the hawker food trade, enhance professionalism and boost their employability. [Dignity Kitchen is the first food court in the WORLD to attain the ISO 22000 certification for food safety management system; Dignity Kitchen, 2016].

- *Leaders ask for and adopt the active teaching and/ or training of leaderships to children and youth with disabilities*

Additionally, the researchers would also suggest the active teaching or training of leaderships to children with disabilities. Leadership skills are essential for children and youth in today's society. It is not only about leadership, but also about teaching students the discretion or carefulness in deciding whether to engage in specific activities. Students with various disabilities need to learn decision-making skills so they can make the right choices.

Leaders can also be developed through trade training as a basic or first step, and here, Singapore's Dignity Kitchen is worth a special mention. It also runs a Hawker Training Program which is a six to eight weeks duration development program; and the curriculum includes theory, practice, assessment and placements. Pupils are trained in food stall operations, basic food hygiene, food preparations, kitchen safety and simple cooking (Dignity Kitchen, 2016). And yet another Dignity Kitchen's enterprise was to start the Mama Stall in May 2012 so as to generate activity-avenue for intellectually challenged youth besides running a food stall. It also trains them to sell books, confectionery, newspapers with special method (such as activity cards). Two stalls have been opened, one in Changi and another in Khoo Teck Puat Hospital Lobby, Yishun (Dignity Kitchen, 2016).

Although most (25: 16 Singaporeans; 4 Malaysians – 2 males and 2 females and 5 Kazakhstanis: 2 males and 3 females) interviewees spoke of "*the able people to plan and make decisions to facilitate the mobility of disabled*" (interviewees' inputs; mentioned 27 times), the people with disabilities are and can be leaders of tomorrow. Here, it is worthy to note that many disabled have become leaders; and some examples include Franklin D. Roosevelt (1882-1945), Winston Churchill (1864-1965) and Woodrow Wilson (1856-1924) (Infomory.com, 2012). When Franklin D. Roosevelt was 39 years old, was stricken with polio and was paralyzed from the waist down, thus needing the use of a cane,

crutches, or a wheelchair. Next, Winston Churchill, throughout his life, suffered from a speech impediment, like what his father also had. He was prone to stuttering, speaking with a lisp, making occasional clattering noises in his throat, and described himself as tongue-tied. And Woodrow Wilson was alleged to have suffered from dyslexia, a type of reading disorder. A very poor student, Woodrow was considered quite slow by his teachers, and did not learn to read till he was 12 years old. His father, strongminded to help his son, tutored him rigorously. Woodrow taught himself shorthand and through utter determination and self-discipline was able to get into college, obtained a degree in law, and became a lawyer, a revered college professor, a governor, and eventually, the 28th President of the United States. Interestingly, these people have been Captains of their lives and turned their lives around for the better.

References

Allio, R. J. (2007). Bad leaders: how they get that way and what to do about them, *Strategy & Leadership*, Vol. 35 Issue: 3, p.12-17.

Ashoka (2013). Harnessing The Power And Resilience of Disabled Women Leaders, *Forbes*, 15 Jul 2013. Website: https://www.forbes.com/sites/ashoka/2013/07/15/harnessing thepower-and-resilience-of-disabled-women-leaders/#28274c3b320c (Accessed on 18 Dec 2017).

Azizan, H. (2015). Need to improve lives of the disabled, *Nation*, 5 Jul 2015. Website: https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2015/07/05/need-to-improve-lives-of-the disabled/ (Accessed on 16 June 2017).

Bassey M. (1999). *Case Study Research in Educational Settings*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Borowska-Beszta, B. (2005). *Etnografia dla terapeutów (pedagogów specjalnych) – szkice metodologiczne*, Kraków: Oficyna Wydawnicza Impuls

Borowska-Beszta, B. (2012). *Niepełnosprawność w kontekstach kulturowych i teoretycznych*, Kraków: Oficyna Wyd. Impuls.

Borowska-Beszta B. (2013). *Etnografia stylu życia kultury dorosłych torunian z zaburzeniami rozwoju,* Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UMK.

Creswell, J., (2009). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches.* 3rd Edition. Los Angeles: Sage Publications, Inc.

Chew, K. H. P. (2000a). *A Gentleman's code*. Singapore: Graham Brash (Pte) Ltd. Deuel, D. (2016). 'Developing Young Leaders with Disabilities', *Lausanne Global Analysis*, January 2016, Vol 5, Issue 1. Website: https://www.lausanne.org/content/lga/201601/developing-young-leaders-disabilities (Accessed on 7 Nov 2017).

Dignity Kitchen (2016).*About Dignity Kitchen, Dignity Kitchen*. Website: http://dignitykitchen.sg/ (Accessed on 7 Dec 2017).

Dul, J. & Hak T. (2008). *Case Study Methodology in Business Research, Butterworth and Heinemann*, Oxford: Elsvier Linacre House, Jordan Hill.

Dykcik, W., (2010) *Tendencje rozwoju pedagogiki specjalnej. Osiągnięcia naukowe i praktyka.* Poznań: Wyd. Naukowe PTP.

Entralgo R. (2018). Alaska will no longer allow workers with disabilities to be paid less than minimum wage https://thinkprogress.org/alaska-minimum-wage diabilityb762e00ab279/ (Accessed on 20 February 2018).

Esvary, P. and Siaw, M.L. (2016). Are We Working Towards A Disabled-Friendly Workforce? Leaderonomics.com https://leaderonomics.com/leadership/towards diversely-abled-workforce (Accessed on 25 June 2017).

Flick, U., (2010). *Projektowanie badania jakościowego*. Warszawa: PWN.

Francis, D. J., Rivera, M., Lesaux, N., Kieffer, M., & Rivera, H. (2006). *Practical guidelines for the education of English language learners: Research-based recommendations for instruction and academic interventions*. Texas: Center on Instruction.

Gaudiano, P. and Hunt, E (2016). 'Richard Branson Supports People With Disabilities – Here Are Six Ways You Can Do It, Too'. *Forbes*, 31 October, 2016. Website: https://www.forbes.com/sites/gaudianohunt/2016/10/31/richard-branson-supports disabilities/#4d516db0788e (Accessed on 17 Dec 2017).

Greenleaf, R.K. & Spears, L.C. (2014). *Servant Leadership A Journey in the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness*, 25th Anniversary ed. Kindle Ed.

Higginbottom, K. (2016). 'Employers Still Lag Behind When It Comes To Disability', *Forbes*, 21 Sep 2016. Website: https://www.forbes.com/sites/karenhigginbottom/2016/09/21/employers-still lagbehind-when-it-comes-to-disability/#23ef4bf113a0 (Accessed on 16 Dec 2017). https://www.ldw.org.uk/media/277933/enabling-wales-easy-read-leaflet.pdf (Accessed on 17 November 2017).

Indramalar, S. (2017). Study shows that Malaysians don't understand disability, 21 Nov 2017, Star2.com. Website: http://www.star2.com/people/2017/11/21/disability prejudicemalaysia/#RG3whFHDCj6f1YAb.99 (Accessed on 25 Nov 2017).

Infomory.com (2012). Famous leaders with Disabilities, 12 Jul 2012, Infomory.com. Website: http://infomory.com/famous/famous-leaders-with-disabilities-2/ (Accessed on 16 June 2016).

Jemielniak, D.,(2012a). (red.) *Badania jakościowe, Metody i narzędzia*. T.2. Warszawa, PWN.

Jemielniak, D., (2012b). (red.)*Badania jakościowe, Podejścia i teorie*. T. 1. Warszawa, PWN.

Kirenko, J., (2007). *Indywidualna i społeczna percepcja niepełnosprawności*. Lublin: UMCS.

Klinger, J. K., & Geisler, D. (2008). Helping classroom reading teachers distinguish between language acquisition and learning disabilities. In J. K. Klinger, J. J. Hoover, & L. M. Baca (Eds.), *Why do English language learners struggle with reading? Distinguishinglanguage acquisition from learning disabilities* (pp. 57-74). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Lawrence, A. T., & Weber, J. (2008). *Business and society*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Lawson, E. and Price, C. (2003). The psychology of change, *McKinsey Quarterly,* June 2003, McKinsey & Company. Website: http://www.mckinsey.com/business functions/organization/our-insights/the-psychology-of-change-management (Accessed on 16 December 2017).

Lederer, J. (2000). Reciprocal teaching of social studies in inclusive elementary classrooms. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 33*, 91-106.

Low, K. C. P. (2013; 2018).*Leading Successfully in Asia*, Springer: Heidelberg Dordrecht London' New York.

Low, K. C. P. (2017). Being Proactive, the Steps: the 7 Ps Involved and the Importance and Benefits of Being Proactive, New Construction Trends in the 21st Century, Kazakh Leading Academy of Architecture and Civil Engineering, KazGASA, 29 Jun and The International Scientific & Practical Conference, Gylym Ordasy (Academy of Science), 1 Jul 2017 (in honour of the 80th Anniversary of academician Askar Kulibayev), Almaty, Kazakhstan.

Low, K.C.P. (2012). Confucius, Learning And Mind Growth – Want to Be A Winner?, *Global Education Journal*, Volume 2012, Issue 2, p. 118 – 134.

Low, K.C.P. and Ang, S.L. (2013). Confucian Integrity Index Grid, *e-Leader Chinese American Scholars Association: CASA* at Singapore, 2 – 4 Jan 2013 (http://www.gcasa.com ISSN 1935-4819, CASA, New York, USA).

Low, K.C.P. and Ang, S.L. (2012). Leaders Who Care, the Confucian Perspective, *International Journal of Business and Social Research (IJBSR)*, vol. 2 no. 3, 2012, p. 99 - 108.

Low, K. C. P and Teo, T. C. (2015). Tsunami Leaders and their Style(s) and Ways, *International Journal of Business and Social Science: IJBSS*, Vol. 6, No. 9; Sep 2015, p. 31-46.

Maginn, M. D. (2005). *Managing in Times of Change: 24 Lessons for Leading Individuals and Teams through Change*, The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.: USA.

Maxwell, J. C. (1993). *Developing the Leader within You*, Thomas Nelson, Inc.: USA.

Mayring, P. (2014) *Qualitative content analysis: theoretical foundation, basic procedures and software solution*. Klagenfurt. URN: http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0168 ssoar395173 . (Accessed on 11 November 2018).

McGregor, D. (1960; 2006) *The Human Side of Enterprise*, McGraw-Hill: USA.

McGregor, D. M. (1957). The Human Side of Enterprise, *Adventure in Thought and Action*, Proceedings of the Fifth Anniversary Convocation of the School of Industrial Management, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA, 9 April 1957.

Mohammed, M. Fatah Allah Said Ahmed(2014). The Effect of Differentiating Instruction using Multiple Intelligences on Improving Reading Comprehension of 5th Graders with Learning Disabilities. *International Journal of Psycho-Educational Sciences* ,6(3), pp.10-17. Nadolna E., Piocha S., (2009) Zatrudnienie osób niepełnosprawnych jako forma rehabilitacji zawodowej. Nr 13 s. 127-140 http://zeszyty.wne.tu.koszalin.pl/images/wydawnictwo/zeszyty/03/dok_16.pdf (Accessed on 7 February 2018).

Niedbalski J., (2015a). Sport osób niepełnosprawnych w przekazie i dyskursie medialnym w Polsce, *Przegląd socjologii jakościowej*. Tom 11, Nr 2. http://przegladsocjologiijakosciowej.org/Volume30/PSJ_11_2_Niedbalski.pdf (Accessed on 7 February 2018).

Niedbalski J., (2015b). Sport jako narzędzie aktywizacji i społecznej integracji osób z niepełnosprawnością fizyczną, *Problemy Polityki Społecznej. Studia i Dyskusje,* 28(1), s. 101- 118. http://www.problemypolitykispolecznej.pl/images/czasopisma/28/PPS-28-101-118.pdf (Accessed on 7 February 2018).

Norderyd J., (2017). A biopsychosocial approach to functioning, oral health and specialist dental health care in children with disabilities – Swedish and international perspectives. http://hj.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1088296/FULLTEXT01.pdf (Accessed on 7 February 2018).

O'Hara, M. (2016). Austerity has hit disabled people hardest – now they're fighting back', *The Guardian*, 24 February 2016. Website: https://www.theguardian.com/publicleaders-network/2016/feb/24/austerity-disabled people-norfolk-council-care-act (Accessed on 16 Dec 2017).

Palincsar, A. S., David, Y. M., & Brown, A. L. (1989). *Using reciprocal teaching in the classroom: A guide for teachers*. Unpublished manuscript.

Riggio, R.E. (2013). The Dangerous Art of Impression Management: How to balance authenticity, tact, and common sense, 25 Oct 2013, *Psychology Today*. Website:

https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/cutting-edge-leadership/201310/the dangerous-art-impression-management   (Accessed on 16 October 2017).

Sahaj T., (2013). Niepełnosprawni i niepełnosprawność w mediach. Warszawa: IRSS.

Saad Eissa M., A., (2017). A Systematic Review of Autism Spectrum Disorder in Children and   Adolescents: Social Deficits and Intervention *International Journal of Psycho Educational Sciences,* Vol. 6 (2) pp. 12-22. (Accessed on 7 February 2018). https://journal.kie.university/wpcontent/uploads/2017/09/2IJPESMouradAEissaSaad.   pdf

Sekaran, U. (2000), *Research methods for business*, John Wiley & Sons, New York, NY

Schalock R., L., Kiernan W., (1990) *Habilitation Planning for Adults with Disabilities.* New   York: Springer Verlag.

Sheh, S. W. (2010). Confucianism and Chinese leadership, *Chinese Management Studies*, Vol.   4 No. 3, 2010 p. 280-285

Smeltzer S.,C. (2007) Improving the health and wellness of persons with disabilities: a call to   action too important for nursing to ignore. *Nurs Outlook*. Jul-Aug;55(4) pp.189-195.

Stańko I., (2009) Rola pracy w integracji osób niepełnosprawnych w społeczeństwie równych   szans, *Socius. Zawodowa integracja oraz udzial w rynku pracy osób niepełnosprawnych,*   2   (2)   s.   2-4. http://www.wrzos.org.pl/download/Socius2pol.pdf   (Accessed on 20 February 2018).

Strumińska-Kutra M. & Kołodkiewicz I., (2012) Case Study, In Jemielnik D., Ed., *Qualitative   research, Methods and Tools*, Warsaw: PWN, s. 1-38

Tai, J. (2016). Singaporeans 'don't walk the talk' on special needs kids, *The Straits Times*, 31 May 2016. Website: http://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/sporeans-dont-walk-the-talk-on special-needs-kids   (Accessed on 7 Dec 2017).

Tan, T. (2016) The hard - and heart - part of inclusiveness for the disabled', *The Straits Times*, 9 June 2016. Website: http://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/the-hard-and-heart-part   of-inclusivenes-for-the-disabled   (Accessed on 7 Dec 2017).

Tan, V. S. L. (2005). *The Change Wizards: Changing People and Transforming Organisations*,KL Strategic Change Consulting: Malaysia.

Verrent, J. (2016). Getting In Sync: Disability And Leadership In The Cultural Sector, The   Blog. 9 Jul 2016. Website: http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/jo-verrent/disability leadership_b_11885252.html   (Accessed on 16 Nov 2017).

West, D. (2015). The Social Model of Leadership: why disabled people are the leaders of   tomorrow,   *Disability   Horizons*.   Website: http://disabilityhorizons.com/2015/11/social model-of-leadership-why-disabled-people-are-the-leaders-of-tomorrow/ (Accessed on 16 Dec 2017).

Wilson JR2008. *151 Quick Ideas to inspire your staff*, Advantage Quest Sdn. Bhd.: Malaysia.

Witte, M. (2017). Kazakhstan Making Strides in Disability Access, Acceptance, Edge Kz. Website: https://www.edgekz.com/kazakhstan-making-strides-in-disability-access acceptance   (Accessed on 18 Nov 2017).

Yussupjanov, P. (2016). In Kazakhstan, Having a Disability Often Means Not Getting a Vote, Open   Society   Foundations.   16   November   2016.   Website: https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/voices/kazakhstan-having-disability-often means-not-getting-vote   (Accessed on 18 Dec 2017).

WHO.(2001) *International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health*. Geneva,   Switzerland: World Health Organization.

Żuraw, H., (2008) *Udział osób niepełnosprawnych w życiu społecznym.* Warszawa: Wyd.   Akademickie Żak.