

Management for Disabled Workers in the Establishment of Fruit and Vegetable Processing Industry in the Upper Northern of Thailand.

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The Asian Conference on the Social Sciences 2015
Official Conference Proceedings

Abstract

This study has applied both qualitative and quantitative method aiming to explore management of disabled worker incubated to fruit and vegetable processing industry in the Northern Part of Thailand. This incubation process aims to match the disabled competency and the demand from the employers with the coordination of supporting staff. The results found that there were 13 fruit and vegetable processing entrepreneurs with over 100 employees required to hire 1 disabled in the ratio of 100:1. There were 7 entrepreneurs hired the disabled as required by laws (53.80%)

The characteristics of the disability hired the most are persons with mobility disability, in the number of 12 personals (92.30%), hearing impairment of 7 persons (53.80%).

The characteristics of fruit and vegetable entrepreneur that hired the disabled shows positive attitude toward the disabled. The score for assigning the right jobs to the disabled is 48 persons or 90.60%.

Government agency finds problems in hiring the disabled as follows: few positions opening for the disabled, qualifications, characteristics and competency of the disabled mismatch with entrepreneur's requirement, lack of active strategy, lack of coordination among stakeholders both form private and public organization.

Government office should create awareness of the disabled's competency and motivate privates sectors in hiring the various disabled. The disabled's competency would be matched with the requirements of the entrepreneurs affecting the higher number of disabled hired to the industry.

Keywords: Disabled employees, Entrepreneurs, Processing fruit and vegetable industry, The Upper Northern Part of Thailand.

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Introduction

All societies comprise various human resource both non-disabled and disabled whether physical or psychological. Some disabled with certain disability type are able to work and show a little participation in the society while the others are unable to at all. Therefore, it is vital to support them in creating opportunities in working as the non-disabled so that they can improve themselves.

Thai government has set up policy and laws to increase the opportunity of the disabled in participating in the workforce on the regular basis. For example, Act of 2550, Employee Protection Act (2541), Rehabilitation of the Disability Person Act (2534) etc. In 2550, Thai government has imposed the laws on the Act of the Support and Development of Disabled Life Quality (2550) stating that company with more than 100 staffs be required to hire the disabled in the ratio of 100:1 aiming to increase the working chance for the disability person.

Therefore, this study aims to explore the efficiency of such laws or the enactment of such laws including the mangement of the disabled workforce whether there is any problems in applying such laws and in which dimension. The results of the study would increase the efficiency of the laws enactment including involving all stakeholders in solving unforeseen problems. Frozen fruite and vegetable industry in the Upper Northern part of Thailand as there are many companies in the industry employed more than 100 staffs (as per to the laws). In addition the Northern part of Thailand is well-known for frozen fruit and vegetable industry due to its geographic competitive advantage which is suitable for planting fruit and vegetable. This has made it the major sources for frozen fruit and vegetable industry. The industry has increase the economic condition in the area as it adds value to fruit and vegetables due to its obsolete nature; moreover, it has created jobs to many people in the area.

To follow such laws, it has incurred the following problems as there are lack of coordinations between personel and related office as follows:

1. Misunderstanding of society and the disabled person showing that frozen fruit and vegetable industry is unlikely to employ the disabled resulting the ability of the industry to employ the disabled as there is limited information on the disabled workforce.
2. Lack of disabled awareness regarding type of disability, knowledge, competency, skill and experience that are required by the frozen fruit and vegetable industry as there is no mediator in collecting such information and coordinating between the disabled and industry.

Due to such problems, this research is interested in the management of the disabled workforce to frozen fruit and vegetable industry, hoping to match up the requirement and the disabled's characteristics with the support of related office in recruiting the disabled workforce and coordinating between the disabled workforce and the industry.

State of the Art

Industry requires the disability with professional training, matching up with job descriptions required by each company including developing their skills regularly both in working routine or higher skilled work. The disabled should be confident in their working performance and if they have the chance in working they should finish their assignment efficiently to be the model for the next disabled employed. This would increase the motivation in hiring more disabled from private and public scrutinized (the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disability, 2555) and, in turn, the disabled would increase their participation in the society as the workforce. The government should take the role in setting up related laws and social policy to support and motivate industry in hiring more disabled (International Workforce Organizations, 2553) such as department of employment can match up the type of disability with industry's requirement including the development of the disabled recruitment process such as building up network between local government so that the disabled can register themselves (Wiriya Namsiripongpun, 2554).

Purpose of the study

To explore the disabled employing conditions to frozen fruit and vegetable industry in the Upper Northern Part of Thailand.

To explore the required disability type in frozen fruit and vegetable industry in the Upper Northern Part of Thailand.

To explore type of frozen fruit and vegetable companies desired by the disabled.

To explore the acting of related scrutinized in hiring the disabled to such industry.

To develop the formation of the management of the disabled to the industry.

Expected Benefits

Learning of the disabled employing conditions to frozen fruit and vegetable industry in the Upper Northern Part of Thailand.

Learning of the required disability type in frozen fruit and vegetable industry in the Upper Northern Part of Thailand.

Learning of type of frozen fruit and vegetable companies desired by the disabled.

Learning of the acting of related organization in hiring the disabled to such industry.

Learning of the formation of the management of the disabled to the industry.

Research Methodology

Data Collection

Primary data was conducted by a) interviewing legal staff of the social development and human security department in the Upper Northern Part of Thailand. b) interviewing the owner of frozen fruit and vegetable companies in such area which has employed more than 100 staff in the number of 13 companies c) interviewing the 51 employed disabled in the industry and d) interviewing other related staff who are responsible for supporting the disabled workforce.

Secondary data was conducted by studying related laws in employing the disabled and protections of the disabled in the workforce including other related laws, research and other educational paper.

Data Collection

The In-depth interview was applied in this study to those legal staff from the Department of the Social Development and Human Security in the Upper Northern Part of Thailand, entrepreneur of frozen fruit and vegetable companies with more than 100 staff in the number of 13 companies, the 51 disabled employees who are currently working in frozen fruit and vegetable companies, government staff who are responsible for supporting the disabled to the workforce.

Data Analysis and Tool

Data analysis was conducted by content analysis and the report was descriptive analysis. The synthesis of the result of the study was done on primary data. After the interviewing, such data were scrutinized for its completion and usability and then were analyzed by SPSS.

Result of the study

Part I. The study of employing condition of the disabled to frozen fruit and vegetable industry.

There are 13 frozen fruit and vegetable companies in the Upper Northern Part of Thailand with more than 100 staff imposed by laws to hire the disabled in the ratio of 100:1 (imposed in 2007). Those companies were in Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Lumphun, Lampang, Prae, Nan and Mae Hong Son while Phayao was the only province that there was no company employed more than 100 staff.

The number of employees in the company. The majority of respondents employs 100-200 employees in the number of 5 companies (38.50%), the second majority was more than 500 employees in the number of 4 companies (30.80%) and 201-300 employees in the number of 2 companies (15.30%) and the least group were 301-400 employees in the number of 1 company (7.70%). This was shown in Table 1.

The number of the disabled employed. The majority of respondents employed 1-3 disabled in the number of 7 companies (53.80%), the second employed between 4-6 disabled, 3 companies (23.10%), and the least was 7-9 disabled employed, and more than 9 disabled employed, 1 of each (7.70%). Among this, there was no response from 1 company (7.70%).

Ration of the disabled employed. The majority of respondents employed the disabled in the ratio of 100:1 as required by laws in the number of 7 companies (53.80%), the second was more than 100:1 ratio in the number of 5 companies (38.50%). The least respondent group were in less than 100:1 ratio as required by laws (7.70%). The reason for hiring more than 100:1 ratio was that company would like to support the employment status of the disabled and they realized of the disabled potential.

Table 1 Frequency and Percentage of Employees

Number of Employees in the Company	Number	Percentage
100 – 200	5	38.50
201 – 300	2	15.30
301 – 400	1	7.70
401 – 500	1	7.70
More than	4	30.80
<u>Number of Disabled Employed</u>		
1 – 3	7	53.80
4 – 6	3	23.10
7 – 9	1	7.70
More than 9	1	7.70
No response	1	7.70
<u>Ratio of disabled employment</u>		
100:1 as required by laws	7	53.80
More than 100:1	5	38.50
Less than 100:1	1	7.70

Part II: The Study of the disabled type that required by frozen fruit and vegetable industry

Based on the data collection from 13 companies in the upper Northern found that companies normally employed persons with mobility disability in the number of 12 companies (92.30%), the second biggest was hearing impairment group of 7 companies (53.80%), and the least was vision impairment of 1 company (7.70%). None employed persons with intellectual, mental, autistic, or learning disability.

Major job assigned were in operational department in the number of 12 employees (92.30%); i.e., cleaning staff, QA staff, gardener, planting staff, packaging staff, QC staff, driver, guarding staff and house keeping staff. The second majority was in administrative work in the number of 6 employees (46.20%) such as administrative staff, messenger, data input staff, human resource, and procurement staff etc.

With regards to satisfaction of employers, the 5 likert scale has been used comprised knowledge and competency in working, working value, responsibility, and human relations and the results are as follows:

Overall satisfaction

In Table 2, the mean score of satisfaction was 3.87 with working value of 4.15, human relations of 4.08, responsibility of 3.74 and knowledge and competency of 3.51 mean score.

Table 2 Satisfactory Level of Companies in each Dimension

Dimension	Average	S.D.	Satisfactory Level
Knowledge and Competency in Working	3.51	1.144	
			Very
Working Value	4.15	1.331	Very
Responsibility	3.74	1.164	Very
Human Relations	4.08	1.230	Very
Total	3.87	1.194	Very

Knowledge and Competency in working.

From Table 3, the level of satisfaction is in 'very satisfactory' from all sub-dimension with the average score of 3.51. Being able to learn and follow orders is 3.68, the working efficiency is 3.46, working and competency in working is 3.38.

Table 3 Satisfaction of entrepreneur as per knowledge and competency in working

Dimension	Average	S.D.	Level
Knowledge and Competency in Working			
Knowledge and Competency in Working	3.38	1.193	Very
Learning and Following Orders	3.68	1.251	Very
Working Efficiency	3.46	1.198	Very
Total	3.51	1.144	Very

Working Value

In Table 4, the level of working value is very satisfactory with the average score of 4.15, comprising sub-dimension in loyalty with 4.23, punctuality with 4.15 and complying with companies' regulation with 4.08 respectively.

Table 4 Satisfactory Level of Entrepreneur as per to Working Value

Dimension	Average	S.D.	Level
Working Value			
Punctuality	4.15	1.345	High
Following regulations	4.08	1.320	High
Loyalty	4.23	1.363	Very High
Total	4.15	1.331	High

Responsibility

In Table 5, the satisfactory level is in high level in all dimensions with the average score of 3.74 comprising sub dimension of being responsible and prudent in working of 3.77, and being to complete the job on time of 3.69 respectively.

Table 5. The Satisfactory Level of Entrepreneur as per to Responsibility Dimension

Dimension	Average	S.D.	Level
Responsibility			
Being responsible to the assigned job	3.77	1.166	High
Completing the job on time	3.69	1.182	High
Being prudent in accomplishing the job	3.77	1.166	High
Total	3.74	1.164	High

Human Relations

From Table 5, the level of satisfaction is in high level in all sub dimension aspect with the score of 4.08. Being able work as a team has the score of 4.15, being able to adapt to other colleagues and environment of 4.08, and being able to get along with others of 4.00.

Table 6. The Satisfactory Level of Entrepreneurs as per to Human Relations

Dimension	Average	S.D.	Level
Human Relations			
Being able to get along with others	4.00	1.291	High
Being able to adapt to colleagues and environment	4.08	1.320	High
Being to work as a team	4.15	1.345	High
total	4.08	1.230	high

Part III. The study of the desired frozen fruit and vegetable company in the Upper Northern Part of Thailand (Supply Side)

Based on the interviewing of 51 disabled employees from frozen fruit and vegetable industry, it is found that the disabled employees are able to work in all type of frozen fruit and vegetable industry in the number of 37 employees (69.80%), the second group shows their unwillingness to work in the industry of 15 employees (28.30%), fruit and vegetable canned companies in the number of 2 employees (3.80%), only 1 employee work in fermented fruit and vegetable company (1.90%). There was none working in frozen fruit and vegetable company.

Based on Table 7, type of company that disabled employees prefer to work with is company with positive attitude toward the disabled and assigning the right job to the disabled has the same score of 48 employees (90.60%), the second majority is suitable working time of 38 respondents (71.70%), the equality among employees of 37 employees (69.80%), providing housing for the employees of 17 staffs (32.10%), transportation services of 7 staff (13.20%), and the least group was providing suitable facility for the disabled employees of 6 staff (11.30%) respectively.

Table 7 Frequency and Percentage of Desired Employers by the Disabled Employees

Desired Employers	Frequency	Percentage
Positive Attitude	48	90.60
Equality among Employers	37	69.80
Assigning the Right Responsibility	48	90.60
Suitable Working Time	38	71.70
Providing Suitable Environment for the Disabled	6	11.30
Transportation Service	7	13.20
Housing Service	17	32.10

*more than 1 can be marked

Part IV The study of other related agency in the support of the disabled employees in the Upper Northern Part of Thailand.

Based on the interviewing of related government staff who are responsible for enhancing the employing opportunities of the disabled, it is found that There is only few opening position for the disabled in the companies due to the mismatching of the disabled' knowledge and competency and the companies' requirement. This can be caused by lack of agency representing the disabled and there are various type of disability which has made it more difficult to match.

Lack of active policy/strategy in involving the disabled in the local area which can be explained by lacking of personnel, experience in hiring the disabled, lack of useful information from the disabled and the companies including lack of coordination between employing departments from private and public sectors such as the Organizations of employers and employees, disabled person Organizations, educational Organizations, social benefit Organizations etc.

Lack of tool and disability aids which results in little access to their rights such as lack of hand language interpretator for hearing impairment staff, communication too to vision impairment staff.

Conclusion

The management of the disabled to frozen fruit and vegetable industry in the Upper Northern Part of Thailand should be conducted based on the matching between the disabled's knowledge, competency and the companies' requirement. The government agency must build up positive attitudes toward working competency to entrepreneurs and motivates them to employ more disabled employees such as labelling on the products showing that it was done by the disabled, honouring companies that employ the disabled, including setting active policy

Which government agency is responsible for selecting the disabled who are ready to work for the opening positions. Companies can notify the required characteristics to such agency to the Department of Employment so that the proper training to the disabled can be provided by the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security. This would increase the disabled's competency, hoping to match up with the companies' requirement and would increase the probability of those disabled in getting the job. Ideally, the industry would hire the disabled more than that of required by laws or more than 100:1 ratio.

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