

## The Development of Supported Employment in Malaysia

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**Abstract :** Supported employment in Malaysia is in the early stages of development. The development of supported employment in Malaysia is an important step towards the inclusion of individuals with disabilities who have previously lacked the necessary support for employment in the open labour market as they were confined to sheltered workshops. There is a paradigm shift from sheltered to supported employment as the sheltered workshop is based on the medical model of disability, which focuses on the disability of the individual and segregated training institutions. The paradigm shift revolves around the social model of disability, which emphasizes the abilities of the individual and the removal of the barriers in the environment by the provision of support. This study explores the development of supported employment by utilizing a mixed methods approach which consists of collecting quantitative data through a survey and interviewing participants to collect qualitative data. Job coaches from six employment sectors participated in the survey and interview. The findings of the study indicate that the role of job coaches is integral to the development of supported employment. The role of job coaches includes job matching, on-the-job training, and developing natural supports to foster greater diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

**Keywords :** supported employment, disabilities, diversity, development

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