

Purpose for Research Topic

Mele'Ani R. Cepeda

Dr. Kimberly Bunts-Anderson

EN202-02

June 7, 2019

Northern Marianas College

## Purpose for Research Topic

Can you imagine not having the basic civil rights for education, employment, and/or even being accepted in a society for something you have no control over? Or being told that you are dumb or slow because it is difficult for you to learn basic things like the ABC's, how to tie your shoes, or just not being able to speak? Or to be hidden away from society because your family is ashamed by your very existence? This has been a big issue in the lives of individuals with disabilities. Families would send their children with disabilities to mental hospitals to be taken care of and hidden from the rest of the world. This is something that, until today, some of the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands (CNMI) struggle with. The student researcher herself has experience first-hand as she has been a part of special education and its programs for ten years. Many people who live on the islands of Saipan, Tinian, Rota and the Northern Islands know someone with a disability, but do not understand how capable they are to succeed in higher education and in life in general.

Special education or education for people with disabilities is a fairly new concept to the America and its territories. It was only in 1990 that the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was made a law by President George H.W. Bush (2019). The law specifies that it is illegal to discriminate “against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, and all public and private places that are open to the general public (2019)”. “ADA” is classified as a “Civil rights law” that helps individuals with disabilities were treated as equals and given the same opportunities as others (2019). The law was split into five titles or sections employment, Public Services, Public Accommodations and Services Operated by Private Entities, Telecommunications, and Miscellaneous Provisions (2019). The main

sections or titles, from ADA, that will be discussed in this paper are employment and Public Accommodations and Services Operated by Private Entities (2019) as well as their effects on Saipan's colleges capability to help with transitioning into higher education and in to employment. The research questions is: How can the CNMIs educational system help and/or become better suitable to help students with disabilities successfully transfer to higher education and/or employment?

The research collected by the student researcher was done in a six week study based on support systems for special education in higher education, and its effects on employment. The first things that were done was creating two surveys. The first being a pilot survey that was up on a Google Doc on May 1, 2019 and continued collecting data until June 2, 2019. The next survey the student research did was create a final survey that was up on May 3, 2019 and collect data until June 5, 2019. After this they are to send out letter to experts about the student researchers topic on special education. The letters were sent to ten specialists five in the CNMI and five out side of the CNMI. The letters included a background on the topic and why it was chosen, as well as three questions. The researcher also included three informal interviews with a student from the Northern Marianas College, a counselor in the Public School System (PSS), and a SPED Aid in PSS. The two people from PSS were chosen because usually in the CNMI PSS SPED programs usually bring in individuals who are license to test for disabilities and diagnose them as well. This plays a role because it allows college, like NMC to accept who have been diagnosed and have been in the SPED program. The researcher continued to do research on disabilities support services throughout the six weeks along side the original research done in class. This as

well as the complete essays for a composition class that would be inserted into the final research report. This allowed the student researcher stress less about the due date of the final report.

#### Reference

An Overview of the Americans With Disabilities Act. (2019, June 06). Retrieved from

<https://adata.org/factsheet/ADA-overview>