

The copyright © of this thesis belongs to its rightful author and/or other copyright owner. Copies can be accessed and downloaded for non-commercial or learning purposes without any charge and permission. The thesis cannot be reproduced or quoted as a whole without the permission from its rightful owner. No alteration or changes in format is allowed without permission from its rightful owner.



**EMPLOYERS' PERCEPTION TOWARDS HIRING
PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**



**MASTER HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA
AUGUST 2018**

EMPLOYERS' PERCEPTION TOWARDS HIRING PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

By

NOR SYAZWANI BINTI MOHAMED KAMIL



UUM
Universiti Utara Malaysia

Project Paper Submitted to
School of Business Management
Universiti Utara Malaysia
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Master Human Resource
Management

Permission to Use

In presenting this project paper in partial fulfillment of the requirement for a Post Graduate degree from the Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM), I agree that the Library of this university may make it freely available for inspection. I further agree that permission for copying this project paper in any manner, in whole or in part, for scholarly purposes may be granted by my supervisor, or in their absence, by the Dean of School of Business Management where I did my project paper. It is understood that any copying or publication or use of this project paper parts of it for financial gain shall not be allowed without written permission. It is also understood that due recognition shall be given to me and to the UUM in any scholarly use which may be made of any material in my project paper.

Request for permission to copy or make other use of materials in this project paper, in whole or in part should be addressed to:

**Dean of School of Business Management
Universiti Utara Malaysia
060100 Sintok
Kedah Darul Aman, Malaysia**



Abstract

Employers' negative attitudes have long been regarded as a main barrier for employment for persons with disabilities. This is because employer attitudes is presumed to relate with the hiring behavior. Thus, this qualitative study was conducted with the intention to explore employers' perception towards hiring persons with disabilities. The study involved semi-structure interview with 10 employers from Klang Valley area who haven't had experience in hiring persons with disabilities. Responses from the respondents indicated that employer are still having negative perception towards person with disabilities. Persons with disabilities are still seen to be helpless who need assistance in doing work, and have limitation in terms of movement, hearing and eyesight. The findings also found that having a policy in hiring persons with disabilities in the workplace does not guarantee that disabled people will be hired. Even if the employers are interested in hiring persons with disabilities, they prefer those who are highly productive; highly independent and possess related qualifications, skills and abilities to perform the given task. Majority of the respondents interviewed also shared that they did not have any experience attending the job coach or return to work program. When asked about the government incentives for those who hired persons with disabilities, majority of them were aware of the incentive and suggested it to be revised and improved. Based on the responses gathered from the interview, several suggestions have been put forward to increase the participation of persons with disabilities in the employment. These include revising the current rewards and incentives given to employers who have hired persons with disabilities; promoting awareness among the employers on the positive side of persons with disabilities and giving equal access to persons with disabilities on education and training so that they have the relevant set of skills that are needed by the industries.

Keywords: employment; persons with disabilities; employers' perception; Malaysia

Abstrak

Sikap negatif majikan telah lama dianggap sebagai penghalang kepada peluang untuk pekerjaan bagi orang kurang upaya. Ini adalah kerana sikap majikan telah dianggap mempunyai kaitan dengan gelagat pengambilan. Oleh yang demikian, kajian kualitatif ini dijalankan dengan tujuan untuk meneroka persepsi majikan terhadap pengambilan orang kurang upaya. Kajian ini melibatkan temubual semi struktur bersama 10 majikan daripada Lembah Klang yang tidak pernah menggaji mana-mana pekerja orang kurang upaya sebelum ini. Maklumbalas yang diterima daripada responden menunjukkan bahawa majikan masih lagi mempunyai persepsi yang negatif terhadap orang kurang upaya. Orang kurang upaya masih lagi dilihat lemah yang memerlukan bantuan dalam menjalankan kerja, dan mempunyai batasan dalam pergerakan, pendengaran dan penglihatan. Dapatan juga mendapati bahawa organisasi yang mempunyai polisi dalam pengambilan orang kurang upaya tidak memberi jaminan bahawa golongan ini akan diambil bekerja. Walaupun majikan berminat untuk mengambil pekerja kurang upaya, mereka lebih memilih mereka yang sangat produktif, mampu berdikari dan mempunyai kelayakan, kemahiran dan keupayaan dalam melakukan kerja yang diberi. Kebanyakan responden yang ditemubual menyatakan bahawa mereka tidak mempunyai pengalaman menghadiri program *job coach* atau *return to work*. Apabila ditanya tentang insentif kerajaan bagi organisasi yang ada mengambil pekerja kurang upaya, kebanyakan mereka sedar akan insentif tersebut dan menyarankan agar ianya disemak semula dan ditambahbaik. Berdasarkan kepada maklumbalas yang diperolehi daripada temubual, beberapa cadangan telah diketengahkan bagi meningkatkan penglibatan orang kurang upaya dalam pekerjaan. Ini termasuklah menyemak semula ganjaran dan insentif yang diberikan kepada majikan yang ada menggajikan orang kurang upaya, mempromosi sisi positif orang kurang upaya kepada majikan dan memberi akses yang saksama kepada orang kurang upaya terhadap pendidikan dan latihan agar mereka mempunyai kemahiran yang relevan seperti yang dikehendaki oleh industri.

Kata kunci: pekerjaan; orang kurang upaya; persepsi majikan; Malaysia

Acknowledgement

First and foremost, I would like to sincerely acknowledge the dedication of my respected supervisor, Associate Professor Dr. Siti Zubaidah Bt. Othman, for making this dissertation possible. It would have been impossible to complete this research without her assistance and guidance from the beginning of the proposal development to the writing of this dissertation. I am therefore deeply grateful to her for her tireless and selfless support and sharing her rich experiences throughout the course of this research.

In addition, I wish to thank my immediate supervisor in the office Encik Ramadan B. Mohd Noor for his assistance throughout my study, especially during the process of data collection. His understanding and support have always been a source of my strength to carry on this study.

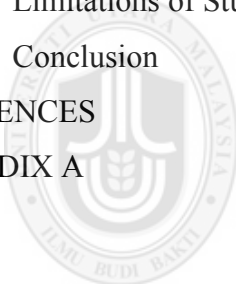
I would also like to express my love and appreciation to my parents for their endless support during the entire period of writing this dissertation. They have always be my motivation to complete this journey.

Special appreciation also goes to my colleagues and my course mates who always inspired me and gave me supports and suggestions. I am also very grateful to my friends who always motivate me during my study. Finally, I wish to express my thankfulness to all the respondents who have participated in this study.

Table of Content

Permission to Use	i
Abstract	ii
Abstrak	iii
Acknowledgement	iv
Table of Content	v
List of Tables	vii
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 Problem Statement	2
1.3 Research Questions	5
1.4 Research Objectives	5
1.5 Significance of the Study	5
1.6 Scope of Study	6
1.7 Organization of Chapters	7
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW	8
2.1 Introduction	8
2.2 Disabilities and Persons with Disabilities – the Definition	8
2.3 Issues of Employment and Persons with Disabilities	13
2.4 Reasons why Organizations are not Hiring Persons with Disabilities	17
2.5 Conclusion	19
CHAPTER 3 METHOD	20
3.1 Introduction	20
3.2 Research Design	20
3.3 Research Sampling	21
3.4 Development of Interview Protocol	22
3.5 The Interview Process	22
3.6 Technique of Data Analysis	23
3.7 Conclusion	24
CHAPTER 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS	25
4.1 Introduction	25
4.2 Organization's Profile	25
4.3 Responses from Employers	26

4.3.1	Employers' Understanding on Person with Disabilities.	26
4.3.2	Policy Related to Hiring Persons with Disabilities	27
4.3.3	Reasons for not Employing Persons with Disabilities	28
4.3.4	Participation in the Job Coach / Return to Work (SOC SO) Program	29
4.3.5	Employers Awareness towards Government Incentives in Hiring Persons with Disabilities	30
4.3.6	Employers Future Intention in Hiring Persons with Disabilities	31
4.4	Conclusion	33
CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION		34
5.1	Introduction	34
5.2	Summary of Research Findings	34
5.3	Research Implications	36
5.3.1	Theoretical Implications	36
5.3.2	Practical Implications	37
5.4	Limitations of Study and Direction for Future Research	37
5.5	Conclusion	38
REFERENCES		40
APPENDIX A		47



List of Tables

Table 4.1 Organization's profile (n=10)

25



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

For people with disabilities, employment is particularly important, because having a disability often means being socially isolated. Employment provides them with a source of identity, feelings of normality, financial support, and socialization. Thus, being able to be employed will reduce this isolation and the most importantly is to reduce poverty.

However, job participating among the disabled in Malaysia still remain as a complex issue. With the emergence of information and communication technology, the field of employment for persons with disabilities should have changed and created a new horizon for the disabled where they can work from home. But, sadly, the reality showed that the number of disabled employed in public and private sectors are still remain low. This is worsened when the unemployment rates for persons without disabilities are high as many of these people can work and want to work. Apart from that, the job requirements in the workplace have increased or changed due to changes in the technology. Particularly the requirements on social skills expanded considerably and make it increasingly difficult for workers with disabilities to perform competently. Therefore, a proper measure and intervention are needed to prepare and make the disabled people ready for work. By uncovering the opinions and perceptions from employers regarding this employment issues, a better picture on the kind of improvement needed can be taken.

REFERENCES

- Ang, M. C. H., & Ramayah, T. H. A. (2015). Equality, diversity and inclusion. *International Journal*, 34(3), 186–200.
- Anizam Mohamed Yusof, Manisah Mohd Ali, & Amla Mohd. Salleh. (2014). Employability of vocational school leavers with disabilities. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 112(2014), 1064-1069.
- Bachiochi, P.D., & Weiner, S.P. (2002). Qualitative data collection and analysis. In S.G. Rogelberg (Ed.), *Handbook of research methods in industrial and organizational psychology* (pp. 161 – 183). London: Blackwell Publishing.
- Barnes, C., & Mercer, G. (2005). Disability, work and welfare: Challenging the social exclusion of disabled people. *Work, employment and society*, 19(3), 527-544.
- Berthoud, R. (2008). Disability employment penalties in Britain. *Work, Employment & Society*, 22(1), 129–148. doi:10.1177/0950017007087420.
- Bickenbach, J. E., Chatterji, S., Badley, E. M., & Ustun, T. B. (1999). Models of disablement, universalism and the international classification of impairments, disabilities and handicaps. *Social Science and Medicine*, 48, 1173-11.
- Bruyere, S.M. (2000). Statistics about people with disabilities and employment. Retrieved from <http://www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/ek01/stats.htm>.
- Bualar, T. (2014). Barriers to employment: Voices of physically disabled rural women in Thailand. *Community, Work & Family*, 17(2), 181–199. doi:10.1080/13668803.2013.806125
- Coffey, A., & Atkinson, P. (1996). *Making sense of qualitative data: Complementary research strategies*. Thousand Oak, CA: Sage Publications.

- Coffey, M., Coufopoulos, A., & Kinghorn, K. (2014). Barriers to employment for visually impaired women. *International Journal of Workplace Health Management*, 7(3), 171–185.
- Edwards, R., & Holland, J. (2013). *What is qualitative interviewing?* London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.
- Fontana, A., & Frey, J.H. (2005). The interview: From neutral stance to political involvement. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 695 – 728). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publication.
- Garske, G.G., & Stewart, J.R. (1999). Stigmatic and mythical thinking: Barriers to vocational rehabilitation services for persons with severe mental illness. *Journal of Rehabilitation*, 65(4), 4-8.
- Gordon, C. (2018). Why don't employers hire people with disabilities? Retrieved from <https://risepeople.com/blog/why-dont-employers-hire-people-with-disabilities/>
- Grbich, C. (1999). *Qualitative research in health: An introduction*. London: Sage Publication.
- Hamad, S. (2007). For equal employment opportunities, report on the consultation regarding the national strategy for labor market integration and maintenance of handicapped persons, Minister of Employment and Social Solidarity.
- Hernandez, B., Keys, C., & Balcazar, F. (2000). Employer attitudes toward workers with disabilities and their ADA employment rights: A literature review. *Journal of Rehabilitation*, 66, 4–16
- Hesse-Biber, S.N., & Leavy, P. (2006). *The practice of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publication.

- Hoque, K., Bacon, N., & Parr, D. (2014). Employer disability practice in Britain: Assessing the impact of the positive about disabled people two ticks symbol. *Work, Employment & Society*, 28(3), 430–451. doi:10.1177/0950017012472757
- Johnson, V.A., Greenwood, R., & Schriener, K.F. (1988). Work performance and work personality: Employer concerns about workers with disabilities. *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin*, 32, 50-57.
- Jumlah OKU di sector awam bawah sasaran. (30 April 2017). *BH online*. Retrieved from <http://www.bharian.com.my>
- Kaye, H. S., Jans, L.H., & Jones, E. C. (2011). Why don't employers hire and retain workers with disabilities? *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*, 21(4), 526-536.
- Khoo, S. L., Tiun, L. T., & Lee, L. W. (2013). Unseen challenges, unheard voices, unspoken desires: Experiences of employment by Malaysians with physical disabilities. *Kajian Malaysia*, 31(1), 37-55.
- Kilbury, R.F., Benshoff, J.J., & Rubun, S.E. (1992). The interaction of legislation, public attitudes and access to opportunities for person with disabilities. *Journal of Rehabilitation*, 58, 6-9
- Kocak, O., & Kavi, E. (2012). The employment opportunities of disabled people at call centers: Some cases from Turkey. *European Integration Studies*, 5, 205–213. doi:10.5755/j01.eis.0.5.1098.
- Lee, M. N., Abdullah, Y., & Mey, S. C. (2011). Employment of people with disabilities in Malaysia: Drivers and inhibitors. *International Journal of Special Education*, 26(1), 112–124.

- Loflan, J., & Loflan, L.H. (1984). *Analyzing social settings: A guide to qualitative observation and analysis* (2nd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Malle, Y. A., Pirttimaa, R., & Saloviita, T. (2015). Inclusion of students with disabilities in formal vocational education programs in Ethiopia. *International Journal of Special Education*, 30(2), 1–10.
- Malle, Y. A., Pirttimaa, R., & Saloviita, T. (2015). Inclusion of students with disabilities in formal vocational education programs in Ethiopia. *International Journal of Special Education*, 30(2), 1–10.
- Marrone, J., & Golowka, E. (1999). If work makes people sick, what do unemployment, poverty and social isolation cause? *Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal*, 23(2), 187-193.
- Minichiello, V., & Aroni, R., Timewell, & Alexander, L. (1995). *In-depth interviewing: Principles, techniques analysis* (2nd ed). Melbourne: Longman.
- Norani Mohd Salleh, Khalid Abdullah, & Nor Aishah Buang. (2001). Job opportunities for special needs population in Malaysia. *Jurnal Pendidikan*, 27, 77–85.
- Pagán, R. (2015). Determinants of participation in further training among workers with disabilities. *Disability and Rehabilitation*, 37(11), 1009–1016. doi:10.3109/09638288.2014.948140.
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oak, CA: Sage Publication.
- Peck, B., & Kirkbride, L. T. (2001). Why businesses don't employ people with disabilities. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 16(2), 71-75.
- Pratt, C. W., Gill, K. J., Barret, N. M., & Roberts, M. M. (1999). *Psychiatric rehabilitation*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

- Ramakrishnan, P. (2007). *Critical factors influencing employment of disabled persons in Malaysia*. Online Thesis. University of South Australia. <http://arrow.unisa.edu.au:8081/1959.8/78821>.
- Ravaud, J. F., Madiot, B., & Ville, I. (1992). Discrimination towards disabled people seeking employment. *Social Science and Medicine*, 35(8), 951–958. doi:10.1016/0277-9536(92)90234-H.
- Richards, (2005). *Handling qualitative data: A practical guide*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publication.
- Robson, C. (2002). *Real world research: A resource for social scientists and practitioner-researchers* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Roessler, R. (2002). Improving job tenure outcomes for people with disabilities: The 3M model. *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin*, 45(4), 207-212.
- Schur, L., Kruse, D., Blasi, J., & Blanck, P. (2009). Is disability disabling in all workplaces? Workplace disparities and corporate culture. *Industrial Relations*, 48(3), 381-410.
- Serajul Haq, F. (2003). Career and employment opportunities for women. *Asia Pacific Disability Rehabilitation Journal*, 14(1), 71-78.
- Shier, M., John, R. G., & Marion, E. J. (2009). Barriers to employment as experienced by disabled people: A qualitative analysis in Calgary and Regina Canada. *Disability & Society*, 24(1), 63-75.
- Smith Randolph, D. (2005). The meaning of workplace discrimination for women with disabilities. *Work (Reading, Mass.)*, 24(4), 369–380.
- Statistik pekerjaan dan perburuhan Kementerian Sumber Manusia. (2015). *Pendaftaran orang kurang upaya (OKU) mengikut etnik dan kategori ketidakupayaan*. Retrieved from <http://www.mohr.gov.my>.

- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basic of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publication.
- Stacher, J., & Hendren, G.R. (1992). Employer agreement with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990: Implications for rehabilitation counselling. *Journal of Rehabilitation*, 58(3), 13-17.
- Ta, T. L., & Leng, K. S. (2013). Challenges faced by Malaysians with disabilities in the world of employment, 24(1), 6–21. doi:10.5463/DCID.v24i1.142.
- Tagalakis, V., Amsel, R., & Fichten, C.S. (1988). Job interviewing strategies for people with a visible disability. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 18, 520-532.
- Taylor, S.J., & Bogdan, R. (1998). *Introduction to qualitative research methods: A guidebook and resource* (3rd ed.). New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Tiun, L. T., & Khoo, S. L. (2013). Challenges faced by Malaysians with disabilities in the world of employment. *Disability, CBR & Inclusive Development*, 24(1), 6-21.
- Unger, D. D. (2002). Employers' attitudes toward persons with disabilities in the workforce: Myths or realities? *Focus on autism and other developmental disabilities*, 17(1), 2-10.
- United Nations (2012). *Incheon Strategy to "Make the Right Real" for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific*. Bangkok: United Nations Publication.
- United Nations Enable (2015). *Report of the 8th Session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. 8th Session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 9-11 June, United Nations Headquarters, New York. (<http://www.un.org/disabilities>).

- Walsh, L., Lydon, S., & Healy, O. (2014). Employment and vocational skills among individuals with autism spectrum disorder: Predictors, impact, and interventions. *Review Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders, 1*, 266–275. doi:10.1007/s40489-014-0024-7.
- WHO (2011). *World report on disability. Produced jointly by WHO and the World Bank*. Geneva, Switzerland: WHO Press.
- Wright, G. E., & Multon, K. D. (1995). Employers' perceptions of nonverbal communication in job interviews for persons with physical disabilities. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 47*, 214-227.



APPENDIX A



STUDY ON EMPLOYERS' PERCEPTION TOWARDS HIRING PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Dear Participant,

You have been selected to participate in our study. The purpose of this study is to explore the current practices in employing people with disability. We would appreciate it if you could share your views regarding the matter. Your feedback will be treated with strict confidence and will be used for the purpose of the study only.

If you have any questions regarding this research, you may address them to me at the contact details below.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

Nor Syazwani Binti Mohamed Kamil
Master of Human Resource Management Candidate
Tel: 0129262802
Email: syazwanikamil@gmail.com

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

EMPLOYERS	
NUM	QUESTIONS
1	What is your understanding on persons with disabilities?
2	Does your organization has any policy in hiring persons with disabilities?
3	Why your organization does not employ persons with disabilities?

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

EMPLOYERS	
NUM	QUESTIONS
4	Have you ever participated in the Job Coach / Return to Work (SOC SO) program?
5	Are you aware of the government incentives provided to employers who employ persons with disabilities?
6	Do your organization has any intention in the future to hire persons with disabilities? Why? Why not?

ORGANIZATION PROFILE

1. Name of organization: _____

2. Types of industry:

☐

Manufacturing

☐

Retailer

☐

Services

☐

Construction

☐

Agriculture

☐

Transportation

☐

Mining

☐

Others specify: _____

(Please

3. Total number of employees: _____

• Part time: _____

• Full time: _____

4. Location: _____

-----THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION----