



Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development

**EMPLOYER'S PERCEPTION TOWARDS RECRUITMENT OF
PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED PEOPLE AND ITS EFFECT ON JOB
OPPORTUNITIES**

Tenmoli Ramachendran

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**Bachelor of Science with Honours
(Human Resources Development)
2015**

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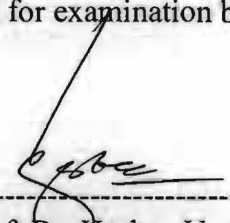
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The project entitled 'Employer's Perception Towards Recruitment of Physically Challenged People and Its Effect On Job Opportunities' was prepared by Tenmoli Ramachendran and submitted to the Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Bachelor of Science with Honours Human Resource Development

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(Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hasbee Usop)

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ABSTRACT

Employer's Perception Towards Recruitment of Physically Challenged People and Its Effect On Job Opportunities

Tenmoli Ramachendran

This study aims to identify the perception of employers towards the recruitment of physically challenged people. Physically challenged people always face difficult times because they are always excluded from job opportunities. Their exclusion from employment, society and academic cause them to live below the breadline. Physically challenged people are frequently seen as burden by employers and employees. In this research, the study focuses about employer's perception towards recruitment of physically challenged people and its effect on job opportunities. They are so many perceptions made. A few companies which hires and do not hires physically challenged people were chosen for the study. The study also focused on whether employers face problems when hiring and working with physically challenged people and how these does affects the job opportunities of physically challenged people. The findings of the study were supporting previous findings by past researches.

ABSTRAK

Persepsi Majikan Terhadap Pengambilan Pekerja Orang Kurang Upaya dan Kesannya Terhadap Peluang Pekerjaan

Tenmoli Ramachendran

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengenalpasti Persepsi Majikan Terhadap Pengambilan Pekerja Orang Kurang Upaya (OKU) dan Kesannya Terhadap Peluang Pekerjaan. Kajian ini merumuskan mengenai bagaimana sesuatu persepsi yang dibuat oleh pihak majikan boleh memberi kesan kepada kadar pengambilan pekerja. Persepsi seseorang pegawai yang terlibat dalam proses pengambilan pekerja terhadap golongan kurang upaya boleh menyebabkan mereka tidak dapat peluang untuk bekerja. Orang kurang upaya sentiasa menghadapi masa yang sukar kerana mereka sentiasa dikecualikan daripada peluang pekerjaan. Pengecualian mereka dari pekerjaan, masyarakat dan akademik menyebabkan mereka hidup di bawah taraf hidup sederhana. Orang kurang upaya sering dilihat sebagai beban oleh majikan dan pekerja. Kajian ini, mengkaji persepsi majikan terhadap pengambilan orang kurang upaya dan kesannya terhadap peluang pekerjaan. Terdapat pelbagai persepsi yang dibuat terhadap golongan kurang upaya. Beberapa syarikat-syarikat yang mengaji dan tidak mengaji orang kurang upaya telah dipilih untuk kajian ini. Kajian ini juga memberi tumpuan kepada sama ada majikan menghadapi masalah ketika mengaji dan bekerja dengan orang-orang kurang upaya dan bagaimana semua ini tidak memberi kesan kepada peluang pekerjaan orang kurang upaya. Hasil kajian ini telah menyokong dapatan kajian terdahulu oleh masa lalu

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

According to UNICEF there are 445,006 Malaysian people with disabilities registered in 2012. However, since registration is just voluntary and not been compulsory, this number definitely could not reflect the actual numbers of physically challenged people in our country. In Malaysia, The Government has never discriminate physically challenged people in providing employment, education, or any other official services. As per in Malaysia, our public sector law reserves at least 1 percent of public sector job vacancies for physically challenged people. A few public amenities were modified to accommodate the needs of physically challenged people. For an example, in public transportation vehicles such as train, commuters, and buses and also in Government building was modified to be convenient for the use of physically challenged people. Mostly all new government buildings were normally equipped with complete facilities for the use of physically challenged people.

Back in 2001, the Government declared the “Code of Practice for the Employment of Persons with Disabilities” in Private Sector as a general guideline for government agencies, employers, employee associations, employees, and others to place suitable physically challenged people in private sector occupations. Moreover, in SUHAKAM’s second annual report, “Disabled Persons

Bill” was introduced for physically challenged people to file complain over discriminatory practices and to reduce communication barriers faced by physically challenged people.

Furthermore, there are many special education schools, but it is still not enough to full fill the needs of this enlarging population of physically challenged population. Previously, Government has taken various initiatives to encourage the public to accept of physically challenged people to make public amenities more convenient for the use of physically challenged people and to increase the Malaysia’s annual budget allocation for programs designed for physically challenged people. The Government has even recognized the fact that public transportation is not disabled-friendly and lowered the duty for physically challenged people for local made cars and motorcycles by 50 percent. A recent statistics found that physically challenged people has made up to 7 percent of the world population.

Physically challenged people always face difficult times because they are always excluded from job opportunities. Nowadays, physically challenged people are frequently “seen as burden by employers and employees”. In this research, we are going to study on employer’s perception towards recruitment of physically challenged people and its effect on job opportunities. This field has been widely researched by researchers from various countries but lesser research has been conducted in Malaysia. Since they are so many perceptions made, I have decided to choose a few companies which hires and do not hires physically challenged people. I also want to study whether employers face problems when hiring and working with physically challenged people and how these does affects the job opportunities of physically challenged people.

1.1 Background of the study

A review of literature on employers' attitudes towards physically challenged people was done. Several factors that may affect employers' perceptions toward physically challenged people at workplace and a description of the methodologies used in the investigations are also provided. Although several key themes appears, years of employer research has generally produced unreliable findings due to disparities in research design.

The unemployment rate of physically challenged people is very discouraging because a recent study found that a large number of physically challenged people is unemployed. It is found that 72% of unemployed physically challenged people. The study shown that even though physically challenged people preferred to work but representatives from business and industry have said that their top concern is qualified workers for the new millennium (Bureau of National Affairs [BNA], 2000). At current situation where there is high labour demand for and a very fast economic growth, it is depressing to acknowledge the fact that people of our nation's largest minority, physically challenged people, are not being able to participate in the workforce to the same as much as others who are without disabilities.

Employers mostly play a very crucial role in acknowledging the great unemployment rate experienced by physically challenged people. A few researchers have found that employer perception towards physically challenged people as the main reason for the high unemployment rate of physically challenged people (Blanck, 1998). Even though employer's perceptions towards physically challenged people have been studied comprehensively, but those researches have produced inconsistent findings. Some of the factors were recognized as positive features by some employers for an example, attendance, safety, and productivity.

All over the world, employment is an important aspect of life, culture and identity of a person. Many people are establishing their lives through employment. Employment has been very helpful in defining a person's status in the society. Those unemployed people are always excluded from social activities, roles and participation within the society. Employers' perceptions of physically challenged people play a vital role in the hiring process and how they are treated at the workplace (Morgan et al. 2005). Meanwhile, existing information shows that physically challenged people have lesser employment products than others. As been mentioned by Lindsay (2011), negative attitudes towards physically challenged people may limit their employment opportunities.

1.2 Problem statement

There almost 650 million physically challenged people worldwide, and out of that nearly 15-20% of every nation's population is affected by disability (Employers' Forum). Provincially, the general trend is also the same. Where as in Asia itself, there are 370 million physically challenged people and 238 million of them are at the working age. Perry (2000) mentioned that, the unemployment rate is normally twice that of the rest of the people and often as high as 80%.

One of the problems that need to be highlighted here is that many physically challenged are rejected by employers who decline to give them a job because they are continuously seen as problem. As found by Kaye et al (2011), one of the perceptions made by employer's is that physically challenged employees cost more expenses for the management to prepare a friendly environment for them. Another perception is that, physically challenged people are not productive compared to people without disabilities and they need so much training and supervision as mentioned by Hernandez et al. (2000). All these perceptions should be clarified as it causes discouragement for the physically challenged people. Moreover, even some of the employees have problems on working with physically challenged people. It is very important for a research to be conducted to justify the past findings and to find out if really perceptions is the biggest threat for the employability of physically challenged people.

1.3 Objective

In this research, objectives of the research are divided into two parts which is main objective and specific objective.

1.3.1 Main Objective

The main objective of this research is to study the perception of employers on recruitment of physically challenged people.

1.3.2 Specific Objective

This research also interested in knowing the factors that becomes a barrier for the recruitment of physically challenged people in private sector. The proposed objectives are as followed:

- i. To study the problems faced by employers when recruiting/working with physically challenged people.
- ii. To study how perceptions of employers towards psychically challenged people could affect their job opportunities.
- iii. To find out the suggestions of employers to increase the number of recruitment of physically challenged people in organization.

1.4 Research questions

There are so many problems faced by physically challenged people to find a job which suitable for them and also the environment that suits them. In this competitive and fast growing world unfortunate people like them are regarded unimportant and most of them are refused to be given jobs with various reasons. Physically challenged people are not seen as contributing community as well as other parties of society. So with regard to all these problems statements, the research questions that need to be answered at end of research is these:

- i. What are the perceptions of employer about recruitment of physically challenged people?
- ii. What is the perception of employer regarding the problems faced by employer in recruiting physically challenged people in organization?
- iii. What are the problems that most likely you face when supervising/working with a psychically challenged person?
- iv. What are the suggestions of employer in order to increase the recruitment of physically challenged people?

1.5 Significance of the study

This study could definitely provide a good justification on false assumption made by people that physically challenged people are not productive and they are a burden to the company. Moreover, this study could also clarify certain perceptions made by people and could open more job opportunities by changing the perception of people towards psychically challenge people. The findings from this research can be used as beneficial guidelines by any individuals to further the research area.

Furthermore, this research can be used a good source information by Government to design many more programs or institutions that could enhance and help physically challenged people to obtain work easily. Moreover, the Non-Government Organizations may use this research as a guide to help and defend the unfortunate physically challenged people to fight for their rights to be considered as contributing citizens of Malaysia.

Meanwhile, this research could also change the perception of employers and educate them that physically challenged people can be productive as much as normal people as long as they are given a chance to prove themselves and given a conducive environment to work in. Finally, this research could also eliminate prejudices and discrimination towards the rights of physically challenged people to work.

1.6 Limitations of the study

The limitations that maybe faced are difficulties in collecting response from the employers. The response maybe very little since they may refuse to be interviewed. The interviewee may also answer without honesty to hide their true feelings about physically challenged people. Moreover, methodological limitations of the study are limited to qualitative method. In fact, the time frame for this study is limited to six months which causes lesser time allocated for data collection and analysis.

1.7 Definitions of terms

In this context, the related terms in this research has been given definition conceptually and operationally.

1.7.1 Perception

The way in which something is observed, assumed, or inferred. Perception is an exclusive manner in each person's opinion or clarification always held by many people and it would be based on looks. In this research perspective, perception of the employer is taken into justification on whether these perceptions that made by employers has any effect on the job opportunities of physically challenged people.

1.7.2 Employer

Employer is a legal entity that hires or recruits employees under a contract of employment and wages the employee salary as compensation. Employers include all from people who hires a babysitter to governments and businesses which hires thousands of employees. In this research, the employer is the one who fixes the company's recruitment policies. And the person who is involved in the recruitment and selection process in the company is the one we are going to approach as they work under company policy guidelines.

1.7.3 Physically Challenged People

According to the Malaysian Persons with Disabilities Act of 2008 (Act 685), physically challenged people includes those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in contact with numerous barriers, may obstruct their full and effective participation in society. If a person is incapable to perform major life activities including caring for themselves, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing or learning, to the amount of the average person, that individual is considered as an

physically challenged person. Moreover, physically challenged people include people who were disabled due to injuries and accidents. Physically challenged people are a fragile and unlucky people that need help from the society and government so that they could best fit themselves normally into their daily activities.

1.7.4 Job Opportunities

Job opportunity is the opening of employment given to a person and be compensated for doing that occupation. A job opportunity is like a chance given to someone to do something or to prove something. In this research, job chances or opportunities given to physically challenged people is being found.

1.7.5 Recruitment

Recruitment is the process of discovering candidates, look over applicant qualifications, screening possible employees, and selecting employees to fulfil a job vacancy in an organization. Effective recruitment makes an organization to hire employees who are skilled, qualified, and best fits with organization's corporate culture. Recruitment methods must be affianced capable, dynamic employees who are loyal to the organization. In this research, the process of hiring and the hiring policies of each company will be found out to know whether it has any effect on the recruitment of physically challenged people.

1.8 Summary

In short, this chapter concludes about background of study. Meanwhile, this chapter also discusses in details regarding problems statement, significant of the study, objective of the research, research questions and limitations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses previous studies related to the employers and employees perception towards physically challenged people and its effect job opportunities. This discussion covers issues, past findings and theories related to the study.

2.1 Researches on Physically Challenged People

Previous studies by psychologists in fields such as law, rehabilitation, education, social and developmental, and industrial-organizational areas is creating a form of study on discrimination faced by physically challenged people with disabilities in the workplace and elsewhere. Those studies also have focused on the capacities of physically challenged people when they are been supported efficiently by society, and the government policies in improving their lives of people with disabilities. As per in 2008, overall employment rate for physically challenged people in Malaysians is still small in both public and private sectors. Moreover, it is the great effort by government as stated in the Laws of Malaysia for Person with Disabilities Act 685 (2008) and further laws are assisting in the reduction of discrimination over physically challenged people. These laws also encourage employers to facilitate workplace environment to accommodate

physically challenged people. This step will definitely increase the recruitment of physically challenged people and for their further career advancement.

Past researches regarding employment of physically challenged people were more focused on observational research only in certain field backgrounds, and experimental research has been increasing in academic backgrounds. But I find it is important for researchers also to focus on in this field, as a part to deliver 'evidence-based proof and support' on latest inventions of public policy or practices. Knowledge building knowledge will help to measure the impact of Government's law and policy in physically challenged people's daily lives. This will also help in the enhancement of each policy that are made and to know the current impact of the policy in order to find better options.

Since long time, disability rights have always been continues question mark and so many prejudices as well as physical barriers are present at workplaces and societies. Luckily, today's generation is very much lucky that each children who are born with disabilities today do not have go through all the struggles and fight for their rights as there is already laws such as Laws of Malaysia for Person with Disabilities Act 685 (2008) to protect their equality rights. However, even with the presence of such law, the way we handle these issues will outline the future generation's lives.

2.2 Theories related to the study

2.2.1 Theory of Maslow

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a theory of motivation which was found by Abraham Maslow. This theory considers people to be going through five different stages of needs that could inspire each of our behaviours. Those five stages are namely, *physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualization needs*. As believed by Maslow, each stage of need must be achieved in order before moving on to the next stage. A simple example to illustrate is that, before the search for health or financial security begins, the physiological needs for food and

water should be achieved first. This theory can be assimilated into a framework to recognize the psychological primacies for physically challenged people.

In Maslow's hierarchy of needs, there is need for safety and security for each individual. The need for safety and security includes health, occupation, assets, family and social strength. When one person have achieved their physiological needs, like food and water, then their safety needs becomes more significant. Meanwhile when their physiological needs are met, they would try to get a job to create financial safety. That's how physically challenged people trying to get job as to fulfil their needs. If physically challenged people is not given an opportunity to work, how else they would be able to achieve their needs for safety and security. Physically challenged people are also humans with all these needs stated in Maslow's theory, if they are not given a chance to prove that they are capable of getting employed and they can survive without depending on others, they would not be able to feel safe and secured in their life. They would definitely feel insecure in their life and unsatisfied with their life.



Figure 2.2.1 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

2.2.2 Equal Opportunity Theory

Equal opportunity theory resolves the inconsistency between the rights and the involvement of self-determination. The theory discusses the reason of this lack of ability and chances among individuals whose individual, social and economic conditions are outside their control like physically challenged people. Every member of the society have shared responsibility of

ensuring equal chances for everyone. The theory shows that when prospects for self-determination are distributed fairly, they are equally optimal for all. Although each person searches is different from one another, projections are however similar because all individuals have generally the similar chance of trailing or not trailing their own needs.

Most people expect a fair chance be given to them to pursue their plans of life. They usually do not want unfair discrimination to frustrate their pursuits. People always want to be treated fairly no matter they are disabled or normal and they do want same chance to determine their own directions and pursuing their own interest as others. Through this research it is obvious that physically challenged people are constraint from living a normal life just because they are not normal. The application of the equal opportunity principle extends to adult opportunity of getting hired by employers.

2.2.3 Theory of planned behaviour (TPB)

While other theories lend various perceptions into why physically challenged people are facing stigmatization, the theory of planned behavior (TPB) provides the greatest useful and applicable concept while analyzing employer perceptions related to hiring and accommodating physically challenged people. The theory can be applied to a varied range of behaviors because perceived behavioral control differs according to current situations. For example, TPB has even been applied to find out how those with physically challenged people searches and apply for job vacancies (Corbie`re et al., 2011).

There is no other studies have been applied TPB to explore this topic from a human management resources perspective. So it is expected that this paper will be able to assist as a reference point for Malaysian researchers to conduct more studies on the employment of physically challenged people in Malaysia. Increased research will in turn contribute to dependable and beneficial information on physically challenged people's employment that are lesser in Malaysia. Such information are much looked-for to support the invention and enactment of new effective policies that can help eliminate employment problems faced by physically challenged people.