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**A STUDY ON EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR DISABLED
PEOPLE IN KOTA KINABALU**

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

According to the Welfare Department of Malaysia, there is about 5% from the total of Malaysian populations suffered from certain form of disabilities. This represents a significant population whom need to be taken care and included as part of our efforts in building a caring Malaysian society.

Previously in the past, disabled people were viewed as burdens. As such, it is common that the general public will relate them to a group of people who need only public's financial aids. However, we never thought that their greatest wish is to be given fair opportunities including opportunities to receive formal educations, to have training, permanent jobs, enjoy the nation's public infrastructure, and so on. All they want is to lead an independent life and to contribute constructively to the nation's development.

In Malaysia, there are about 220,000 disabled persons with about 95,435 registered with the authorities. However, only 3,870 have paid employment. In other words, more than 95% of people with disabilities are still unemployed. Although some Malaysians with disabilities may not be able to hold down jobs, a large proportion can still work and contribute to society if given the opportunity, and if some workplace modifications are made. It is very miserable to say that, while the government has given jobs to over 2 million foreign workers in Malaysia, they are yet to recognize this huge untapped workforce among the Malaysian disabled peoples.