



**The Factors Influencing The Hiring Decision Of
People With Disabilities Among Private
Organizations In Kota Kinabalu, Sabah**

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STUDIES**

APRIL 2011

HAKMILIK
Pihak Universiti
UMS Sabah
MARA
2011

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Companies' decisions to hire and retain employee can be influence of variety of factors. The study examines the factors that influence companies' decision to hire a person with disabilities in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. While not denying the fact that there are numerous factors contributing to the companies' decisions to hire disabled people. According to the Department of Social Welfare Malaysia, persons with disability is any person who is unable to obtain for himself/herself, fully or partially, the normal requirements of an individual and / or is unable to participate fully in the community due to shortcomings either physically or mentally and whether it occurred since birth or later in life. There are six categories of disabilities that are identify and registered in the department that is first hearing disability including deaf and mute, second is vision disability including blind that is eyesight less than 3/60 for the good eye even with vision support equipment (eye glasses) and low vision/partially sighted that is eyesight less 6/18 but equal or better than 3/60 for the good eye even with vision support equipment (eye glasses), third is physical disability such as Polio, Amputee, Muscular Dystrophy, Myopathy, Neuropathy, Osteogenesis Imperfecta and others, fourth is Cerebral Palsy such as Hemiplegia that is Cerebral palsy that affect half of the body, Diplegia that is Cerebral palsy that affect both legs and Quadriplegia that is Cerebral palsy that affect all limbs, fifth is learning disability that is Global Development Delay (for children age < 3), Down Syndrome Autism, attention deficit hyperactive disorder and specific learning disabilities such as dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia and others, sixth is other disabilities' category that not stated above.

People with disabilities are often being socially excluded in our Malaysian Society (Malaysian Care Organisation). Negative attitudes towards persons with

1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

There are 15,409 PWDs registered with the State Welfare Services Department in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah as at July 2010, including those with physical or mental disabilities, hearing and vision impairment, cerebral palsy as well as intellectually challenged according to Community Development and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Azizah Mohd Dun in the Daily Express(10 October 2010). According to her, there are many other PWDs out there have not registered to the department and urges to do so and the society must adapt to their needs and accord them the same right. There are some approaches and campaign done by government to improve the standard of living disabled persons.

In general, the reaction of the private sector towards employment of disabled people may be due to misperception about people with disabilities. Hooi (2000a, p. 4) quotes Bathmavathi Krishnan, a senior disabled librarian in Kuala Lumpur: 'Most employers are reluctant to employ the disabled because of concerns regarding safety regulations, the need to modify premises such as installing ramps, disabled-friendly toilets and extra medical costs'. Mariah Abdul Rahman (Hooi 2000a, p. 4) a web-lab manager in MIMOS Bhd, cites prejudice and the fear of uncertainty among employers as the main reasons why people with disabilities find it difficult to seek employment.

In this era of globalization and digitization where competitive pressures of the new economy spill over into the lives of the rich, poor and disabled people, the need for a decent job is even more fundamental to a life of dignified existence: "The work that we do has a crucial impact on our social and material well-being, in terms of income, class, status, influence, social relationships and personal identity" (Barnes, Mercer & Shakespeare 1999, p.1 10).