

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**THE CHALLENGES OF WHEELCHAIR
PRESCRIPTION ASSESSMENT ON
APPROPRIATENESS AND PRACTICAL DESIGN
FOR MALAYSIAN USERS**

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Thesis submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Faculty of Art and Design

August 2016

ABSTRACT

The wheelchair has become a main assistive tool for a person with mobility impairment in assisting them to perform daily life activities, and thus maintaining their quality of life. For this reason, the wheelchair was created in various types of design to fulfil the specific categories of mobility. Therefore with a good understanding of their nature mobility, the wheelchair is created to pursue something that reflects their needs. This will then affect the user's abilities and function. Without a correct wheelchair prescription, the users will suffer in term of ability functionality, physical deformities and overall, affect the user's quality of life. One of constrain faced by the wheelchair users, is the need to purchase their own wheelchair. Further to that, the unnecessarily expensive price for a wheelchair creates an additional budget constrain towards the wheelchair users. For this reason, the related government agencies and private organizations offered several schemes to the eligible applicants in obtaining a free wheelchair. However, most of the applicants and recipients didn't receive the exact materials as what was prescribed according to their needs and requirements, in the given schemes. Therefore this research tend to investigate further their needs, constrains, assessment process and satisfaction. As a result to that, the suggestion and recommendation will be proposed in tackling the issues raised. The quantitative approach is used in the first phase to reveal what are the real issues behind the wheelchair users. Following that, the generalizations of ideas can be made. In acquiring further in-depth information's, the qualitative approach has been used upon the selected participants, suing the interview protocol that provided a more detailed and specific data. On the other hand, to familiarize the social interactions towards the wheelchair users, observational study has been conducted. Thus, providing important information's towards social norms against the wheelchair users. As a result, the wheelchair assessment is vital in prescribing towards persons of mobility impairments in determining the suitable types of wheelchair. Moreover, their needs and requirement needs to be included within the prescriptions in relation to their physical ability and limitations. In addition to that, the proposed system in providing the wheelchair provision is faced with issues in the bureaucracy. With this, the wheelchair users would have to wait within 1 – 3 months for their expected wheelchair, which in the end affects the user's daily activities. Likewise to getting what the user's deserve, the wheelchair users are faced with another predicament, which is to accept the wheelchairs that doesn't fit the needs of the user; i.e., types of wheelchair, some parts / accessories may deferent in specifications or sizes. There is a need to reviews the procedure of wheelchair provisions as part of research conclusions. It is important to reduce the time frames to build a strong communications between prescribers, users, organisations and wheelchairs suppliers. As recommendations, a standardized assessment formats as a guideline has to be created in obtaining vital information's in prescribing prescriptions. Furthermore, a proper guideline (pocket books) for prescribers / users/ organizations provided with information's regarding types of impairments to co-relate with types / accessories of wheelchair in term of suitability and costs needed to be produced.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

With the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Alhamdulillah, His Provision has allowed this thesis to meet its completion. I would like to express my special appreciation and thanks to my advisor Associate Professor Dr Mohamad Hariri Abdullah, you have been a tremendous mentor for me.

And to my beloved parents, Hjh Kembang Mohammed and Hj Mat Rasul Sidek, for your unceasing prayers and unfailing patience, my utmost appreciation. The whole work of this thesis would not have been completed if not for the sacrifice and patience of my beloved wife Tuty Liana Medali and my princesses; Lyra Humaira & Lyna Luna Tihani; for the time that you have allowed me to be with my PhD, my endless appreciation. Not to forget my in-laws; Hj Medali Karto, Ummi, Hjh Rahimah Othman and Hj Yaakub Arshad, for your belief that I can do it.

Also, I take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to all my Industrial Department members, staff of Faculty of Art & Design, and UiTM Melaka management; Associate Professor Dr Adnan Hashim, Dr Rani Diana Othman, En Norazman Harun and Puan Zahara Ramli, for their never-ending encouragement and supports.

My appreciation goes to so many individuals for making this endeavour happen, in particular to those who have shared views, opinions, insights and experiences in the research: Mrs Noorul Fatihah Bt Nordin, Miss Suhana , Dr Norhayati Husin , Mr Abd Malik Mat Said , Mr Hamzah , Mr. Tosioku Matsuoka , Mrs. Jayalecthumy a/p Cumarawasamy , Mr. Anthony Thanasayan , Mr. Anthony Leopold , Mr. Muhammad Amar Abdullah , Mr. Ezham , Dr. Thomas Samuel , Mr. Francis Siva, Mr Rusli b Jamil , Mr Mohd Sharim Sulong and Dr Musyiddin Abd Manaf.

Finally, to all that I may have not been able to mention in this list, my apologize and my deepest appreciation goes to each and every one of you.

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