

EMPLOYER MOTIVATION FACTORS FOR HIRING AMONG INSURED PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Rajwani Md Zain
School of Applied Psychology, Social Work and Policy
Universiti Utara Malaysia, 06010 Sintok Kedah, Malaysia
Email: rajwani@uum.edu.my

Fatimah Zahra Binti Abdul Malek
Pertubuhan Keselamatan Sosial (PERKESO)
Email: fatimah.malek@perkeso.gov.my

ABSTRACT

The Return to Work (RTW) program aims to help Insured Persons (IPs) or SOCSO contributors who have suffered disability due to accidents and illnesses so that they can return to work. The program uses a multidisciplinary and biopsychosocial approach through coordination by the RTW Case Manager with IPs or clients individually, as well as other stakeholders such as hospitals, employers, private employment agencies and so on. The main issue that is the focus of this study is the actual perception of employers towards People with Disabilities (PWD) who are also participants in the Return-to-Work Program (RTW) to work again. This paper focuses on the positive factors that motivate employers to re-employ Insured Persons (IPs) with disabilities. It aims to develop a set of guidelines for employers and Case Managers to help them manage IPs (clients) so that they can return to work. A qualitative approach was used to conduct this study. The subject of this study is the employers who has employed RTW Program participants to work, which involves two offices, namely SOCSO Penang State Office, Seberang Jaya and SOCSO George Town Office. The interview method was used to obtain primary data for this study and it was recorded using a digital voice recorder. The method of semi-structured interview (semi-structured interview) is conducted in-depth interview guided by question items that are formed and modified according to the forms of previous studies and known information. An interview framework was created based on the adaptation of questions conducted by Kirschner, Lindbom and Paterson (1952), Client Satisfaction Inventory (CSI) by Steven (1994) as well as Stevens (2002). The summary of the study found that among the positive factors that motivate employers to hire new employees among PWD is the attitude of employers who think positively towards PWD employees, PWD who have no communication problems, have appropriate skills and qualifications, as well as funding or capital support and others facilities for the disabled. The conclusion from the study found that PWDs can change their own destiny if the negative perception of them by the employer is changed and provide opportunities for PWDs, especially employment opportunities. The results of this study can be used to provide exposure and training to SOCSO Case Managers in order to be prepared when dealing with IPs as well as efforts to persuade employers to hire disabled workers and make this Return-to-Work Program a success. In addition, social workers can also take advantage of the results of this study to be used during intervention sessions to motivate their clients to work again because disability is often closely related to poverty, low self-esteem and affects survival. Also, can also be used by other agencies such as the Welfare Department, Zakat Centers, and the Labor Department throughout Malaysia to help encourage employers to hire their clients to work where they also experience the same issues and problems.

Keywords: workers, people with disabilities, employers, motivation

INTRODUCTION

The number of work-related accidents increases from year to year causing an increase in the number of chronic patients that impact on work productivity. Accident cases reported in 2010 were 57,639 cases while in 2017 the number of cases has increased by 69,980 cases. In just 7 years, the increase that occurred was 21.4% (PERKESO, 2010 & 2017). For cases that have been certified invalid in 2010, there were 38,258 cases while in 2017 there were 63,822 cases. This shows an increase in cases of 66.8% in 7 years (PERKESO, 2010 & 2017). Therefore, PERKESO has introduced the Return to Work (RTW) Program to help Insured Persons who experience this disability to return to work through the concept of case management (PERKESO, 2017).

There are several factors that prevent an employee from returning to work. According to Draper, Reid and McMahon (2010), discrimination against disabled workers causes them to be stereotyped. A study by Ju, Zhang and Pacha (2011) revealed that the lack of employability skills, which is a general competence required in doing a certain type or level of work, makes it difficult for people with disabilities to find a place in the open job market. Among the examples of employability skills required are problem solving skills, communication, teamwork and individual interpersonal skills (Sheppard & Unsworth, 2010). Employers play an important role in the development process and career direction of the disabled. PWDs will successfully place themselves in the job market if opportunities are provided by employers based on skills, interests, attitudes and type of disability. This study was conducted to see employers' perceptions of disabled workers among participants in the RTW Program.

Various benefits and interventions are offered under this program including free physical and vocational rehabilitation assistance, medical aids including prosthesis, orthotics, vehicle modification, workplace modification and others. This program is in line with the provisions of the law under Section 57(1) of the Employees' Social Security Act (ESSA 1969) which states that "An Insured who suffers from or admits permanent disability or disability may be given facilities free of charge by the Organization for rehabilitation physical and vocational". The Disabled Persons Act 2008 emphasizes the right of disabled persons to access

employment. Section 29(1) states "Persons with disabilities shall have the right to access to employment on the basis of equality with persons with disabilities". While Section 29(2) states "Employers must protect the rights of the disabled, on the basis of equality with the disabled, to obtain a fair and good working environment including equal opportunities and equal remuneration for work of equal value, a safe and healthy working environment, protection from disturbance and redress of dissatisfaction".

Based on the Persons with Disabilities Act 2008, "PWDs include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory deficiencies that, when interacting with various barriers, can restrict their full and effective participation in society". The issue of employability among the disabled has long been discussed and debated. In reality, people with disabilities still do not get fair job opportunities even though many organizations or companies certify that people with disabilities are productive, persistent, loyal and reliable. In Malaysia, only about 3523 people with disabilities out of 2.4 million Malaysians work in Malaysia, and most of them work in the private sector (Hooi, 2001). A study by Noraini, Khalid and Nor Aishah (2001) found that little success has been achieved to bring the disabled back into the workforce.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The disabled are not only marginalized because of the disability they suffer from, but are also affected by environmental elements such as barriers to building access, lack of suitable transport, barriers to employment opportunities and lack of educational facilities. The difficulty of engaging in daily activities is compounded by the perception and mentality of the community which is still in the old notch. The quality of life of PWDs is affected when they are discriminated against and exploited in organizations including difficulties in locating themselves in the labor market (Ta & Leng, 2013).

The main issue or the focus of this study is the true perception of employers towards the disabled who are also participants in the RTW Program to return to work. The RTW program recorded that more than half PWD cases referred to job placement were not successfully employed by the employer in year 2019. Since this program is a voluntary basis, SOCSO does not oblige employers to take them to work by force. The determination of whether the IP is accepted for work or not is determined by the Case Manager during negotiations with the employer as well as the report-duty date and job offer letter. If the employer agrees to hire them, they are classified as successfully returning to work, and vice versa. If the situation of unemployment occurs, SOCSO might have to spend high compensation to them.

In addition, employers will lose experienced human resources if their employees stop working due to an accident or illness. The results of a study by Kenny (1998) found that small companies are more affected by disabilities that occur to their employees than large companies. As for the employer's perspective, a study by Gardner et al (2006) related to bipolar problems found that the cost of managing an employee with bipolar disorder is USD6836 more than a normal employee if seen from the employer's perspective. The cost factor that employers have to bear can affect their desire to employ people with disabilities.

The lack of a guideline in educating employers on how to manage disabled employees at work is a factor in the low percentage of employers employing disabled people. This guide can later be disclosed to employers as well as SOCSO Case Managers in the training process for them as one of the methods to help Case Managers negotiate with employers and persuade them to be interested in employing disabled workers and further motivate IPs to work again by highlighting the factors positive and become a solution to negative factors that are expected to exist.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The objective of this study is to identify positive factors that encourage employers to hire disabled IPs to work again. This study is expected to be important to help SOCSO Case Managers to motivate referred IPs to follow the RTW Program. It not only gives benefits and financial implications to SOCSO but also gives a more meaningful life to IP, stabilizes the economy and business of an employer. All research propositions are based on the original objective of this study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Khor (2002) said by the 1% quota that had been allocated, only 538 disabled people were successfully placed to work in the public sector and the remaining 6,000 people in the private sector. The objective of this Project Paper is to identify the employer's perspective on the issue of hiring employees among the disabled who participate in the SOCSO RTW Program. Through this study, the researcher will look at the aspects of qualifications and sufficient skills and the factors that influence them through the Solution Focused Theory. The focus of this theory is on what is expected to work (what work?) as explained by De Shazer and Berg (1997), it is not a focus on what factors are more successful than other factors. This approach will be used to identify and provide positive changes to the employers involved in this study and is themed as a positive factor that attracts employers' desire to hire IPs to work again. At the same time, this theory ensures that aspects that 'do not work' are identified for improvement actions. Through this aspect of 'do not work', the researcher will collect and focus on negative factors, which affect the employer's desire.

Previous studies have explained the findings related to positive factors that encourage employers to employ people with disabilities. It becomes the basis or marker for comparing the researcher's findings later. There are some findings that are similar to the findings of the researcher described in the Discussion Chapter. Although the previous study was not specific to the same program as the RTW Program, the concept of employment among the disabled is similar and relevant to this study.

Good perception of employers

According to a study conducted by Levy, Jessop, Rimmerman and Levy (1992) on 500 executives revealed that there is a positive attitude towards hiring among people with chronic illnesses including psychiatric illness, autism, moderate and severe learning difficulties, as well as diseases of various categories. In a similar study of small companies, the participants, the executives, found that employees with serious illnesses were considered dependable, productive, and able to interact with others, especially if they were given appropriate service support (Levy et al, 1993). This shows that employers are willing to give disabled people the opportunity to work if they have the skills or skills required for the job offered.

Support and equipment

A study by Roessler and Summer (2002) found that although representatives of the Human Resources Division prefer to arrange facilities including flexible schedules, support equipment and special parking to help people with disabilities work, they also still think about the cost of providing the facility, the influence of the facility that against typical work schedules, and employee productivity. In the same study, Gilbride et al (2000) found that Human Resources Directors think more about; (1) restructuring of work and facilities; 2) costs involved in restructuring work and assignments; and 3) its effect on workers' compensation claims. This shows that employers are willing to hire disabled people to work in their company if their company allocates certain facilities to disabled people.

Good knowledge of the employer

A study by Houtenville and Kalargyrou (2011) explains that better knowledge about persons with disabilities will increase the prospects or opportunities of PWD being accepted to work based on job satisfaction and loyalty to the organization. This past study also supports the objective of this study in identifying positive factors that encourage employers to employ OB PWD.

RESEARCH METHODS

A qualitative approach was used to conduct this study. The employer's perception is assessed through a set of verbal questions. It is to identify the similarities and differences among the study subjects in forming ideas about the positive factors that encourage employers or prevent employers from employing disabled workers.

The method of semi-structured interview (semi-structured interview) conducted as an in-depth interview (in-depth interview) is based on question items that are formed and modified according to the forms of previous studies and known information. An interview framework was made based on the adaptation of questions conducted at the University of Minnesota, United States (Kirschner, Lindbom & Paterson, 1952), and Client Satisfaction Inventory by Steven (1994) as well as in United Kingdom (Stevens, 2002).

This study was carried out in Penang since it is the third highest state that has referrals of employment placement cases from among the disabled. Based on SOCSO statistics, in 2019 a total of 87 cases of disabled people who participated in job search activities were from referral cases from SOCSO offices around Penang. Due to the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic and the Movement Control Order (MCO) by the Government, the researcher had to conduct interviews using the Zoom Video Conferencing and Cube Call Recorder applications. This study is focused on research subjects who are employers who have employed RTW Program participants to work. The selection of research subjects was based on three criteria that were set, namely employers who are still actively contributing with SOCSO, employers who have participated in open interview sessions organized by SOCSO, and employers who are in the study location who have employed RTW Program participants.

The sample frame of the study consists of employers who are still actively contributing to SOCSO in 2019, which is a total of 23,595 employers in Penang. The purposive sampling method was used to select the study subjects. Three criteria have been set in the sample selection, namely: i) Employers who are still active contributors with SOCSO in the State of Penang; ii) 2. Employers who have participated in an open interview session organized by SOCSO and iii) Employers in the city of Georgetown who have employed RTW Program participants.

The first criterion is that only employers who are still actively contributing to SOCSO in the State of Penang are selected. This means that only 23,595 employers were selected. The second criterion is that only employers who have participated in an open interview session organized by SOCSO in 2019 will be selected. This made the study subject sample narrowed down to only 31 employers. Next, the third criterion is set, which is that only employers who are registered in the city of George Town and have employed RTW Program participants are selected, with the number of study subjects further reduced to 11 employers. An email invitation to participate in this study was issued to all 11 study subjects. Only those who agreed to participate in this study were contacted again for an appointment to be interviewed. Five research subjects agreed to participate in this study.

The form of the question is an open-ended question and the format of the interview session is semi-structured. Data collection is cross-sectional only (one-off data collection). The duration of the data collection process through this interview took three months. The responses of employers who attended the interview session were analyzed using content analysis methods based on conventional approaches. Conventional content analysis techniques are suitable to be used in the design of this study because they can explain the phenomenon, in the context of this study regarding the factors of employment of IP PWD. The advantage of using the content analysis method is that the researcher can obtain information directly from the study subject without preconceived concepts or theoretical perspectives, based on the unique perspective of the study subject and real data. It is important to provide an understanding of a phenomenon in this study.

RESULT

Demographic information of the study sample

As in Table 1, the study subjects who agreed to give feedback were five people, four men and one woman, with an average age of 30 to 45 years. In terms of ethnicity, all of them are Malay. In terms of educational background, four of them have a bachelor's degree, and one has a master's degree. A total of two research subjects are from the service industry, two from the retail industry, and one from the manufacturing industry.

Table 1: Demographic information of the study sample

Demographic		Numbers
Age	30 - 34 years	2
	35 - 39 years	2
	40 - 44 years	1
Sex	Male	4
	Female	1
Education level	Degree	4
	Master	1
Sector	Manufacturing	1
	Retailing	2
	Service	2

Positive factors that encourage employers to hire IP PWD to work again

- i. Positive perception of employers
- ii. Skills and qualifications
- iii. Funds and support

Five employers mentioned their positive opinion of disabled employees such as disabled employees being more loyal to the organization, focused, motivated, confident, and able to follow instructions, punctual, initiative and responsible. All these factors have the same meaning or element, which is that good perception by the employer is a positive factor for the employer to employ IP PWD, so the researcher decided to name it as 'Employer's positive perception'.

Five employers mentioned the factors of absence of communication problems with PWD, their employees can work in a team, can work under minimal supervision, have appropriate skills, can provide the best quality of work, can learn new skills, have appropriate academic qualifications, can adapt new methods and be able to solve problems. The researcher found that there is a similarity in their sentences which is the element of the existence of skills and work qualifications of PWD is a positive factor that encourages employers to employ IP PWD, so the researcher has named it as 'Skills and qualifications'. Three employers have mentioned the factors of financial assistance, capital support or other facilities, the company's profit if it employs disabled people, disabled people do not often take holidays and do not quit work easily, and disabled people have a good attendance record. The researcher found that all these sentences have the same element, which is that the cost benefit to the employer is one of the positive factors that encourage employers to employ IP PWD. Therefore, the researcher has named it 'Funds and support'.

In summary, five research subjects gave their opinion on 'Positive perception of the employer' as a positive factor that encourages employers to employ IP PWD, five study subjects gave their opinion on 'Skills and qualifications', while three study subjects gave their opinion on 'Funds and support'. Based on this qualitative study, the researcher did not test prepositions. This is because, the preposition is only a preliminary framework to guide the direction of this study. After the researcher identified the themes from the data obtained, the themes made the preposition clearer, deeper in describing the main issue of this study.

Positive perception of employers

A total of five employers considers the factors of disabled employees to be more loyal to the organization, focused, motivated, confident, able to follow instructions, punctual, initiative and responsible can attract employers to hire them. According to one employer:

"In my opinion, from the perspective of homestay operators who want to expand their business to more levels, it is also good to hire disabled people who are deaf and dumb, because we know they can do work, there are only limitations. If there is a suitable job opportunity for the disabled, we will give the opportunity to the disabled". [Employer C]

According to another employer:

"In our company there are 100 employees, four of them are disabled employees. Employers need to allocate positions for disabled people so that the welfare of disabled people is not neglected". [Employer B]

Skills and qualifications

A total of five research subjects stated that if communication problems can be resolved, disabled workers can work in a team, and can work under minimal supervision, then there is no problem for them to hire disabled workers. PWD is also said to have

appropriate skills, can provide the best quality of work, can learn new skills, have appropriate academic qualifications, can adapt new methods, and can solve problems. According to one employer:

"Before this we never employed disabled people. Most of us don't even know much about PWD so we don't know what to expect. Some of our staff feel a little worried when Mr. (name of the disabled worker is withheld) comes here. They didn't know what level he was before they met. When he comes to work with us, he is actually the same as any other employee. He was given the same training as an assistant like other workers. We pay the same as other workers. Does not include extra cost. We also do not need to make special accommodation. His supervisor is also very helpful. He helped us save a lot of time to adjust to Mr. (PWD). He showed us that this Mr. (PWD) likes if the work assignment is broken down into several schedules and times. It took us a long time to realize this. Mr. (PWD) can actually work well and help in my personal opinion. Overall, our work experience with Mr. (PWD) is only positive, Mr. (PWD) also likes working in our team". [Employer A]

According to another employer:

"If there are suitable qualifications, and there are skills we can consider". [Employer C]

Funds and support

A total of three research subjects said that financial aid or capital support or other facilities to the disabled encouraged them to employ the disabled. The company has a profit if it employs the disabled. PWDs also do not often take time off and do not quit work easily, with a good attendance record which also involves costs. According to one employer:

"The disabled bring engagement, excitement, and passion. They also bring a strong work ethic. The types of work available in our organization are diverse, from entry level, to technical and management level. All opportunities are open to the disabled. We do have the necessary accommodation that we need by law. But we might do it with a little difference. In fact, we have organized sign language classes that are going well, which actually builds excitement in our organization. Now we can communicate better with the disabled. And this knowledge is very expensive because you can apply it at work too. This requirement depends on specific employees only. What do they really need? What kind of assistive equipment or technology do they need to ensure they can do the job to the best of their ability? This is a good cost. Good cost for disabled individuals to ensure they can do their job. And it is also reasonable cost. The benefits of employing the disabled are more when compared to the cost". [Employer D]

According to another employer:

"Employees who don't often take sick leave. Don't miss anything, we don't have to worry about finding someone else to replace them". [Employer C]

DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

Overall, the results of this study found that the positive factors that encourage employers to employ IP PWD back to work are positive perceptions of employers, skills and qualifications, as well as funds and support. While the negative factors that prevent employers from employing IP PWD to work again are the employer's attitude, facilities and equipment, communication and cost. The results of this study have answered the research questions and further achieved the objectives of the study. There are also important and significant findings that contribute to knowledge in the field of Social Work such as the proposal to create a set of guidelines for employers and Case Managers in managing IP PWD which has never been proposed before utilizing the findings from the factors that encourage employers to hire IP PWD to work again.

Although there are research findings that are generally similar as previous studies, there are specific aspects in this study that are different from previous studies. An in-depth discussion of the findings of this study will be explained and the researcher will justify the implications of the findings in the next sub topic.

First, the results of this study found that the factors that encourage employers to employ disabled people are the attitudes of employers who consider disabled employees to be more loyal to the organization, focused, motivated, confident, able to follow instructions, punctual, take initiative and be responsible. The results of this study are consistent with studies conducted by Hashim and Wok (2014), Houtenville and Kalargyrou (2012), Kulkarni and Valk (2010), Lengnick-Hall, Gaunt and Kulkarni (2008), Colella (1994), Lengnick-Hall (2007), Schoonheim and Smits (2008), as well as Stone and Colella (1996), which these past researchers found from a larger perspective, even though disabled workers have disabilities, they still have good quality in work. Workers with disabilities were found to be able to show good work attitudes such as appreciating work, being reliable, committed to the work given, minimal disciplinary problems, less cases of quitting, and a good work attendance record. Based on the results of the study, it was also found that there are employers who practice an open attitude in hiring employees from minority and diversity groups, including the disabled and LGBT. This is in line with a study conducted by Baker, Slonaker and Wendt (2000) who found that some employers tend to include elements of diversity as an 'important component of running a business'.

Although these past studies have found that the 'positive perception of employers' factor encourages employers to employ people with disabilities, they do not take into account differences in terms of company policies. Companies that have a special policy on hiring people with disabilities tend to prefer disabled people to work with them. This is the result of this study through research subjects from the retail industry that has a special policy of employing at least 2% of disabled people in their organization, which is a specific aspect that is different from previous studies. The company's policy plays an important role in shaping the attitude and perception of employers in order to provide opportunities for disabled people to return to work and further achieve the organization's Key Performance Indicators (KPI). The results of the study also found that there are employers who think that work

is also a form of therapeutic activity for disabled workers, further strengthening the Bio psychosocial Theory which says that a person's psychosocial experience and social behavior are interrelated with biological processes.

The results of this study also show that a good employer's perception, a fair and impartial attitude towards disabled workers can bring success to the employment of disabled people. Employers who are professional and do not underestimate the ability of the disabled to work tend to give opportunities to the disabled, and some of the disabled are intelligent and university graduates. This kind of pure attitude needs to be present in every employer in our country because they need to carry out all their responsibilities as leaders in a workplace in a professional and fair manner. This is because favoritism and discriminatory practices not only damage harmony in the workplace but also affect the reputation of the organization in the eyes of the general public. Employers should know how to assess the level of ability and contribution of each of their employees. Employers also need to give due appreciation to employees who successfully carry out a task entrusted to them. A caring employer is an employer who is diligent to sit down and discuss with any of their employees who do not meet the requirements of the job tasks that have been set as well as listen and understand well the reasons why their employees fail to do a certain type of task well. Companies also need to open their minds to accept disabled people to work to give them the opportunity to earn a living while also optimizing the use of the country's human resources.

Second, the results of this study found, another motivating factor is if communication problems can be solved, disabled workers can work in a team, and can work under minimal supervision. PWDs have appropriate skills, can provide the best quality of work, can learn new skills, have appropriate academic qualifications, can adapt new methods, and can solve problems encouraging employers to employ OB PWDs. The results of this study are consistent with the study conducted by Hartnett, Stuart, Thurman, Loy and Batiste (2011) who found that employers who employ disabled workers are able to get qualified workers, obtain success in the form of profits, and in terms of training costs.

However, the results of this study contradict the results of a study by Gordon (2018) who found that among the reasons given by employers who do not want to employ disabled people is that they do not have facilities, they need prospective employees who have specific expertise, require a lot of work modification, are too risky to employ the disabled, and employing the disabled does not give any profit to the business.

If the results of this study are refined, it is found that PWDs who have academic qualifications or certain skills tend to be employed by employers. This shows the importance of empowering the disabled through education is the best way to help them get a job, then contribute back to the nation and the country. The Government needs to ensure that the education system and infrastructure in Malaysia, especially in schools and universities, are conducive for disabled students. In terms of skills, if seen in terms of ability, deaf disabled workers have the same cognitive intelligence as normal workers. However, the job process becomes difficult because they face language and communication problems. Therefore, employers should be aware that the disabled are not a liability. The education system for the disabled in schools, universities and training centers is getting better and better. This system makes them competitive Malaysian workers.

Third, the results of this study found that other positive factors are financial assistance or capital support or other facilities for the disabled. The company has a profit if it employs the disabled. PWD also doesn't often take holidays and doesn't quit work easily, with a good attendance record. The results of this study are also consistent with a study by Lengnick-Hall (2007) which states that high costs in business can be eliminated by disabled workers if employers create a disabled-friendly work environment by reducing the cost of layoffs, reducing the probability of litigation, and obtaining tax relief from the Government. Employers can get profit if they employ disabled people. This coincides with a study conducted by Jasper and Waldhart (2013) who interviewed managers in the hospitality and recreation industry and found that disabled workers had lower cases of absenteeism than workers without disabilities.

Based on the results of this study, it shows that the existence of funds and other support factors for employers and employees with disabilities makes employers tend to employ disabled people. If refined, this shows the importance for the Government to provide incentives for any employer that provides job opportunities and infrastructure to help the disabled. Employers need to take advantage of existing incentive opportunities in Malaysia such as grant assistance and skills training through the Human Resource Development Fund (HRDF) managed by the Ministry of Human Resources in an effort to produce more skilled workers. This kind of facility opportunity should be continued and can even be improved such as making it a comprehensive and committed policy to be given to any employer who hires disabled people. This step can help employers give a comprehensive commitment in an effort to improve the quality of life of disabled workers.

Recommendation

The researcher found that there is room that can be improved in this study. Among them is that the number of research subjects should be taken more in order to get more interesting research results. Researchers can also improve the study by involving research subjects from among those who have never employed RTW Program participants to identify their perceptions. Other researchers who wish to develop the results of this study are also advised to include elements of the medical practitioners' perception of the RTW Program, given that no such study has ever been conducted in Malaysia.

A reference handbook is also proposed to be published for employers and PERKESO Case Managers based on the findings of this study, where there are some thoughtful employer recommendations that can be used to improve the RTW Program. Based on the results of the study, one of the suggestions put forward is the introduction of a buddy system among staff so that they can accept colleagues from the disabled group while adapting to their colleagues. In addition, employers need to be prepared to invest a number of allocations to provide skills training so that disabled workers can achieve the scope of work or work standards desired

by the employer, in addition to improving their ability to work on par with other normal workers. In order to increase the motivation of disabled employees to be more loyal to the company, attendance incentives or reward systems can also be introduced to reward disabled employees who show good performance and contribute through their skills.

In addition, it is also suggested that a follow-up study be conducted to identify the employer's perception of the programs organized by SOCSO namely Disability Equality Training (DET) since no such study has ever been conducted at SOCSO. The DET program is organized by SOCSO for employers in order to make them aware of the importance of employing people with disabilities and how to overcome any obstacles that arise. In addition, the researcher can improve this study by involving welfare department Officers (*Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat*) in providing input since they have also been involved in terms of job placement among the disabled.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the results of this study have answered the issues to be studied and have achieved the objectives of the study. The results of the study show that there are various positive factors that can encourage employers from hiring new employees among the disabled to work again. Some of the results of the study are consistent and contradict the preposition of the study and review of the work by previous researchers. In these challenging times, most workers who suffer from disability or PWD as a result of injury, accident or chronic illness or from birth are identified as poor, less educated and less given job opportunities. Although there is a small number of disabled people who are accepted for work, this figure is still low compared to the actual number of disabled people who still have no source of income to support themselves.

Employers play an important role in providing employment opportunities to the disabled for them to return to work. The stigma related to the disabled that says the disabled are not able to give their best should be changed. The disabled do not have the space to show their ability and determination on par with other normal people if this job opportunity is not given. The disabled will continue to be marginalized and shackled by the problem of poverty in their own world so that they cannot improve their quality of life if the abilities of the disabled are not tested in the real labor market. In the future, the disabled can change their own fate if the negative perception of them is changed and give opportunities to the disabled, especially job opportunities.

Apart from that, employment opportunities for the disabled need to be provided in more sectors. For now, only a few sectors have specific quotas for disabled workers; changes need to be made, i.e. all sectors need to be encouraged to hire qualified and skilled PWDs to hold or fill the positions provided. This action requires a role from the government. Apart from the field of employment, the disabled also need to be given opportunities in the field of education. The time has come for the disabled to be given the space to choose the study program they are interested in without being limited to a specific choice. Excellent and capable disabled people need to be crowned as icons and should be set as examples for non-disabled people.

As for the implications for future studies, the results of the study have proven that the factors of employer's attitude, facilities and equipment, communication and cost are obstacles for employers to hire IPs PWD to work. The relationship between these factors and effects can be the basis for future studies and needs to be studied in more depth and comprehensively so that disabled people can find employment more easily. In terms of implications for the RTW Program's disability management practices, the qualitative data analysis of this study indicates that any implementation of job search among the disabled must take into account factors such as positive perceptions of employers, skills and qualifications, as well as funds and support for both disabled and employers.

Since the research conducted is qualitative, there is a possibility of falsification of information during interviews, fraud, exaggeration and distortion of facts. For example, there is a big difference between what the research subject says and what he does. This makes what he says not believed to be valid or otherwise. Another weakness in this study is that it takes a long time because it is difficult to control employers from giving too long responses that are not related to the question. The answers given by the research subjects are also inappropriate, lack the desired details, and are too focused on the questions asked only. The answers obtained are also quite difficult to analyze. Therefore, it is important for the researcher to have good interviewing skills and data analysis skills. Another weakness is the small number of study subjects due to the time constraints of conducting the study, which is approximately three months only, causing the generalization of the study's findings to be limited. However, it provides a platform for further discussion.

REFERENCES

- Baker, B., Wendt, A., & Slonaker, W. (2002). An Analysis of Gender Equity in the Federal Labor Relations Career Field. *Public Personnel Management*, 31(4), 559 - 67. <https://doi.org/10.1177/009102600203100411>
- Colella, A. (1994). Organizational socialization of employees with disabilities: critical issues and implications for workplace interventions. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*, 4(2), 87- 106.
- De Shazer, S., & Berg, I. K. (1997). 'What works?' Remarks on research aspects of solution- focused brief therapy. *Journal of Family therapy*, 19(2), 121-124.
- Draper, W. R., Reid, C. a. & McMahon, B.T. (2010). Workplace Discrimination and the Perception of Disability. *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin*, 55 (1), 29 - 37
- Gardner, H. H., Kleinman, N. L., Brook, R. A., Rajagopalan, K., Brizee, T. J., & Smeeding, J. E. (2006). The economic impact of bipolar disorder in an employed population from an employer perspective. *The Journal of clinical psychiatry*, 67(8), 1209-1218
- Gilbride, D. & Stensrud, R., Ehlers, C., Evans, E., & Peterson, (2000). Employer's attitudes towards hiring persons with disabilities and vocational rehabilitation services. *Journal of Rehabilitation*, 66 (4), 17-23

- Gordon, C. (2018). Why don't employers hire people with disabilities? Retrieved from <https://risepeople.com/blog/why-dont-employers-hire-people-with-disabilities/>
- Hartnett, Helen P. Thurman, Loy & Batiste (2011). 'Employers' Perceptions of the Benefits of workplace accommodations: Reasons to Hire, Retain and Promote People with Disabilities'. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 34(1), 17 – 23
- Hashim, J., & Wok, S. (2014). Predictors to employees' organisational behaviour and involvement in employment. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: *An International Journal*, 33 (2), 193–209. <http://doi.org/10.1108/EDI-03-2012-0018>
- Hooi YC (2001). Disabled as potential IT workforce. Available:<http://thestar.com.my/special/online/disabled/sound.html> [Accessed on 3 March 2015]
- Houtenville, A. & Kalargyrou, V. (2012). People with Disabilities: Employers' Perspectives on Recruitment Practices, Strategies, and Challenges in Leisure and Hospitality. *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, 53, 40 - 52.<http://doi.org/10.1177/1938965511424151>
- Houtenville, A. & Kalargyrou, V. (2011). People with Disabilities: Employers' Perspectives on Recruitment Practices, Strategies, and Challenges in Leisure and Hospitality. *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, 53(1), 40– 52
- Jasper, C. and Waldhart, P. (2013), "Employer attitudes on hiring employees with disabilities in the leisure and hospitality industry: Practical and theoretical implications", *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 25 (4), 577 - 594. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09596111311322934>
- Ju, S., Zhang, D. & Pacha, J. (2011). Employability Skills Valued by Employers as Important for Entry-Level Employees With and Without Disabilities. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals*. 35(1), 31– 35. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0885728811419167>
- Kenny, D. T. (1998). Returning to work after workplace injury: Impact of worker and workplace factors. *Journal of applied rehabilitation counseling*, 29, 13-19.
- Khor, H.T. (2002). Employment of Persons with Disabilities. *Social-Economic & Environmental Research Institute*, 4 (3), 4 – 7
- Kirchner, W., Lindbom, T. & Paterson, D. (1952). 'Attitudes toward the employment of older people', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 36, 154-56
- Kulkarni, M., & Valk, R. (2010). Don't ask, don't tell: Two views on human resource practices for people with disabilities. *IIMB Management Review*, 22(4), 137–146. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.iimb.2010.08.001>
- Lengnick-Hall, M. L. (2007). Hidden talent: How companies hire, retain, and benefit from people with disabilities. Westport, Connecticut: Praeger.
- Lengnick-Hall, M.L., Gaunt, P.M., Kulkarni, M. (2008). Overlooked and underutilized: People with disabilities are an untapped human resource. *Human Resource Management*, 47 (2), 255 - 273. <http://doi.org/10.1002/hrm>
- Levy, J. H., Jessop, D.J., Rimmerman, A., Francis, F., & Levy, P.H.,(1993).Determinants of attitudes of New York state employers towards the employment of persons with severe handicaps. *Journal of Rehabilitation*, 59, 49-55.
- Levy, J.K., Jessop, D.J., Rimmerman, A., & Levy, P.H. (1992). Attitudes of Fortune 500 corporate executives toward the employability of persons with severe disabilities: A national study. *Mental Retardation*, 30, 67-75.
- Noraini Mohd Salleh, Khalid Abdullah & Nor Aishah Buang. 2001. Job Opportunities for Special Needs Population in Malaysia. *Jurnal Pendidikan*. 27. 77-85.
- Pertubuhan Keselamatan Sosial Malaysia (PERKESO). (2010). *Laporan Tahunan Pertubuhan Keselamatan Sosial Malaysia*. Retrieved on 30 July 2019 through https://www.perkeso.gov.my/images/laporan_tahunan/Laporan_Tahunan2010_Lengkap.pdf.
- Pertubuhan Keselamatan Sosial Malaysia (PERKESO). (2017). *Laporan tahunan pertubuhan keselamatan sosial Malaysia*. Retrieved on 30 July 2019 through https://www.perkeso.gov.my/images/laporan_tahunan/Laporan_Tahunan2018.pdf.
- Pertubuhan Keselamatan Sosial Malaysia Website. (2017). Program 'Return To Work' (RTW). Retrieved from <https://www.perkeso.gov.my/index.php/ms/accordion-b/program-return-to-work>.
- Pertubuhan Keselamatan Sosial Malaysia. (2017, Ogos 10). *Minit Mesyuarat Jawatankuasa Pemandu Pengurusan Prestasi PERKESO Bil.3/2017*. Bahagian Komunikasi Koperat PERKESO. Kuala Lumpur.
- Pertubuhan Keselamatan Sosial Malaysia. (2019, Mac 2019). *Minit Mesyuarat Cawangan Perkhidmatan Pekerjaan PERKESO Bil.3/2019*. Bahagian Perkhidmatan Pekerjaan PERKESO. Kuala Lumpur.
- Roessler, R. (2002). Improving job tenure outcomes for people with disabilities: The 3M model. *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin*, 45(4), 207-212.
- Schoonheim, J., & Smits, J. (2008). Report on the employment of disabled people in European countries. ANED: Academic Network of European Disability Experts.
- Sheppard, L. & Unsworth, C. (2010). Developing Skills in Everyday Activities and Self- Determination in Adolescents With Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. *Remedial and Special Education*, 32(5), 393 - 405.
- Stevens, G. R. (2002). Employers' Perceptions and Practice in the Employability of Disabled People: A survey of companies in south east UK. *Disability & Society*, 17(7), 779–796. doi:10.1080/0968759022000039073
- Stone, D. L., Colella, A. (1996). A Model of factors affecting the treatment of disabled individuals in organizations. *The Academy of Management Review*, 21(2), 352–401.
- Ta, T.L. & Leng, K.S. (2013). Challenges Faced by Malaysians with Disabilities in the World of Employment. *Disability, CBR & Inclusive Development Journal*, 24(1), 6 - 21.