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DISABILITY ASSESSMENT ON NOISE-INDUCED HEARING LOSS USING HEARING HANDICAP INVENTORY QUESTIONNAIRES FOR SOCSO COMPENSATION

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ABSTRACT

Our presentation aimed to dissect on how to improve the compensation mechanism for workers in Malaysia who have suffered from Noise-Induced Hearing Loss (NIHL). The current mechanism implemented by the Social Security Organization of Malaysia (SOCSO), is based solely on the severity of hearing impairment using pure tone audiometric test. This method has been criticized for not considering the actual impact of NIHL on the subject's daily life, including their ability to hear in noisy environments and the resulting social and emotional disabilities. We hope to trigger some discussions as to why assessment of level of disability resulting from NIHL subjects have not been practiced throughout the world, even by the (almost) utopian, developed Scandinavian countries. We also wish to highlight a small pilot study that aims to determine the level of disability of NIHL subjects using a self-assessment questionnaire, the Hearing Handicap Inventory for Adults, and to develop an algorithm for diagnosing and assessing disability resulting from NIHL. The aim is to provide a more accurate assessment of the impact of NIHL on workers and better compensation method, and eventually lead to a more effective prevention efforts in the future.

Keywords (3-6): Occupational Noise, Compensation, Hearing Loss