

# Partially blind doctor obtains Ph.D in Psychology

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**KOTA KINABALU:** No matter how much effort and upskilling are put in by a person with disabilities, it is impossible to be treated equally in entering the workplace.

This is what partially blind 29-year-old Dr Teoh Jia Long believes.

He is one of 67 Univeristi Malaysia Sabah (UMS) Ph.D graduates who received their scroll at the UMS 22nd Convocation Ceremony on Saturday.

“To be honest, I was relieved after finishing my Ph.D in Psychology. It was my passion, and I finally completed it. My plan now is job hunting, and I hope I can be a lecturer in any universities in Malaysia.

“With the number of person with disabilities participating in the public and private sectors has yet to reach one per cent, this is the truth that we need to face. Despite our effort or skills improvement we did, inequality is still our main challenge.

“However, I will continue hunting for a job,” he said during an interview with the media.

Dr Teoh expressed his appreciation towards UMS and its staff, especially his supervisor Professor Madya Dr Muhammad Idris Bullare for introducing him to positive psychology.

Describing himself as a quiet and reserved person when he just arrived in Sabah from Penang, he found that his course helped him to be more outspoken and positive.

Dr Teoh, who was born with visual impairment due to glaucoma is also grateful for completing his studies in UMS, a

university with good reputation among students with disabilities.

“When I just started studying here, there were not many equipment for us, but UMS tried its best to assist us. We even can call drivers if we need to go anywhere around the campus to study.

“But today after UMS launched its Inclusivity Policy, they have improved a lot and they are still improving in adding more equipment. This is a positive move,” he said.

As a person with disability, Dr Teoh said the learning process would always come with challenges.

“To me, reading materials are the most difficult part because I have to use electronic to read books and it will take time to finish. Reading electronic materials no problem because it can be read using apps. However reading scanned documents is a total nightmare because if you convert it into text, there will be another issue in the accuracy,”

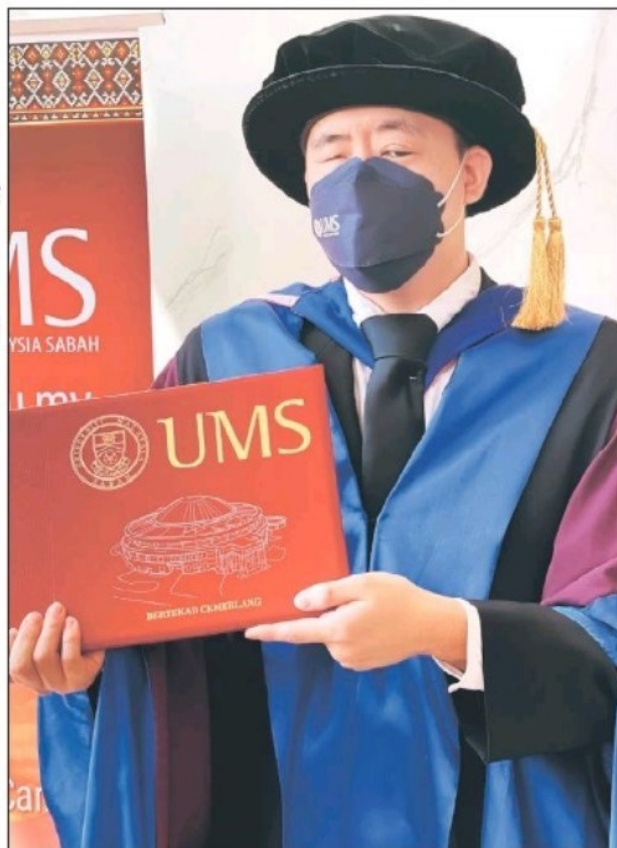
he said.

Apart from challenges in accessing reading materials, Dr Teoh also said mobility was another disadvantage for him before the e-hailing era.

“I was lucky for having a good supervisor who assisted me in logistic when I needed to go out collecting data.

“When the e-hailing service was introduced in the market, it was easier for me but recently our transportation cost had been increasing due to the high demand in the service,” he added.

Dr Teoh is currently teaching English online. However, he is hoping to enter the workplace soon.



Dr Teoh Jia Long