

The relations between acceptance and accessibility

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Abstract

This study is investigating in what way different supportive assisting techniques or the lack of them affects the work and the workers in terms of accessibility and acceptance. The study was made in three workplaces (with no, little and much assisting techniques). In the first one there were no assisting tools at all. The second one had an ordinary simple cash register, whereas the third one had a cash register, designed for people with development disability. The participants in this study were people with development disabilities who were trainees (cashiers) and their tutors, which also worked in the environment as cashiers. By using high level of assisting technique the usability and the means of social acceptance as well as the system acceptance was high. There were only small differences between the group of tutors and the group of trainees in their perception of usability. In the case of no assisting technique both groups perceived larger difficulties in the social cooperation with the customers which become a larger social acceptance issue in accordance to their operational goal. The major finding in this study is that accessibility of the system has a major influence on both the practical and the system acceptance.

Background

The Swedish government has set a goal that Sweden shall be entirely accessible for every citizen by 2010, Swedish government bill (SOU 1999/2000:79, 2000). This goal focuses on the term “design for all” and the meaning is that no one shall be excluded because of their disabilities or functional difficulties for example in their workplaces. Other examples of such actions for inclusion are the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the United Kingdom Disability Discrimination Act of 1995.

This legislation is not the only strive from the Swedish government. In the middle of the 1990s there was a project by the Swedish Handicap Institute (HI) called “Mentek”. The “Mentek” project was aimed to bring knowledge about using new technology as a help for people with intellectual disabilities. The result of this project pointed out empowerment as the main gain of using these kinds of technologies (Granlund, 1996). A part of “Mentek” was about what computer based

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