EMPLOYMENT CHALLENGES FACED BY ADULTS WITH MILD INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY: A TRIAD ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

Employment of the persons with Mild Intellectual Disabilities (ID) is still a major issue in global societies while international and national policies advocating for the employment of disabled persons continue to receive encouragement. This research examines challenges in employment experienced by adults with Mild Intellectual Disabilities to establish barriers, appraise support structures, and assess existing programs and policies to enhance engagement of persons with disabilities in employment. As such this study aims to contribute to the existing literature and provides focus on quantitative examination of factors regarding modification in support services for employment, employer adaptations, and the vocational rehabilitation for improving the employment prospects and job sustainability. From the results obtained, it can be concluded that people with ID must require a change in current organizational policies, increase in social awareness, and create more embracive workplace culture in order to ensure their socio-economic inclusion. Suggestions encompassed provision of self-designedonic strategies, as well as effective campaigning for policies, and the formation of adequate employment models. It is therefore the intent of this study to educate the existing policymakers, disability organizations as well as employers on what measures needs to be taken to ensure employment for individuals with Mild Intellectual Disabilities with the view of enhancing their quality of life and granting them an opportunity to integrate into the society.

Keywords: Mild Intellectual Disability, Employment Barriers, Disability Support Systems, Employment Programs, Socio-Economic Integration, Intellectual Disabilities

INTRODUCTION

Intellectual Disability (ID) is characterized by a significant, below average, impairment of intelligence and social skills which are known to begin before reaching 18 years of age. It as per World Health Organization, ID presupposes learning disabilities that affect fine motor skills.

Some use the term intellectual and developmental disabilities' (IDD) that refers to different conditions including ASD and DS but not every person having those conditions has ID. Vocational rehabilitation is one of the major objectives for persons with IDD are aimed at providing them with paid meaningful work, which gives not only economic but also social and educational freedom from poverty. Nevertheless, competitive, integrated employment persists as a problem, andsubtotal most persons with disabilities still work in a segregated manner (Qian et al., 2018).

The attainment of paid employment is one of the most important goals for people with ID as it provides considerable social and material benefits including a sense of purpose, better health and quality of life. Nevertheless, the percentage of people with ID that are integrated into the Paid Employment in the open economy remains low, as highlighted by the percentage differences across the countries. In Finland only 3% of working age people with an ID are in paid work, the same as in the Netherlands. As this is an important part of the goal of supporting people with ID to as early as possible achieve an optimal level social reintegration/ functioning several barriers still persists especially in the area of employment, from subsidized productive work to mainstream open jobs (Nevalaet al., 2019).

Employment history of people with IDD has changed over time, especially with the trend of deinstitutionalization since the late 1960s to receive support for services in the community. Some other acts that have been enacted with the intention of improving the employment opportunities for people with IDD consist of the Rehabilitation act amendments and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Still, employment outcomes for people with IDD are not as high as for those without disabilities or with other types of impairments. This research papers aims at discussing the employment status of the persons with IDD in the U. S. with regards to different employment characteristics and their effect (Almalky, H. A. 2020).Physical activity is defined as any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that require energy expenditure and Adults with ID classified as those in the lower end of IQ scale engage in reduced rates of regular physical activity, more sedentary behaviour than the general population as shown below. This group also suffers the ill effects of obesity and other long-term illnesses such as high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and other cardiovascular diseases. These issues illustrate the importance of directed studies and programs to support health among this group of people. It is important that those who are working in physical activity for adults with ID know and overcome the determinants of PA that prevents this population group from acting physically (Bodde&Seo, 2009).International human rights advancement reached another high in May 2008 by the United Nations Convention on Persons with Disabilities. In the case of training and employment, the principles of the CRPD are to ensure that disabled and non-disabled persons have equal chance in different sectors. However, there is still some ways to go as those with intellectual disabilities especially in the third world have difficulties acquiring education and vocation training that will enable them to secure jobs. Nevertheless, it can be concluded based on the international experience that with correct encouragement, people with an intellectual disability are capable of being active members of the working process and the economy (Parmenter, T. 2011).

Paid work is a significant unmet young adult life activity that gives meaning and improves quality of living standards yet people with developmental disability continue to be unemployed or underemployed. This way the nurses can effectively help the clients enhance their quality of life by reducing impacts of barriers to employment (Lemaire&Mallik, 2008).It is

a relatively complicated phase of people's lives when they gradually shift from childhood and become adults experiencing different things at that stage. This transition is never easy but Holder explains that it is more challenging, slow, and full of challenges particularly to adolescents with intellectual disabilities than other adolescents. This review seeks to establish what is known in the present literature about the transition process for young people with intellectual disabilities while employing International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) framework. Also, it also discusses the dearth of studies and the lack of adequate policies and services that can help those people when they are in this age bracket (Foley et al, 2012).

Employment is a critical aspect in adulthood especially for those with ID and all the other aspiring populace in society. Although in accordance to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities every person with a disability has the right to work, and to have access to employment on the basis of equal opportunity with others, employment rate of persons with ID is significantly lower than that of the population as a whole. Nonetheless, a number of studies have discussed aspects in relation to employment for this group who have been explained above; literature development focusing on the factors that affect the sustainability of employment for this group is scarce. Recent reviews again have raised concerns by helpfully capturing the fact that there is still limited awareness about the factors in the work environment that foster sustained employment of people with ID which was recognized as a research deficit that desperately requires addressing (Taubner et al, 2022).

Intellectually disabled people also have risks of behavioral health problems that make them have poor dietary systems, least physical activity, and weight issues that make them prone to chronic ailments. This higher incidence is attributable to such factors as restricted access to services such as health, education, and income earning activities. These individual's requirement must be met, and thus empowering them through self-governance and health knowledge is essential. Capacity building is a major component of health promotion and empowering people for health and this makes health education very crucial when it comes to the health of the ID population since it supports positive changes in health behaviours among people with intellectual disabilities (Bergström et al., 2014).Get a job is a critical endeavor in the lives of persons with ID since it creates many economic and psychological values among them, new direction in life, new friends, better health, and quality life. However, people with ID are frequently marginalized in access to competitive employment opportunities in the open mainstream environments with relatively low employment degrees in each country. The traditional structural approach has been steadily replaced by the client-centered or person-centered approach in the delivery of support services with the belief that one-size-fits-all is not the best way to go. This review focuses on a way through which rehabilitation interventions enhanced employment status of persons with ID and the challenges faced or factors that supported the same (Nevalaet al., 2019).

According to a survey, there are numerous adults in the United States who suffer from SMI, but few of these people have a job, with just fifteen percent of adults that have SMI being employed at any given time. People with SMI are also among the increasing population that have been receiving SSI and SSDI benefits. Although majority of persons with SMI would wish to work, many of them have disabilities which hinder them from gaining and sustaining employment. Specifically, SE services which help people with SMI to secure and maintain competitive, entry-level employment in integrated settings have been found to enhance employment prospects; however, issues concerning elevated drop-out rates and job instability

bear witness to this. This raises the employment outcomes and success for those with SMI; therefore, the purpose of this study is to give an account of the factors that influence employment success of individuals with SMI as well as proffer ways of improving employment services (Henry & Lucca. 2004).

Adults with Mild Intellectual Disabilities (ID) continue to experience tough time looking for employment despite many International and National policies that have been initiated to help such persons find jobs. The current employment rate among people with ID remains significantly lower than that of the overall population of many countries worldwide, including developing countries, the reasons are low education levels, unawareness of vocational training, prejudice, and unfavorable work circumstances. These impacts negatively impact the development of a person with an ID, restricting his/her development in the workplace, their social integration and financial stability. These issues should be discussed in detail being based on the analysis of the concrete factors that impede the people with ID to be employed or stay employed.

The main objectives of the study were to investigate the barriers faced by individuals with intellectual disabilities in assessing and retaining employment opportunities, examine the attitude perceptions and practice of employers regarding heiring individual with intellectual disabilities, analyze the studies and work place accommodation that contribute to successful employment experiences for individual with intellectual disability and, develop recommendations for stakeholders in employers' policy makers educators to promote inclusive employment practice.

This study is relevant as it seeks to give enhance knowledge concerning the specific employment barriers experienced by MIDs. The paper will advance the knowledge that will anion help in formulating better approaches and policies that can improve the employment status of this category of people. Through the analysis of the barriers and enablers of employment experiences encountered by the disabled persons, the study will sensitize disability advocacy groups, policymakers and employers to how best they can work towards enabling these persons to gain meaningful employment. Furthermore, it will help in the context of enhanced social and economic integration of people with ID and will raise their quality of life as well as will help them become active and integrated members of society.

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Almalky (2020) evaluated the outcomes for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) in the United States. Historically, individuals with IDD faced isolation and institutionalization until legislative changes in the late 20th century, like the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, which increased access to community-based living and employment. Despite these advancements, people with IDD continue to experience lower employment rates compared to the general population. The primary objective of the article was to assess the impact of various employment types sheltered, supported, competitive, and customized on the well-being, self-esteem, and economic contributions of individuals with IDD. Bodde&Seo (2009) explained the physical activity (PA) among adults with intellectual disabilities (ID) highlights a marked disparity between their participation levels and that of the general population.

Adults with ID are significantly less likely to engage in regular PA, a factor that contributes to higher rates of obesity, cardiovascular diseases, and other chronic health

conditions within this population. Studies indicate that this discrepancy in PA is influenced by a complex interplay of personal, social, and environmental barriers. Personal barriers include low motivation, limited awareness of the benefits of physical activity, and a lack of self-efficacy in performing physical tasks. However, while these personal factors are relevant, the literature suggests that structural and social barriers play a more significant role in limiting PA participation. Transportation challenges are a common issue, as individuals with ID often rely on caregivers or support services to access facilities where PA can take place. Financial constraints, both on the part of individuals and the organizations that support them, also limit access to resources such as gyms, recreational centers, or specialized PA programs designed for adults with disabilities.

The lack of accessible and inclusive PA programs further compounds the problem, as many community-based initiatives fail to cater to the unique needs of adults with ID. Caregiver support is another critical factor highlighted in the literature. Caregivers, both familial and professional, play a pivotal role in facilitating or hindering PA participation. Research suggests that when caregivers are informed, motivated, and trained to encourage physical activity, individuals with ID are more likely to engage in regular PA. However, many caregivers face their own barriers, such as time constraints, lack of knowledge about appropriate PA interventions, and competing responsibilities. Consequently, caregiver-related barriers can significantly limit opportunities for adults with ID to engage in physical activity. Environmental and policy-level constraints within residential and day service programs are also prominent in the literature.

Many programs that cater to adults with ID are not designed with physical activity in mind and lack the necessary infrastructure or policies to promote regular exercise. In some cases, organizational priorities are focused on other aspects of care, such as personal hygiene, daily living skills, or medical management, with PA being relegated to a secondary concern. This lack of emphasis on PA at the organizational level underscores the need for policy changes that promote a more holistic approach to health and well-being for individuals with ID. The literature suggests that efforts to improve PA participation among adults with ID must address these modifiable barriers at multiple levels.

Interventions that focus on policy changes, improving transportation and financial access, training caregivers, and creating more inclusive programs are essential. Additionally, while personal barriers such as motivation and self-efficacy are important, addressing the broader structural and social barriers is likely to have a more substantial impact on increasing PA participation and improving the overall health outcomes of adults with intellectual disabilities.

Parmenter (2011) stated that employment opportunities for people with intellectual disabilities present a complex and evolving picture. Historically, individuals with intellectual disabilities have faced significant barriers to employment, often leading to their participation in segregated work environments like sheltered workshops or day activity centers. These environments were initially designed to provide a supportive and controlled atmosphere for individuals deemed unable to enter the open labor market. However, over time, these settings became permanent placements for many, limiting opportunities for advancement or integration into mainstream employment.

Day programs and centers traditionally focused on providing activities and basic skills training rather than preparing individuals for competitive employment. These programs often

served as lifelong solutions for individuals with intellectual disabilities, especially those with moderate to high support needs. While some centers have shifted toward more skill-based, independence-focused models, the transition to open employment remains limited. In certain cases, reluctance to leave familiar environments or a lack of confidence in one's abilities further hindered progress toward competitive employment. Sheltered workshops, a long-standing employment model for individuals with intellectual disabilities, offered minimal wages and limited opportunities for transition to the open labor market. The model, though providing a stable work environment, has been criticized for perpetuating segregation and inequality. Workers in these settings typically received training allowances and welfare benefits, but few ever advanced to regular employment.

Qianet al. (2018) focused on employment sustainability for individuals with intellectual disabilities (ID), aiming to fill gaps left by previous studies, particularly regarding long-term employment outcomes. The background emphasizes the critical importance of understanding factors that contribute to not just obtaining, but also maintaining employment for individuals with ID.

Taubner et al. (2022) explained the research on employment sustainability for individuals with intellectual disabilities (ID). It starts by acknowledging that employment is a significant aspect of adult life, contributing positively to individuals and society. Despite these benefits, people with ID face disproportionately low employment rates compared to the general population. Nevala et al. (2019) stated that the effectiveness of rehabilitation interventions on the Employment and Functioning of People with Intellectual Disabilities: A Systematic Review" presents a comprehensive literature review analyzing rehabilitation interventions aimed at improving employment outcomes for individuals with intellectual disabilities (ID). The background emphasizes the low employment rates among people with ID across countries and highlights the importance of employment for improving quality of life, self-esteem, and social inclusion for this population.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research design, utilizing semi-structured interviews as the primary data collection method. Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA), as presented by Braun and Clarke (2006), serves as the methodological framework to analyze the interviews. The reflexive approach enables an iterative process of interpretation, ensuring that the researcher's positionality and insights are integral to understanding the data.

Participants

The participants for this study were selected through purposive sampling to ensure diversity and relevance to the research focus. Each participant was invited to share their perspectives on the key themes of the study, ensuring a rich, nuanced dataset.

Research Instruments

The researchers used self-designed tools to gather valuable insights from disability advocates, individuals with intellectual disabilities, and employers. All the three tools included twenty categories to inquire the insights and establishing codes and themes.

Interview Procedure

The semi-structured interviews were conducted in a conversational manner, allowing participants to articulate their experiences freely. An interview guide was used to steer the conversation while

remaining flexible to follow the participants' leads. Interviews were audio-recorded with consent, transcribed verbatim, and anonymized to maintain confidentiality.

Ensuring Rigor

1. Reflexivity

A reflexive journal was maintained throughout the research process, documenting the researcher's thoughts, decisions, and evolving understanding. Regular reflexive discussions with peers and advisors were conducted to challenge and refine interpretations.

2. Credibility

Member checking was employed, allowing participants to review and validate the interpretations. This practice ensured that the themes accurately reflected participants' experiences.

3. Transparency

Detailed documentation of the analytical process, including coding frameworks and thematic development, was maintained to ensure transparency and replicability.

4. Ethical Considerations

Participants provided informed consent and were assured of their right to withdraw at any stage. Anonymity and confidentiality were prioritized throughout the study.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The analysis followed a systematic process, as detailed below:

1. **Familiarization with the Data**

The researcher immersed themselves in the interview transcripts by repeated reading, actively noting initial impressions and potential themes. Reflexivity was practiced throughout, with the researcher maintaining a reflexive journal to document biases, assumptions, and evolving interpretations.

2. **Generating Initial Codes**

The transcripts were coded inductively, ensuring that codes emerged directly from the data. The coding process involved detailed line-by-line analysis, and each code was documented with excerpts from the text.

Table 1

Codes and sub-codes for the disability advocates group

Codes	Sub-Codes
Experiences and Roles of Disability Advocates	Experience in advocacy roles
	Challenges faced in supporting employment
	Organizational role in promoting employment
	Familiarity with employment sectors/industries
Barriers to Employment	Discrimination and stigma in workplaces
	Accessibility issues in job opportunities
	Lack of inclusive workplace policies
	Limited access to vocational education and training
Social Attitudes and Workplace Dynamics	Impact of stigma on hiring decisions
	Negative social attitudes towards intellectual disabilities
	Resistance to workplace accommodations
Systemic and Policy-Related Challenges	Insufficient or restrictive legislation
	Ineffectiveness of public policies
	Limited enforcement of employment laws
	Corporate resistance to accommodations
Recruitment Challenges	Complex recruitment processes
	Bias in interviews and hiring practices
	Lack of inclusive hiring tools and practices
Success Stories and Best Practices	Examples of successful employment programs
	Effective strategies for long-term retention
	Benefits of tailored employment initiatives
Role of Support Systems and Resources	Importance of vocational training
	Role of job coaches and mentors
	Family and community involvement
	Accessibility to employment services
Recommendations for Improvement	Suggestions for policy reform
	Recommendations for inclusive corporate practices

Future Outlook and Emerging Trends	Advocacy for better workplace accommodations
	Technological advancements benefiting job seekers
	Shifts in societal attitudes toward disability inclusion
	Predictions for long-term employment trends
Overarching Insights and Perspectives	Broad reflections on employment challenges
	Insights into holistic approaches for improvement
	Final thoughts on the advocacy journey

Table 1 shows codes and sub-codes for the disability advocates group

Table 2

Codes and sub-codes for the employees group

Codes	Sub-Codes
Roles and Experiences of Employees	Frequency of interaction with employees with intellectual disabilities
	Duration of involvement with this group
	Nature of experiences (positive, neutral, challenging)
Workplace Challenges	Difficulties in adapting individuals to workplace routines
	Impact of challenges on performance and team dynamics
	Gaps in support and their consequences
	Comfort level in expressing workplace needs
Support Systems and Formal Accommodations	Availability and effectiveness of workplace accommodations
	Integration into teams and factors influencing success
	Role of formal supports (job coaches, accommodations, flexible policies)
	Examples of successful engagement strategies
Effective Strategies and Accommodations	Flexible work schedules and task adjustments
	Instances of overcoming challenges with support
	Significance of training and mentoring programs
Workplace Culture and Inclusion	Co-worker perceptions and reactions
	Challenges in fostering understanding and acceptance
	Positive shifts in workplace culture due to inclusivity
	Management approaches to feedback and development
Recommendations for Workplace Inclusion	Suggestions for organizational reforms
	Strategies for enhancing communication among staff, management, and employees
	Staff training to foster understanding and support

Future Outlook and Opportunities	Predictions for industry trends benefiting employees with intellectual disabilities
	Technological and social changes driving inclusion
	Insights into long-term prospects and areas for improvement
Holistic Reflections	Broader experiences and learnings from working with employees with intellectual disabilities
	Additional insights into improving inclusion and integration
	Suggestions for enhancing advocacy and organizational practices

Table 2 shows codes and sub-codes for the employees group

Table 3

Codes and sub-codes for the individuals with IDD group

Codes	Sub-Codes
Work Experience and Job Preferences	Description of current or previous job roles
	Preferences for types of work
	Factors contributing to job satisfaction
	Enjoyment of job-related tasks
Challenges Faced at Work	Difficulties related to intellectual disability at work
	Task-related struggles and coping mechanisms
	Impact of cognitive or physical limitations on performance
	Social or environmental challenges at the workplace
Social Interaction and Inclusion	Interactions with coworkers and supervisors
	Perceptions of support and understanding from colleagues
	Instances of exclusion or unfair treatment
	Experiences of feeling part of the team
Support Systems and Accommodations	Types of support received at work (e.g., additional help, modifications)
	Importance of job accommodations for performance
	Employer adjustments to enhance job performance
	Availability of mentors or advisors for work challenges
Positive Experiences and Achievements	Instances of pride in work accomplishments
	Recognition of personal achievements at work
	Special training or guidance that improved job performance
Job Satisfaction and Workplace Environment	Comfort and support within the workplace environment
	Perception of equality and fairness among

	colleagues
	Desired improvements in the work environment for better performance
	The role of workplace culture in job satisfaction
Career Goals and Aspirations	Long-term career goals and job aspirations
	Support needed to achieve career aspirations
	Skills or training desired to progress in careers
Advice for Peers and Future Outlook	Advice for others with intellectual disabilities seeking employment
	Suggestions for improving work experiences for individuals with intellectual disabilities
	Insights into improving accessibility and inclusion in workplaces

Table 3 shows codes and sub-codes for the individuals with IDD group

3. **Constructing Themes**

Codes were organized into potential themes by identifying patterns and relationships within the data. This phase involved critical reflection to ensure that themes accurately represented the data while acknowledging the researcher's interpretive lens.

Table 4

Themes corresponding codes for the disability advocates group

Codes	Themes
Experiences and Roles of Disability Advocates	The multifaceted role of disability advocates in bridging employment gaps was generated a theme against four codes.
Barriers to Employment	The systemic, social, and personal barriers limiting employment opportunities were generated a theme against four codes.
Social Attitudes and Workplace Dynamics	Social attitudes and workplace practices as critical influences on employment experiences were generated a theme against three codes.
Systemic and Policy-Related Challenges	Systemic challenges in policy and public frameworks limiting progress was generated a theme against four codes.
Recruitment Challenges	Inequities in recruitment processes as a barrier to inclusion was generated a theme against three codes.
Success Stories and Best Practices	Success stories as models for inclusive employment practices was generated a theme against three codes.
Role of Support Systems and Resources	The interplay of external support systems in promoting workforce inclusion was generated a theme against four codes.
Recommendations for Improvement	Actionable pathways for enhancing employment inclusivity was generated a theme against three

	codes.
Future Outlook and Emerging Trends	Optimistic outlook and future-oriented solutions for employment inclusion was generated a theme against three codes.
Overarching Insights and Perspectives	Comprehensive perspectives on fostering inclusive employment ecosystems were generated a theme against three codes.

Table 4 shows themes corresponding codes for the disability advocates group

Table 5
Themes corresponding codes for the employees group

Codes	Themes
Roles and Experiences of Employees	Insights into employee experiences in supporting individuals with intellectual disabilities were generated a theme against three codes.
Workplace Challenges	Barriers to seamless integration and success in workplace environments was generated a theme against four codes.
Support Systems and Formal Accommodations	Importance and impact of structured support systems for employee inclusion was generated a theme against four codes.
Effective Strategies and Accommodations	Tailored approaches enabling employees with intellectual disabilities to thrive was generated a theme against three codes.
Workplace Culture and Inclusion	Building a culture of acceptance and inclusive growth was generated a theme against four codes.
Recommendations for Workplace Inclusion	Actionable steps to create inclusive and supportive workplace environments were generated a theme against three codes.
Future Outlook and Opportunities	Future directions for employment inclusivity in diverse industries was generated a theme against three codes.
Holistic Reflections	Reflective perspectives on fostering workplace inclusion was generated a theme against four codes.

Table 5 shows themes corresponding codes for the employees group

Table 6
Themes corresponding codes for the individuals with IDD group

Codes	Themes
Work Experience and Job Preferences	Understanding the nature of work and personal job satisfaction among individuals with intellectual disabilities was generated a theme against four codes.
Challenges Faced at Work	Navigating workplace barriers and coping with

	task-related difficulties was generated a theme against four codes.
Social Interaction and Inclusion	Social integration and the role of supportive workplace relationships in inclusion was generated a theme against four codes.
Support Systems and Accommodations	Support structures and accommodations that facilitate job performance and inclusion was generated a theme against four codes.
Positive Experiences and Achievements	Celebrating accomplishments and the impact of support on achievement was generated a theme against three codes.
Job Satisfaction and Workplace Environment	Workplace culture and its influence on job satisfaction and inclusion was generated a theme against four codes.
Career Goals and Aspirations	Career development aspirations and the resources needed for growth was generated a theme against three codes.
Advice for Peers and Future Outlook	Empowerment, advice, and outlook for individuals with intellectual disabilities in the workforce was generated a theme against three codes.

Table 6 shows themes corresponding codes for the individuals with IDD group

4. **Reviewing and Refining Themes**

Themes were reviewed against the coded data and the entire dataset to ensure coherence and relevance. This iterative process included multiple rounds of analysis to refine and consolidate themes, ensuring their alignment with the research objectives.

5. **Defining and Naming Themes**

Each theme was defined in detail, capturing its essence and relevance to the research question. Reflexive analysis was integral in this phase, as the researcher's interpretations and contextual understanding shaped the final articulation of themes.

6. **Writing the Analysis**

The final analysis was presented with rich descriptions and illustrative excerpts from the interviews. Reflexivity was explicitly acknowledged, with the researcher's positionality and influence on the analysis transparently discussed.

Table 7

Themes corresponding codes for the disability advocates group

Themes	Analysis
The multifaceted role of disability advocates in bridging employment gaps was generated a theme against four codes.	The advocates play a critical role in advocating for inclusive employment practices, working across various sectors to ensure equal opportunities. This theme emerged from codes related to their advocacy efforts, strategies to remove barriers, and involvement in shaping policies that support inclusive workplaces.
The systemic, social, and personal barriers	This theme reflects the broad spectrum of

limiting employment opportunities were generated a theme against four codes.	challenges individuals with disabilities face in employment, which includes societal attitudes, legal frameworks, and individual stigmas. Codes related to these barriers highlight the multifactorial nature of the challenges that need to be addressed in the quest for inclusive employment.
Social attitudes and workplace practices as critical influences on employment experiences was generated a theme against three codes.	The theme emphasizes the profound impact that societal perceptions and workplace culture have on the integration of individuals with disabilities. Codes related to discriminatory attitudes and lack of inclusive practices underscore the need for changing workplace dynamics to foster inclusivity.
Systemic challenges in policy and public frameworks limiting progress was generated a theme against four codes.	Disability advocates identified how existing policies and frameworks hinder the effective inclusion of individuals with disabilities. Codes emphasize the need for reforms in legislation, public perception, and enforcement of disability rights to create an equitable environment.
Inequities in recruitment processes as a barrier to inclusion was generated a theme against three codes.	This theme emerged from codes illustrating how recruitment practices often overlook individuals with disabilities, thus limiting their chances of employment. Advocates stress the need for fair recruitment practices that emphasize abilities over perceived limitations.
Success stories as models for inclusive employment practices was generated a theme against three codes.	Highlighting real-life examples, this theme emphasizes that successful integration of individuals with disabilities in the workforce is not only possible but also beneficial. Codes reveal how these success stories can serve as best practices and inspiration for other organizations.
The interplay of external support systems in promoting workforce inclusion was generated a theme against four codes.	Support systems such as vocational training, mentorship, and disability-specific resources play an essential role in helping individuals with disabilities thrive in the workplace. Codes illustrate the importance of these systems for job retention and career advancement.
Actionable pathways for enhancing employment inclusivity was generated a theme against three codes.	Advocates provide actionable suggestions to enhance workplace inclusivity, such as offering better accessibility, training employers, and developing tailored support mechanisms. Codes reflect these recommendations as steps toward a more inclusive workforce.
Optimistic outlook and future-oriented solutions for employment inclusion was	Despite existing barriers, there is optimism about the future of disability inclusion in the workforce.

generated a theme against three codes.	The codes highlight emerging trends in technology and policy that can facilitate greater inclusion and the role of advocacy in shaping this positive change.
Comprehensive perspectives on fostering inclusive employment ecosystems were generated a theme against three codes.	This theme captures the holistic approach required to create inclusive workplaces, including advocacy, policy change, and societal awareness. Codes reflect a broad understanding of how various stakeholders, advocates, employers, and employees, must collaborate for lasting change.

Table 7 shows themes corresponding codes for the disability advocates group

Table 8

Themes corresponding codes for the employees group

Themes	Analysis
Insights into employee experiences in supporting individuals with intellectual disabilities were generated a theme against three codes.	Employees in inclusive workplaces often serve as allies, offering support and mentorship to individuals with disabilities. This theme highlights the importance of empathy and collaboration among employees to create a supportive work environment.
Barriers to seamless integration and success in workplace environments was generated a theme against four codes.	Employees face challenges such as lack of resources, inadequate training, and stigma, which hinder the full integration of individuals with intellectual disabilities. The codes highlight the need for more inclusive policies and practices to overcome these barriers.
Importance and impact of structured support systems for employee inclusion was generated a theme against four codes.	This theme emphasizes the critical role of formal support systems like HR accommodations, workplace adjustments, and specialized training. Codes show that well-organized support systems increase job satisfaction and retention.
Tailored approaches enabling employees with intellectual disabilities to thrive was generated a theme against three codes.	Strategies such as job carving, flexible hours, and mentorship programs help employees with intellectual disabilities succeed. The codes reveal how customization of workplace practices can lead to better outcomes for all employees.
Building a culture of acceptance and inclusive growth was generated a theme against four codes.	The theme reflects the importance of fostering a culture that values diversity and inclusion. Codes suggest that workplaces must focus on acceptance, awareness training, and creating an environment where differences are celebrated.
Actionable steps to create inclusive and supportive workplace environments were generated a theme against three codes.	Employees recommend strategies like diversity training, clearer communication, and employee resource groups to enhance inclusion. The codes

	illustrate the practical steps needed to ensure equitable treatment for all employees.
Future directions for employment inclusivity in diverse industries was generated a theme against three codes.	Employees are optimistic about future employment trends, with growing recognition of the value of inclusive workplaces. Codes suggest that industries are evolving to better integrate individuals with disabilities, providing more opportunities in the future.
Reflective perspectives on fostering workplace inclusion was generated a theme against four codes.	Employees reflect on the importance of a collaborative and inclusive work environment. Codes emphasize that diversity benefits both individuals and organizations, leading to improved productivity and workplace harmony.

Table 8 shows themes corresponding codes for the employees group

Table 9

Themes corresponding codes for the individuals with IDD group

Themes	Analysis
Understanding the nature of work and personal job satisfaction among individuals with intellectual disabilities was generated a theme against four codes.	This theme explores the preferences and satisfaction levels of individuals with intellectual disabilities in their work environments. Codes highlight the importance of matching job roles to personal interests to improve job satisfaction and retention.
Navigating workplace barriers and coping with task-related difficulties was generated a theme against four codes.	The barriers faced by individuals with intellectual disabilities are discussed, with codes focusing on difficulties in communication, task completion, and social integration. Support mechanisms are essential to overcoming these challenges.
Social integration and the role of supportive workplace relationships in inclusion was generated a theme against four codes.	Social interaction is crucial for the well-being and job success of individuals with intellectual disabilities. Codes illustrate how workplace relationships, mentorship, and peer support enhance social inclusion.
Support structures and accommodations that facilitate job performance and inclusion was generated a theme against four codes.	The role of formal accommodations and informal support systems in helping individuals perform their jobs effectively is explored. Codes suggest that tailored support is vital for ensuring success.
Celebrating accomplishments and the impact of support on achievement was generated a theme against three codes.	This theme highlights the positive impact that proper support and accommodations can have on the achievements of individuals with intellectual disabilities. Codes reflect the importance of recognition and celebrating progress.
Workplace culture and its influence on job satisfaction and inclusion was generated a	The workplace environment significantly affects job satisfaction and inclusion. Codes show how a

theme against four codes.	supportive and inclusive culture leads to higher job satisfaction among individuals with intellectual disabilities.
Career development aspirations and the resources needed for growth was generated a theme against three codes.	Individuals with intellectual disabilities have career goals that may include advancement and skill development. Codes emphasize the importance of mentorship and resources for career growth.
Empowerment, advice, and outlook for individuals with intellectual disabilities in the workforce was generated a theme against three codes.	Empowerment and advice for peers play a crucial role in fostering self-confidence and career success. Codes suggest that with the right support, individuals with intellectual disabilities can thrive in the workforce.

Table 9 shows themes corresponding codes for the individuals with IDD group

CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The analysis of the themes and corresponding codes across the Disability Advocates, Employees, and Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) groups provides a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted nature of inclusive employment practices.

The disabled people's representation of employment concerns to policy sources, employers, and support organizations through the use of positive stories, job incorporation plans and future focused optimism. Subordinate cultures and policies, accommodation, role models, and practical solutions are mentioned by the employees to promote the inclusion and solve the issues. People with IDD emphasize work, and social inclusion, fun change as a result of supportive environments report employment strategies ,tips and stories about career advancement. Altogether, these views emphasize contingent approaches and partnerships, policy changes to develop consistent workplaces and establish employment for people with disabilities.

Discussion

Representatives of disabled people insisted on such factors as job discrimination, absence of accommodation, and inadequate numbers of vocational rehabilitation programs. They also highlighted the need for advocacy, use of success stories, and, new trends such technological development in increasing inclusion of the workforce. Employees stressed on organisational incorporation issues such as social rejection, lack of support, and disparities in education and training, while at the same time pointing towards factors like career sponsorship, tailored work and organisational culture support as major factors. For enhancing inclusion, they suggested diversity training and organisational support to create standard plan. People with IDD described the challenges they have faced when performing their jobs, with coworkers, and in their communities but were also able to explain how support, accommodations, and coaching can help workers with those disabilities succeed and thrive. It demonstrated the readiness for the career advancement and offered suggestions, which coworkers could use when faced with employment issues. In general, the study highlights the contradiction between overall employment opportunities for people with intellectual disabilities and the lack of workplaces' accessibility to these people, a contradiction that calls for systemic changes on organizational and societal levels to provide people with ID with equal chances in employment and proper support at work.The themes identified across the Disability Advocates, Employees, and Individuals with Intellectual

and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) groups provide an insightful understanding of the multifaceted nature of inclusive employment.

For Disability Advocates, the critical role they play in bridging employment gaps is essential for creating equitable opportunities in the workforce. Their advocacy efforts are not limited to providing direct support but also involve systemic change, such as influencing policy reforms and addressing barriers like discriminatory social attitudes and flawed recruitment practices (Goggin & Newell, 2005). Advocates highlight the importance of external support systems, including mentorship and vocational training, which are crucial in supporting individuals with disabilities in their employment journey (Schur et al., 2014). The optimistic outlook shared by advocates also emphasizes the role of emerging trends and technology in furthering employment inclusivity, reinforcing the need for continued advocacy (Brucker et al., 2022).

The Employees' group provides a rich perspective on the significance of a supportive workplace culture. Employees in inclusive environments play a pivotal role in mentoring and fostering an inclusive atmosphere, which directly impacts the successful integration of individuals with disabilities (Ahmad et al., 2017). However, challenges remain in ensuring consistent integration, with issues such as insufficient resources, lack of adequate training, and stigma hindering seamless inclusion (Moriarty, 2020). The critical importance of structured support systems and accommodations, such as job carving and flexible working hours, is reinforced in this group, as these measures ensure that employees with intellectual disabilities can thrive (Foster &Boxall 2015). Moreover, the future of employment inclusivity appears promising, with employees recognizing the growing trend of acceptance and integration within diverse industries.

For Individuals with IDD, the themes underscore the vital connection between job satisfaction and the availability of tailored support structures. Individuals with intellectual disabilities report that proper accommodations and social integration are essential for both their job performance and their overall well-being in the workplace (Schur et al., 2014). The importance of fostering supportive relationships and mentorship is a common thread, as these interactions play a crucial role in enhancing social inclusion and job satisfaction (Hagner & Cooney, 2005). Furthermore, individuals' career aspirations reveal a desire for growth, with mentorship and career development resources being essential in enabling them to advance in their careers (Luecking, 2009). Empowerment and advice for peers also play a critical role in strengthening self-confidence and shaping a more inclusive work environment.

Recommendations

Disability advocates should continue to push for policy reforms that address systemic barriers to employment, such as discriminatory hiring practices and lack of accessible work environments.Organizations should invest in comprehensive training programs for employees to promote understanding, empathy, and effective strategies for inclusion. Mentorship programs and peer support networks should be established to foster a supportive work environment.To enhance job satisfaction and career advancement for individuals with IDD, employers and advocacy groups should focus on providing personalized career development resources.

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