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**A Systematic Review: Community Support in Employment  
Skill Development of Intellectual Disabilities People**

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# A Systematic Review: Community Support in Employment Skill Development of Intellectual Disabilities People

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## Abstract

Intellectual disabilities people are exposed to particular challenges in obtaining employment skills through education services. In Indonesia, people with intellectual disabilities are among minorities in the labor market. This study employed a systematic review of studies regarding community programs supporting the development of employment skills for people with intellectual disabilities. A data search was performed using three databases: Scopus, EBSCO, as well as ERIC, and a total of twelve studies were selected based on the inclusion criteria. The results indicated that community support has a positive influence in promoting and developing the employment skills of people with intellectual disabilities. Furthermore, the review suggests that improving their employment skill is still needed.

## Keywords

Intellectual disabilities, extension education, employment skill, community living, work skill

## 1 Introduction

Employment is a basic human right that many people feel as part of their identity. The acquisition of skills to enter the labor market is an essential part to get employed or employment. People with disabilities are among highly marginalized groups often overlooked to acquire this skill. In Indonesia, disabled people experience lower employment rates than those who are not. Data from the National Labor Force Survey (SAKERNAS) indicated that there are 17.95 million working-age people with disabilities in 2020, and only 8 million or 5.79 percent people with disabilities in the workforce (Kementerian Ketenagakerjaan, 2021). Employment of people in Indonesia has been guaranteed through ratification of the United Nations of Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), which realizes people with disabilities have the right to work with others equally. Furthermore, the CRPD also prohibits all forms of discrimination for them in obtaining self-employment, accommodation in the workplace, and access to vocational training. The law number 70 (2019) mentioned that education and training for employment of people with disabilities is included as one among seven strategic priorities stated in Indonesia's Master Plan for Persons with Disabilities.

There are lots of benefits associated with employment, which many people with disabilities are struggling with and are not afforded the opportunity. One of the education's goals for them is their preparation for participation in the labor market. They are among the least considered subpopulations in a competitive employment setting. When compared to other disability categories, people with intellectual disabilities remain underemployed (Timmons, Hall, Bose, Wolfe, & Winsor, 2011).

Underemployment of intellectual disabilities affected their vulnerability to fall to the poverty line. This is due to limited access and opportunities to work. Yet, people with intellectual disabilities also have potential and skills to contribute to the community, if only they are given the opportunity and supported by accommodation and adequate facilities. When people with disabilities are equipped with the skills necessary for employment, this subpopulation can create job opportunities for themselves (Jahoda et al., 2009). So that they are no longer seen as a burden for the family as well as society.

Providing appropriate training and community-based empowerment programs for with intellectual disabilities aimed to help them become qualified professionals. To prepare intellectual disabilities people

for employment in early adulthood, employment skills training and work experiences are required for them. Given the potential impact on education and training for the employment of people with intellectual disabilities, it is critical to investigate what type of skills are required from various perspectives. Therefore, this study provides a description on the issue of the skills needed by people with intellectual disabilities to get decent jobs in the workplace.

## **2 Methods**

The literature review's purpose is to identify and outline the current research on employability skills development for people with intellectual disabilities through education services.

### **2.1 Search Strategy**

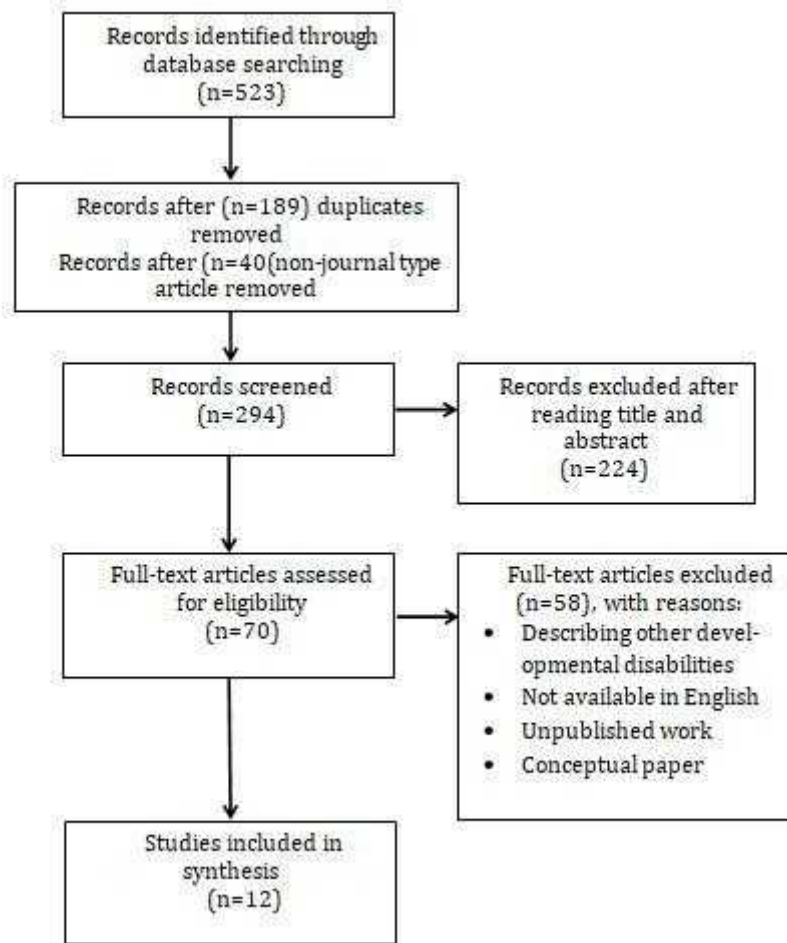
The current systematic review using following inclusion criteria: a) Written in English, and b) Presence of community support program for employment skills of people with intellectual disabilities. The literatures were searched via Scopus, Ebscohost, and Educational Resource Information Center (ERIC). The search keywords used across the selected databases include ("community support" OR "community program" OR "community") AND "support" AND ("intellectual disabilities" OR "intellectual impaired") AND ("job" OR "employment") NOT ("school"). A total of 523 articles were generated by the initial search and these were subjected to a selection process involving removal of duplicate manuscripts, title/abstracts screening, as well as a full-text review. Figure 1 shows the article search process based on the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis guidelines (Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff, and Altman, 2009).

### **2.2 Screening Process**

Researchers independently searched the databases and analyzed the data. The initial search resulting in 523 articles (see Figure 1). The first exclusion steps is by removing the duplication, with the total 189 are found. Book chapters and conference proceeding also being excluded from the review (n=40 articles). Eventually, 294 articles do not match the inclusion criteria were excluded.

### **2.3 Data Analysis**

Data analysis was performed in three steps, and in the first step, a data record was created for included studies. Subsequently, the articles were categorized to generate an overview. The included articles were then scanned for definitions, as well as an understanding of the concept and factors in providing education services to improve the employment skills of people with intellectual disabilities. In the next step, the articles then were coded and discussed using an inductive approach by conducting a scan of the articles and discussing the categorization of factors based on the research question (Table 1). The basic and important data of the articles were then integrated narratively along with these categories.



**Fig 1** The search strategy's flow diagram

**Table 1** Results found based on the search strategy

Authors	Publication year	Title	Key information
Dixon & Reddacliff	2001	Family Contribution to The Vocational Lives Of Vocationally Competent Young Adults With Intellectual Disabilities	The family contributions in supporting and maintaining employment of adults with ID are in practical assistance, moral support, motivations, and strong ethical work, protection from difficulties and exploitation, and family cohesion.
Feerasta	2017	Individuals With Intellectual Disabilities in The Restaurant Business: An Exploratory Study of Attributes For Success	Personal attributes for employment from the people with disabilities' perspectives are effort to increase performance, being ready to study, and being a team player (friendship skills).
Friedman & Nye-Lengerman	2018	Exploring The Role of Prevocational Services for People With Intellectual And Developmental Disabilities In Medicaid HCBS Waivers	Training for ID combines vocational skills and functional abilities. Skills included are about problem solving, safety, conformity, interpersonal relations, and dress code. In

			addition, prevocational skills also included personal care, such as toileting.
Gomes-Machado et al.	2016	Effects Of Vocational Training on A Group of People with Intellectual Disabilities	Vocational training program, The SCOT in Brazil showed impact on changes in adaptive behavior of people with ID.
Grigal et al.	2019	Experiences That Predict Employment for Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities in Federally Funded Higher Education Programs	The Transition and Postsecondary Program for Intellectual Disability contain career development experiences such as unpaid internship and volunteer activities.
Kocman et al.	2018	The Employers' Perspective on Barriers and Facilitators to Employment of People With Intellectual Disability: A Differential Mixed-Method Approach	Expectations of potential employees to people with intellectual disabilities are often due to misinformation or less information and awareness.
Scheef et al	2019	Salient Employability Skills for Youth with Intellectual And Developmental Disabilities In Singapore: The Perspectives Of Job Developers	Job developers, spoken in terms of hiring people with intellectual disabilities, tend to hire individuals who have strong soft skills, such as attitude, dependability, stamina, communication, and flexibility. Regarding technical skills, the job developer mentioned that skill certificates will add value to an individual.
Simonsen & Neubert	2013	Transitioning Youth with Intellectual and Other Developmental Disabilities: Predicting Community Employment Outcomes	Community-based employment support for people with ID must include development on behavioral, adaptive, and emotional skills.
Siperstein et al	2014	Pathways To Employment: A National Survey of Adults with Intellectual Disabilities	Adults with intellectual disabilities need community-based work experiences to develop adaptive, behavioral, and emotional skills.
Timmons et al.	2011	Choosing Employment: Factors That Impact Employment Decisions for Individuals With Intellectual Disability	Factors considered influencing decision-making on people with ID regarding employment are family support, schools, enhancing knowledge and skills of community rehabilitation providers.
Torres et al.	2021	Using A Literacy-Based Behavioral Intervention to Teach Job Interviewing Skills To Adults With Intellectual Disability	Teaching adults with ID job interview skills using LBBI, it is basically a task analysis of job interviews. LBBI has proven effective to develop job interviewing skill for adults with ID

Traina et al.	2021	Transition Program from School To Employment In Youths With Intellectual Disability: Evaluation Of The Irish Pilot Study E-IDEAS	E-IDEAS curriculum effective to improve communication, social, employment skills, and independent living needed in the workplace. It is designed for training intervention in vocational rehabilitation centers.
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### 3 Results

#### 3.1 Study characteristics

The articles mentioned employment skills of intellectual disabilities people ranging from 2001 to recently 2021. It is obvious that most studies describing employment skills development of people with disabilities are within the sheltered workshops, vocational training, and/or vocational rehabilitation center. Moreover, most studies included in this review are from the first people with intellectual disabilities perspectives, the employers, and also employment agencies.

#### 3.2 Type of Support Provided

The vocational training and rehabilitation mentioned in the most articles reviewed (Dixon & Reddacliff, 2001; Gomes-Machado, Santos, Schoen, & Chiari, 2016). Some of the intervention included in the training and rehabilitation designed by integrating employment skills development required in the job market, with the soft skills specifically needed by people with intellectual disabilities such as adaptive behavior training. Other than that, some study designing the training based on the task-analysis strategies (Torres, Kearney, Brady, Wood, & Katz, 2021). Training media used in training are made based on the individual skill, such as e-book that are customized based on their reading level.

#### 3.3 Type of Skills Required

A total of eight articles focus on discussing the importance of various soft skills required for people with intellectual disabilities in employment. Skills training from the perspectives of job developers that they need to have mostly are adaptive behavior (Chan et al., 2018; Gomes-Machado et al., 2016; Siperstein, Heyman, & Stokes, 2014; Traina, Mannion, & Leader, 2021; Voermans, Taminiau, Giesbers, & Embregts, 2021). This can be overcome by the support of families, teachers, therapists, or skills training centers. Furthermore, skills like communication, and attitude will support interpersonal relationships between people with disabilities with others within the employment setting (Scheef, Walker, & Barrio, 2019; Voermans et al., 2021). These would also maintain the behavioral and emotional issues of people with intellectual disabilities. Meanwhile, in terms of hard skill, one article mentioned that certificates of technical skills would be necessary for some jobs but not all required this (Dixon & Reddacliff, 2001). The authors conclude that improved adaptive behavior, social, behavior, and emotional skills should be considered in designing employment training motivation. The training would also benefit if mentioned skills acquired in the certificate.

#### 3.4 Source of Support

Families are the most and foremost support in the employment success of people with intellectual disabilities (Friedman & Nye-Lengerman, 2018). It starts with introducing the idea of employment, to the practical assistance during the employment time. Parents may provide help in money management, moral support, motivation, and protection from exploitation in the workplace (Dixon & Reddacliff, 2001). Job and workplace support aspects can also raise their performance. Employees should make sure an inclusive environment, both physically and socially.

### 3.5 Discussion

Intellectual disabilities people are at high risk of exclusion in employment skills training activities. Stigma and lack of awareness of this group often become their barrier in entering the job market, apart from this lack of employment skills. They are seen as dependent, rely on others to help them in their lives. This pessimistic view of personal attributes is what hinders in getting employed.

People with intellectual disabilities have the skills and potential to contribute to society through employment, if they are given the opportunities and adequate support. There are specific needs related to employment skills that need to be developed. Adaptive behavior is one among the most mentioned in the article reviewed (Gomes-Machado et al., 2016; Siperstein et al., 2014; Traina et al., 2021). People with intellectual disabilities are often diagnosed by their significant limitations on adaptive functioning. However, this multidimensional skill including daily living skills, communication, and socialization should be included in the employment skills training program.

Moreover, in order to get a job someone needs to successfully navigate a job interview. Unfortunately, people with intellectual disabilities often struggle with communication. Social skills such as being assertive, taking turns in dialogue, using proper facial expressions and eye contact, and sharing relevant information are essential for a successful job interview (Walker, Vasquez, & Wienke, 2016). By adapting these needs with technology, Torres et al (2021) developing a literacy-based behavioral intervention to improve job-interview related communication skill.

Accommodation needs to be assessed carefully by the training agencies to fully provide the skills required by people with disabilities in the workplace. Employers and employees also need to evaluate the impact of accommodation on the work performance (Gold, Oire, Fabian, & Wewiorski, 2012). The evaluation includes determining what accommodations are necessary and what is not. These efforts for people with intellectual disabilities are important to ensure an inclusive work environment. It is also suggested that training practices should consider disability-inclusive to embrace their value within the society.

### 4 Conclusions

Generally, the included studies emphasize the significance of employment skills improvement programs for intellectual disabilities people outside the sheltered workshops or rehabilitation settings to expand their opportunities to enter a competitive job setting. In addition, specific skills should be carried out in providing employment skills development training. These skills include adaptive behavior, social skills (communication, attitude, friendship, and interpersonal skills), maintaining behavior, and emotional skills. The most important is to avoid a deficit-oriented and profit viewpoint of training agencies. Only in this way is it possible to provide an integrating design of training that includes the development of skills required in the job market but also providing them with skills related to their individual needs.

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