



## IMPACT OF EMPLOYMENT ON DEVELOPMENT OF SELF-DETERMINATION SKILLS IN ADULTS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

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### Abstract

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*The purpose of education for all students with or without intellectual disability is preparation for adulthood. Unfortunately there are aspects of the special education process which serve as barriers to their outcome. The opportunities to make choices, express preferences, experience control over outcomes, take risks and assume responsibility for personal actions are highly prized by most people. Perceptions of adulthood are linked directly to these adult roles (Blalock, 1988).*

*Self-determination is a concept reflecting the belief that individuals have the right to direct their own lives. Students with intellectual disability who have self determination skills have better chances of being successful in making the transition to adulthood including employment and independence (Wehmeyer & Schwartz 1997). A self determined person sets goals, makes decisions, sees options, solves problems, speaks for himself, understands what supports are needed for success and knows how to evaluate outcomes (Mortin & Marshal 1996),*

*To lead an independent life in the society it is important for persons with intellectual disability to develop self-determination skills. The study was conducted on a sample size of 10 adults with intellectual disability with mild to moderate level of severity & are employed in various set ups from various socio economic status. To measure the level of self determination skills Self Determination Scale for Adults with Intellectual Disability (SDSAID) was used. The scale has 36 items spread over five domains i.e., Personal management, Community participation, Recreation & leisure time, Decision making & Problem solving. It is a self administered tool.*

*It was observed that employed adults with mild intellectual disability with more experience has performed better in overall self-determination skill.*

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### Introduction

During the past decade self-determination has emerged as an important concept in education, progress and services delivery for persons with disabilities. It has been felt that

training in post-school programmes will further help in transition process and thus result in successful placement of persons with intellectual disability.

In India, training in self-determination is not a part of curriculum either in special school or at vocational training level. This study would highlight the significance of employment in developing self-determination skills and show how such individuals manage their personal affairs, participation in the community, choice making and solving of problems in day-to-day life.

Studies reveal that active student involvement in transition planning is by now accepted as the best practice in transition and as a means to promote self-determination (Test et.al 2004). Wehmeyer & Palmer (2003) reported in their research that students with higher levels of self-determination at the time of graduation from the school had better financial independence and were also able to access jobs. Fowler C.H. & Moira Komand indicated in their research findings that majority of self-determination intervention affected skills that directly support academic performance (eg, organization of academic assignments) and, traditional academic skills such as maths productivity and spelling accuracy were also positively affected.

#### **The Objective of the Study:**

- a. To find the level of self-determination skills in the adult persons with intellectual disability who are employed.
- b. To compare the levels of achievement in various domains of self-determination skills in the adults with intellectual disability who are employed.
- c. Based on the findings to recommend the importance of giving training to develop self-determination skill in persons with intellectual disability at the transition stage, from school to work.

#### **Research Questions:**

1. Does employment help the persons with intellectual disability in developing skills?
2. Is it possible for persons with intellectual disability to develop self-determination skills in personal management?
3. What is involvement in community participation and recreation and leisure time?
4. How far persons with intellectual disability can learn skills in choice making and problem solving in day-to-day life.
5. Has socio-economic status any effect on achieving self-determination skills ?

### Methodology:

The subjects of the study were ten persons with mild and moderate intellectual disability working at various places in Chandigarh. (table – 1)The inclusive criteria for the study are:

1. Adults with Mild and moderate intellectual disability
2. Age above 18 years of age
3. On sustainable employment

**Table: 1 – Details of subjects of the study.**

Sub. No.	Age	Gender	IQ	SES	Experience
1	31 yrs	Male	58	Upper	6 yrs
2	23 yrs	Female	60	Lower	3 yrs
3	42 yrs	Male	53	Lower	14 yrs
4	24 yrs	Male	58	Middle	6 yrs
5	25 yrs	Male	55	Lower	2 mths
6	32 yrs	Male	46	Upper	3 yrs
7	24 yrs	Male	64	Lower	6 yrs
8	33 yrs	Male	40	Middle	2 yrs
9	43 yrs	Male	40	Middle	7 yrs
10	25 yrs	Male	47	Lower	7 yrs

### Tools:

A performa has been prepared to collect the necessary information from the subjects such as name, age, gender, IQ, SES and experience in employment.

A self-rating scale titled Self-determination Scale for Adults with Intellectual Disability(SDSAID) was used. Reliability & Validity of SDSID scale has been established on persons with Intellectual Disability. The scale has 36 items spread over five domains as under:

1. Personal Management: 12 items
2. Community Participation : 6 items
3. Recreation & Leisure Time : 6 items
4. Choice Making : 6 items
5. Problem Solving : 6 items

### Collection of Data:

As it is self rating scale the investigator personally approached the subjects gave the scale and explained it to each on. Each subject was allowed to rate freely. They ticked the columns: Always, Most of the times, Sometimes, Rarely or With assistance and Not Exposed or Not at all. In the Problem solving Domain they were given different options according to the question and situation. After ticking, the investigator computed the data as per the key given in the scale.

**Key:**

Always	:	4
Most of Times	:	3
Sometimes	:	2
Rarely or with assistance	:	1
Not at all or not exposed	:	0

**Data Analysis:**

**Self-determination Level:**

The level of self-determination of ten subjects, it ranges from 48% to 92%. The severity level of the subjects is mild and moderate Intellectual disability. Their socio economic status (SES) are 2 : upper middle, 3middle & 5 lower income The age ranges from 23 years to 42 years. There is only one female out of the 10 subjects. The subjects experience in employment ranges from 2 months to 14 years.

Group A	:	81% - 100% achievement in self-determination skills
Group B	:	61% to 80% achievement in Self-determination skills
Group C	:	41% to 60% achievement in Self-determination skills
Group D	:	below 40% achievement in Self-determination skills

**Group A (81%- 100%):**

Group A has two subjects the subject (1 &4) who achieved above 85%. The subject no.1 aged 31 years who achieved 92% has mild intellectual disability. He belongs to upper middle-income group with a job experience of 6 years.

The subject no. 4 aged 24 years who achieved 85% has mild intellectual disability. He belongs to middle income group and has job experience of 6 years.

**Group B (61% - 80%):**

Group B has five subjects (5, 9, 7 & 3) who achieved above 70%. The subject no. 5 aged 25 years who achieved 79% has mild intellectual disability. He belongs to low income group with a job experience of 2 months.

The Subject no. 9 aged 43 years who also achieved 76% has moderate intellectual disability. He belongs to low income group with a job experience of 7 years.

The subject no 7 aged 24 years who achieved 72% has mild intellectual disability. He belongs to low income group and has job experience of 6 years.

The subject no. 3 aged 43 years who achieved 70% has mild intellectual Disability. He belongs to low income group and has job experience of 14 years.

**Group C (41% - 60%):**

Group C has three subjects 6, 2 & 8 who have achieved above 48%. The subjects no. 2 aged 23 years who achieved above 48%. The subject no 2 aged 23 years who achieved 54% has mild intellectual disability. She belongs to low income group and has job experience of 3 years. The subject no. 8 aged 33 years who achieved 48% has moderate intellectual disability. He belongs to middle income group with job experience of 2 years.

**Domain wise Performance:**

**A. Personal Management:**

**Group A (81% - 100%) :**

Subjects 1,5 & 9 who scored above 83% have moderate intellectual disability. The experience in job ranges from 2 months 7 years.

**Group B (61% - 80%):**

Subjects 4, 10 and 7 who scored above 71% have moderate intellectual disability The experience in job ranges from 6 to 7 years and belong to low- or middle-income groups.

**Group C (41% -60%):**

Subjects 3,2,6 & 8 who scored above 48% have mild or moderate intellectual disability. The job experience ranges from 2 years to 14 years and each belongs to one of the three income groups.

**B. Community Participation:**

**Group A (81% - 100%):**

The subjects 1, 9 & 4 who scored above 83% have mild or moderate intellectual disability. The experience in job ranges from 6 -7 years and they belong to upper income group.

**Group B (61% - 80%):**

The subjects 10, 5 & 3 who scored above 67% have mild or moderate intellectual disability. The experience in job ranges from 2 months to 14 years and they belong to low income group.

**Group C (41% - 60%):**

All the subjects 7, 6 & 2 scored 54% have mild or moderate intellectual disability. The experience in job ranges from 3 – 6 years and they belong to upper, middle or lower income group.

**Group D (bellow 40%):**

The subjects 8 who scored 33% has moderate intellectual disability. The experience in job is 2 years.

**C. Recreation & Leisure Time:**

**Group A (81% - 100%):**

Subjects 4 and 1 who scored above 83% have mild intellectual disability. The experience in job for both the case is 6 years and belong to upper middle income group.

**Group B (61% -80%):**

Subjects 7, 3 & 9 who scored above 62% have mild or moderate intellectual disability. The experience in job ranges from 6 – 14 years and they belong to middle or low income group.

**Group C (41%- 60%):**

The subject 10 & 5 who scored above 46% have mild and moderate intellectual disability. The experience in ranges from 2 months to 7 years and they belong to low income group.

**Group D (bellow 40%):**

The subjects 6, 8 & 2 who scored above 12% have mild or moderate intellectual disability. The experience in job ranges from 2-3 years and they have mild or moderate intellectual disability. The experience in job ranges from 2 – 3 years and belong to upper or low income group.

**D. Choice Making :**

**Group A (81% - 100%):**

The subjects 1,4,5 & 10 who scored above 83% has mild or moderate intellectual disability. The experience in job ranges from 2 months to 7 years and they belong to upper, middle and low income group.

**Group B ( 61% - 80%):**

The subjects 7,2,3, 6,9 & 8 who scored above 62% have mild or moderate intellectual disability. The experience in job ranges from 2 years to 14 years. they belong to upper middle or low income group.

**E. Problem Solving:**

**Group A (81% -100%):**

The subjects 5, 10 9, 7, 3, 4 & 1 who scored above 83% have mild or moderate intellectual disability. The experience in job ranges from 2 months to 14 years and they belong to upper, middle or low income group.

**Group B (61% - 80%):**

The subjects 8, 6 & 2 who scored above 71% have mild or moderate intellectual disability. The experience in job ranges from 2 years to 3 years and they belong to upper, middle or low income group.

**Results:**

**Question No. One:**

The overall self-determination achievement reveals that all 10 subjects were able to score between 40% and 92%. The mean score is 71%. Therefore it suggests that persons with mild and moderate intellectual disability who are employed are able to learn self-determination skills.

**Question No. Two:**

It is possible to develop personal management skills in persons with mild or moderate persons with intellectual disability. The mean score of 71% show that they can manage their personal affairs which could help them lead an independent life.

**Question No. Three:**

The mean score obtained in Community Participation is 67% & in Recreation & Leisure time is 53%. The results of Community Participation and Recreation & Leisure Time reveals that employed adults do not get adequate opportunity for the community involvement and recreation activities once they are employed in any job. This reveals that more emphasis has to be given in these areas.

**Question No. Four:**

Employed adults with mild and moderate intellectual disability has good Choice making and Problem solving skills, This could be because of the social environment they are encountering in their day-to-day working life.

**Question No. Five:**

Socio Economic Status (SES) has negligible impact in learning self-determination skills. The domain wise analysis does not show much difference when compared with their socio-economic status. As the sample is very small, generalization in not possible.

**Recommendation:**

- Training in Self-determination to be included in specially at transition stage.
- Importance has to be given in training in the areas of community participation, recreation and leisure time activities.

- As the sample is small is small, it is suggested to have study with large number of sample.

### **Conclusion**

Though it is preliminary study conducted on self-determination in India, it throws light on importance of self-determination skills to be taught to persons with Intellectual disability. It also urges the professionals and parents not to underestimate and limit the areas of training of persons with intellectual disability.

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