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## International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research in Science, Engineering and Technology (IJMRSET)

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# POST-18 Vocational Training: Analyzing Employment Outcomes for Intellectually Disabled Individuals in Kollam, Kerala

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**ABSTRACT:** This research investigates the employment rates of individuals who had participated in vocational training programs for persons with intellectual impairments when they became 18 years old. The data for this study was gathered in Kollam, also known as Kerala. It is vital for persons with intellectual disabilities to get vocational training in order to increase their employability and autonomy. This is in accordance with the more generalized goals of inclusive and equitable human resource development. According to the findings of this study, the goals that structured vocational training tries to address include job placement, the development of skills, and long-term career possibilities. It explores the effectiveness of training methods that are tailored expressly to meet the needs of young people with intellectual impairments, as well as the role that instructors, facilities, and supplemental services play in assisting these individuals in making the transition from school to the job. The findings of this research provide useful insights into the strengths and limitations of Kollam's Vocational Higher Secondary Education (VHSE) system. These findings have the potential to be used in the enhancement of vocational training programs, which will eventually lead to an increase in employment rates. The findings shed light on the necessity of continuous review, education that is specifically targeted, and relationships between educational institutions and industries. In addition, there are recommendations for improving vocational training for those with intellectual impairments, with the goal of enabling these individuals to find employment that are satisfying to them and to become fully integrated into society.

**KEYWORDS:** Vocational, employment, Disabled

## I. INTRODUCTION

Obtaining meaningful job is a significant life success for those who have intellectual disabilities (ID) since it enables them to provide for themselves financially, provides them with a sense of belonging, and assists them in developing both emotionally and professionally. It has been shown that employment may improve the mental health, self-esteem, and quality of life of those with intellectual disabilities, in addition to other positive psychosocial and economic benefits. In addition, obtaining job provides individuals with ID with the opportunity to interact with new people, broaden their social circles, and experience a greater sense of integration into society. Nevertheless, in spite of these benefits, people who were born with impairments often face a multitude of challenges that impede their capacity to make important contributions to society as well as the employment. When it comes to finding work, persons who have identification may have a difficult time. Existing impediments may be broken down into three primary categories: individual, social, and structural.

Their ability to carry out responsibilities in an efficient manner in a typical job may be hindered as a result of personal challenges such as learning impairments, difficulties in communicating, or difficulties in adapting to new environments. Individuals who have a disability already face considerable obstacles to inclusion as a result of widespread discrimination and misunderstanding. The common notion that these individuals are unable to make a contribution to the workforce is the root cause of discriminatory behaviors that aim to deny them employment opportunities. Another significant barrier is the lack of easily available vocational training programs and social environments that are accommodating to those who have intellectual disabilities. People who have intellectual disabilities often continue to depend on their families or on government assistance programs since there are not enough support networks available to them, such as schools that provide specialized education and employment accommodations. As a consequence of



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their dependence, those who have ID are further alienated from mainstream society, which in turn restricts the opportunities available to them for social and financial growth.

### Vocational Skill Training as a Solution

One of the most effective ways to assist persons with intellectual impairments in securing meaningful employment is via the implementation of programs that target the teaching of particular vocational skills. Through vocational training programs, individuals with intellectual disabilities (ID) have the opportunity to acquire skills that are marketable in a regulated and realistic environment. In contrast to conventional education, which may not always be able to accommodate the learning patterns of individuals with intellectual disabilities, vocational training focuses on the acquisition of skills via repeated practice and customized instruction. By providing individuals with ID with the opportunity to acquire essential job-related skills at their own pace, this strategy enhances the employment possibilities of such individuals. Providing persons with ID with opportunities to improve their employability via the acquisition of vocational skills is a successful method. These programs that educate people with intellectual impairments the skills they need to compete for jobs in a number of sectors have made it possible for these individuals to compete for employment opportunities. In addition, vocational training programs often include a component that focuses on life skills education. This component helps individuals with ID acquire the interpersonal and communication skills that are necessary for effective integration into the workforce.

### Legislative Policies and NGO Involvement

Over the course of the last several decades, there has been significant progress made in the provision of vocational education and employment opportunities for those who have intellectual disabilities. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (RPWD) of India is one example of a piece of legislation that mandates the inclusion of individuals with disabilities in vocational training programs and in the workforce. The purpose of these laws is to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to work opportunities that are fair. They emphasise the importance of skill development, job reservation quotas, and adequate accommodations for disabled individuals. It has been vital for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to work in conjunction with government initiatives in order to guarantee that individuals with ID have access to vocational training and that their rights are pushed for. It is common practice for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to collaborate with vocational training centres, businesses, and enterprises in order to assist individuals with intellectual disabilities in securing meaningful work. Counseling, career coaching, and workplace support are also included in these groups in order to provide further help to those with ID who are transitioning from training to job responsibilities.

### Challenges in Transitioning from Vocational Training to Employment

Even if there have been advances in legislative rules and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are actively engaged, it is still exceedingly difficult for persons with intellectual disabilities to go from vocational skill training to job. A significant component that contributes to this problem is the fact that individuals with ID need varying degrees of functional limitations and help that is essential to their daily lives. Due to the severity of their disease, some individuals with intellectual disabilities may need only little assistance in joining the workforce, while others may require comprehensive support services such as job coaching, adaptations to the workplace, and continual monitoring.

Furthermore, there is a possibility that the vocational skills that are taught in training do not necessarily correspond to the requirements of the labour market. There are a lot of companies that are hesitant to hire individuals who have intellectual impairments because they have preconceived views about how productive they would be and because they are concerned about the additional resources that would be necessary to make fair adjustments for them. Because of this, there is a mismatch between the demand for workers in various industries and the availability of competent individuals who have identified themselves as having identification. Another possibility is that vocational training will be delayed because there is not enough early intervention for people with intellectual disabilities. One of the most common reasons why people with ID have difficulty acquiring the fundamental skills necessary for employment is that they are either not diagnosed at an early enough stage or they do not get the specific education and training that they need. If this delay allows them to stay reliant on family or help for a lengthy period of time, the transition to paid labour, which is already a challenging process, may become much more challenging.



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### Vocational Training Programs in Kerala

The most common way for students with intellectual disabilities in Kerala to get entry to vocational training programs is via the Vocational Higher Secondary Education (VHSE) system. There are programs like this one that are designed to educate individuals specialized skills in sectors such as food processing, tailoring, and carpentry in order to help them become more employable. On the other hand, there hasn't been a lot of study done on how effective these programs are in terms of finding employment for those with documentation, particularly in the Kollam region. When it comes to aiding persons with disabilities to enter the employment, the Indian state of Kerala has achieved significant success, which contributes to the state's image for having progressive social policies. On the other hand, there are still issues with the infrastructure, about the education of instructors, and regarding the collaboration between enterprises. It is more probable that vocational training programs will be effective if they provide a high-quality education, a learning environment that is conducive to learning, and access to the essential support services. Due to a shortage of funds at educational institutions, there are occasions when individuals with intellectual disabilities do not have access to individualized teaching that is tailored to match their specific needs.

### OBJECTIVES

1. To evaluate how vocational training affects the employment and skill development of people with intellectual disability.
2. To determine the obstacles and difficulties these people encounter when they go from training to work.

### II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

To make sure the research was conducted ethically, the institute's ethics committee examined and approved the study. The employment effects of post-18 vocational training programs for intellectually handicapped adults were investigated in an exploratory design research that took place in Kollam, Kerala, from December 2019 to January 2020. After consulting with research consultants, reviewing pertinent literature, and drawing on actual field experience, the researcher prepared an interview script to conduct in-depth interviews with vocational trainers. One occupational therapist and one vocational training specialist with expertise in dealing with people who have intellectual impairments reviewed the interview script thoroughly. Thanks to their input, we were able to refine our questions to better gauge the difficulties that people with intellectual impairments encounter before, during, and after receiving occupational skill training. The script was revised to make the questions more relevant based on their feedback.

The study's inclusion criteria led to the initial selection of 10 trainers from Kollam's vocational skill training centres; subsequently, seven trainers from various centres were selected to engage in in-depth interviews using a purposive sampling approach. The selection process for these vocational trainers was based on their experience and engagement in providing training to people with intellectual disabilities. Kollam, Kerala is home to both urban and semi-urban organizations that provided the trainers. We used topic analysis to methodically examine the audio recordings and transcriptions of the qualitative interviews. Finding commonalities and subthemes in the transcriptions was part of the process. The findings were evaluated and validated by research guides, who also functioned as the second and third authors of the study, after the main researcher had completed the theme analysis. This procedure rendered the results reliable and insightful into the difficulties encountered by people with intellectual disabilities seeking work after completing vocational training programs in the area.

### III. RESULT

In accordance with the question that was posed in the research, the results are presented in the following order: a wide range of occupational programs that are offered by the institution that specializes in vocational skill training; Information on the socio demographic characteristics of the participants Concerns raised by skill trainers about the challenges that persons with intellectual impairments face throughout the process of skill training; Concerns raised by skill trainers regarding the challenges that are experienced during the transition from skill training to employment.

#### Socio demographic profile of the participants

The women who took part in the study varied in age from 26 to 50, and they all had a bachelor's degree or above as their educational background. Additionally, 85.7% of the women had worked in the field for over a decade.



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### Various vocational skill programs being offered by the vocational skill training centres

In order to get a more comprehensive understanding of the several programs that were available at each of the skill training centres, the researcher conducted a thorough examination of the curriculum. According to what they saw, it would seem that the majority of these facilities offered training that was somewhere in the between of being unskilled and being semi-skilled [Table 1]. It was via qualitative interviews with teachers of specific vocational skills that the findings were established.

**Table 1: Different occupational skill programs provided by vocational skill training institutions**

| Name of Organization                          | Number of Programs Offered at Vocational Skill Training Centre | Vocational Training Provided for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities (PID)                                                            |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Amba                                          | 2                                                              | Data Entry, Artificial Intelligence Face Mapping                                                                                         |
| Seva in Action                                | 4                                                              | Car Washing, Hospital Assistant Staff, Retailing, Digitalization (Computer Work)                                                         |
| Grow Foundation                               | 1                                                              | Package Course (Basics of English, Communication Skills, Mathematics Skills, Reasoning, and Computer Training)                           |
| Nithya Saadhana                               | 4                                                              | Electronic Parts Sub-assemblies, Office Assistant, Computer Data Processing, Paper Bag Making                                            |
| The Association for Mentally Challenged (AMC) | 8                                                              | Weaving Doormats, Candle Making, Making Diyas, Paper Bags, Tailoring, Carpentry, Gardening, Computer Skills                              |
| Dharithree Trust                              | 6                                                              | Soap and Oil Making, Diya Paintings, Paper Covers, Making Bags, Candle Making, Agricultural Work (Poultry, Gardening, Dairy Products)    |
| Amogh                                         | 6                                                              | Computer Basics, Bag Making, Leaf Cups and Paper Plates Making (Eco-friendly), Loom Weaving, Making Art Gifts, Diya Products, Paper Bags |

### Challenges during vocational skill training facilitation

while respondents (vocational skill trainers) were asked to explain the challenges they encountered while providing skill training for PID, they highlighted six primary aspects about the challenges they encountered. First, there were the behavioural issues that were associated with post-traumatic stress disorder (PID), which included (1) hostile attitudes towards trainers and other trainees, (2) significant changes in mood, and (3) low levels of motivation; (4) the family support system of PID, which included low levels of support and encouragement, family members' awareness of the disorder, misconceptions, and knowledge gaps; and (5) finally, there were the gaps in knowledge. (6) related mental health and medical problems: co-occurring mental and physical health difficulties, short attention spans that hamper skill imparting; (5) level of education: limited or nonexistent capacity to read and learn from text resources; (6) associated mental health and medical problems: low or nonexistent educational attainment; (7) level of education (5) problems with trainers: staying skilled teachers at centres is difficult, and there is a shortage of competent trainers to teach PID; (6) vocational skill training methodology: these centres do not formally recognize or certify the skill training they provide, and there is a dearth of standardized training materials, manuals, and curricula for PID [Table 2].



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**Table 2: Challenges during vocational skill training facilitation**

| Themes                                               | Subthemes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Quotes/Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Behavioral Problems of PID</b>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Aggression towards trainers</li> <li>➤ Aggression against other trainees</li> <li>➤ Significant mood variations</li> <li>➤ Poor motivation</li> </ul>                                                                                | "Initial few months of the trainee joining the organization, most of the time, we observed behavioural issues. Which are like hitting the other trainees and orally abusing the vocational trainers sometimes we notice demanding behavior also." (Mrs. B, Seva in Action Organization)                                                                      |
| <b>Associated Mental Health and Medical Problems</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Comorbid mental health problems</li> <li>➤ Physical health issues</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                         | "Here we have one of the challenges during skill training is other comorbid illness like mental illness behavioral issues and other physical health issues so these problems are led them to not get interested into vocational training or not able to involve effectively." (Mrs. B, Seva in Action)                                                       |
| <b>Level of Education</b>                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Poor attention span interfering with skill imparting</li> <li>➤ Poor or no ability to read and to learn from text resources</li> </ul>                                                                                               | "We observed that their attention time is very less and do not put concentration during class time and needs to be taught multiple times. So its effect on their training." (Mrs. D, Nithya Saadhana Organization)                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>The Family Support System of PID</b>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Poor family support and encouragement</li> <li>➤ Family member's awareness, misconceptions, and knowledge gaps</li> </ul>                                                                                                            | "We have seen a majority of family members, who do not involve during skill training programs. And also they underestimate that these people cannot do anything. Also noticed that family members are discriminating their children abilities and strengths without understanding them." (Mrs. G, Amogh Organization)                                        |
| <b>Issues Related to the Trainers</b>                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Lack of availability of experienced skill trainers to impart skill training to PID</li> <li>➤ Challenges with retaining the skill trainers at centres</li> </ul>                                                                     | "One of the major problems is employee's retention, sometimes whoever joined here leaving the organization because of various reasons which are salary, job satisfaction, job security etc., and sometimes not getting skilled trainers or other professionals and suitable persons." (Mrs. F, Dharithree Trust Organization)                                |
| <b>Vocational Skill Training Methodology</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Poor or non-availability of standardized training materials, manuals, and curriculums for skill training for PID</li> <li>➤ Lack of any formal recognition and certification for skill training imparted at these centres</li> </ul> | "We can see that there are no proper guidelines; recommendations are available. Also, there are not much research regards to vocational rehabilitation for these people (PWID) in terms of how to facilitate vocational programmes, which course is useful and facilitate employment opportunities also one of the challenges." (Mrs. G, Amogh Organization) |

### Challenges post skill training and at workplace

There were two main themes and subthemes that were articulated by the participants (those who teach vocational skills) in answer to questions about obstacles that were faced both during and after skill training. The transitional challenges that people with intellectual disabilities face, such as less opportunities and challenges in transitioning to a new job and environment, were one of the themes that were discussed. The attitudes of employers, poor incomes, workplace absenteeism and leaves for PID, a lack of support from PID's family, physical and mental health concerns, and structural impediments are all factors that might make it difficult for PID to continue working and to remain in their current position. A third appendix



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### IV. DISCUSSION

From the perspective of those who teach vocational skills, the purpose of this study was to get an understanding of the challenges that are associated with PID both during and after the training process. The study may have certain shortcomings, but it does contribute to shedding light on the many challenges that people with intellectual disabilities confront during occupational skill training and after those training sessions. The researchers were able to identify a number of barriers that prevented people with disabilities from getting appropriate vocational and post-skill training as a result of the in-depth interviews that they conducted using this method. People who have intellectual disabilities (PIDs) who take part in occupational skill development programs enhance their employability, which in turn improves their satisfaction and the likelihood that they will be able to support themselves financially. On the other hand, there are a variety of barriers that are not readily apparent that individuals encounter at various phases of the recruiting process.

#### Challenges during vocational skill training facilitation

Our statistics suggest training barriers might deter PID from developing their vocational abilities. The results indicated that many participants cited behavioural difficulties as skill development barriers. PID sufferers may engage in aggressive, violent, and stereotyping activities that hurt themselves or others. Due to behavioural abnormalities, PIDs struggle with safety, social isolation, and vocational skill training. This topic supported prior study that demonstrated these practices hurt the person expressing them and their educators and others. More people with intellectual disabilities (PID) have mental and physical illnesses than the general population. Due to poor motivation, short attention span, and other mental and physical health concerns, their professional training may deteriorate.

The results show that persons with PID have problems reading and writing and understanding what they read due to cognitive deficits, thus they require extra time and help. This clearly shows that PID needs help acquiring new abilities. Another major impediment is social support, which affects development. This study found that PIDs are prejudiced, undervalued, and under supported by their families. It may be because family members don't understand PID, are negative about it, and fear community rejection. Due to poor pay, vocational skill training institutes struggled to recruit and maintain skilled trainers, limiting PID service quality. This is a big issue since vocational skill training requires competent workers. We discovered that inadequate training, a lack of standardized training materials, manuals, and curricula for PID skill training, and a lack of formal recognition and accreditation for these centers' skill training are all issues. This is despite the fact that proper training is essential for employment.

#### Challenges post skill training and at workplace

For the second part of the study, the researchers aimed to see the difficulties that vocational skill trainers face on a daily basis as they pertain to post skill training. Obtaining gainful job for PID was cited by most research participants as the most significant obstacle, followed by skill training. Due to a lack of possibilities, it was found that helping PID find jobs was more difficult than helping them acquire new skills. People with PID have restricted prospects due to ineffective adaptation of inclusive policies and procedures. This may be successfully addressed via labor market and educational system collaboration, which would promote greater levels of employment. Without systemic support, it can be difficult for people with intellectual disabilities to transition from skill training to employment and stay in their current job. They may face challenges such as employers who are dismissive and discouraging, colleagues who do not support them, lower salaries and a lack of appreciation for their work, family members who do not understand or support them, and frequent absences due to health problems. Supported employment and job coaches are useful mechanisms that may assist employees and employers overcome obstacles like job retention.

### V. LIMITATIONS

The information that was utilized to arrive at these findings came from a selection of the vocational training centres located in Kollam, Kerala. As a consequence of this, it is possible that the findings cannot be used in different contexts. Despite the fact that there have been significant advancements in vocational training for people with intellectual disabilities (ID) in Kerala, it is essential to keep in mind that the challenges that have been brought to light in this research may not be representative of other locations, particularly rural areas, and the specific circumstances that they face. A significant number of vocational training programs in rural areas are affiliated with agricultural or family-owned businesses, which do not necessarily comply to the conventional work hours requirement. It is possible that those living in more rural areas are more likely to have difficulties with infrastructure, skilled teachers, and specific professional training. This study would have been more beneficial if it had incorporated the perspectives of family



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carers and those with intellectual disabilities. This would have allowed us to get a greater understanding of the challenges and needs that are faced by this particular population. To determine whether or not we want to make the transition from vocational training to the workforce simpler, we need to determine whether or not their viewpoints and experiences are comparable to those of the trainers, or whether or not there are distinct problems that need to be addressed.

### VI. CONCLUSION

The investigation of intellectually disabled people's post-18 vocational training and job outcomes in Kollam, Kerala, reveals several opportunities and risks in this subject. Despite the fact that vocational training programs empower intellectually disabled (ID) persons, several challenges impede them from transitioning to employment. Both trainers and trainees cited behavioural issues, co-occurring health illnesses, and poor family support as the biggest hurdles. Poor staff retention, a lack of standard vocational training curriculum, and a lack of skilled trainers impede the effectiveness of these programs. Despite these difficulties, the findings emphasize the need of continued ID-specific vocational training program improvements. Training must account for people's strengths and limitations, and families need better assistance, to enhance job success. Equal job opportunities for intellectually disabled individuals should include more inclusive and formal recognition of their vocational aptitude. This study stresses the need for improved collaboration between government agencies, NGOs, and training institutes to improve the framework for intellectually disabled people's long-term career success. Educators and policymakers should prioritize vocational training that satisfies market demand for skills and addresses this demographics' needs to prevent excluding them from society's progress. Future research should include caretakers and persons with ID to better understand the issues and find solutions that engage everyone.

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