

Work-Bound Youth with High-Incidence Disabilities: Patterns of Career Choice and Behaviours

Dr. Abdul Basit

Senior Special Educationist, Department of Special Education, Govt. of the Punjab, Lahore, basitranakkot@yahoo.com

Dr. Zahid Majeed

Director, Academic Planning & Course Production, Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad

Dr. Muhammad Ishfaq

Assistant Professor, University of Education, Lahore, Email: muhammad.ashfaq@ue.edu.pk

Abdul Qudoos Awan

PhD (Scholar) Special Education, Department of Special Education, University of Education, Township Campus, Lahore

Abstract

Children/Person with High Incidence Disability is the one of unserved population in area of Disability particularly in Pakistan. There is still a lot to do for betterment for these in area of education, training, job placement and career choice. This study was qualitative in its design further it was survey Research. Self-made questionnaire was developed to collect the data. Non-Random Sampling (Purposive sampling) technique was used to collect the data. Focus group Discussion was conducted through online. Twenty Special Education Teachers working with High Incidence Disabilities were selected for this study (10 from Public and 10 from Private Sector) Discussion was recorded and themes were derived from the discussion (Through thematic analysis). Equality, Inclusive environment, Training, Working on Residual abilities Parental involvement, guidance and Motivation were the main themes driven. There are plenty of efforts require to accommodate the High Incidence disabilities in area of job placement, career choice and their betterment. Punjab Govt need to sensitize the stakeholders of High Disabilities.

Keywords: High Incidence Disabilities, Job Placement, Career Choice, Training

Introduction

Students with learning disabilities (LDs) who are getting special education services are more likely to have High Incidence condition, which is frequently considered a minor condition. According to reports, around 36% of the disabled students who get services via the Individuals with difficulties Education Act (IDEA) have specific learning difficulties. Intellectual disability, learning disability, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Attention Deficit (AD), Attention deficit hyper active Disorder (ADHD) and emotional/behavioural disorder are kinds of High Incidence Disabilities (HID). It is common practice to include students with disabilities that have a high incidence rate in mainstream classrooms. In addition to what they study in a traditional classroom setting, students devote a significant amount of time to this integration. To create an optimal learning environment, these pupils are given adaptations, accommodations, and extra services in the classroom. Paraprofessionals frequently lend a hand, bolstering the group's endeavours to improve the students' development.

Students in this situation receive additional assistance from a group of experts that includes social workers, occupational therapists, pathologists, and physical therapists. When students need extra help navigating the complexity of college life, their services are crucial. Anyone can become a part of this committed network and make a difference in the lives of kids who are struggling academically and personally by earning a master's degree in social work. It takes a group of experts working together for kids with high-incidence impairments to be able to integrate and grow. Members in this group include social workers, occupational therapists, physical therapists, and pathologists. Students with disabilities have access to a priceless support system of experts who are committed to improving their academic and personal experiences. Academic performance is negatively impacted by socializing, communication, and learning challenges experienced by students with high incidence impairments. Communication disorders, which include speech and language difficulty, are a common type of high.

Disabilities with a high incidence might manifest in several ways. Statistics show that a large percentage of students with learning disabilities (LD), mild intellectual impairment (MILD), emotional or behavioural disorders (E/BD), or both are among the most common students with high incidence. More and more impairments, such as high-functioning autism, ADD/ADHD, and speech and language impairments, are being identified these days. The term "other" is being used more and more to describe a broad category of high incidence disability that includes these. Better strategies and support systems can be developed by identifying and comprehending these traits. Students with high incidence impairments can benefit substantially from this knowledge in terms of their educational experiences and results. When a student starts to have difficulty in a classroom setting, it is sometimes too late to identify that they have a disability. Teachers may identify odd behavior patterns, distinguishing them from their colleagues, prompting a closer inquiry. Recognizing and understanding the varied shapes that students' difficulties and health issues might take is essential for educators, parents, and peers.

Because of the long-established divide between the two sectors, professionals have mostly ignored the requirements of work-bound youngsters when it comes to career development. Widespread public support for higher education, as shown in studies by Herr and Cramer (1996) and Rojewski and Kim (2003). Griffin (2007), the National Council on Disability (2003), Wagner (2005), Young & Browning (2005), and others have paid little attention to the career demands and postsecondary results of work-bound youth with high-incidence impairments. While there is a paucity of extensive research, several publications have highlighted the dismal levels of postsecondary education and vocational success experienced by teenagers with high incidence impairments. For example, Sitlington, Frank, & Carson (1994) and Wagner, Blackorby, Cameto, & Newman (1993) are examples of such findings. These results are probably due to the fact that people with disabilities are more likely to have distinctive issues with slowed or hindered job growth, lower academic achievement, and more obstacles in general.

According to Dietz, S., & Montague, M. (2006) Students with learning disabilities, emotional and behavioural disorders, or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) are among the many high-incidence disability (HID) categories that we often face in the classroom. While there are some similarities and some differences in the social, academic, and behavioural functioning among these three groups, there is a lot of overlap in the ways in which their disabilities affect their ability to prepare for work and advance in their careers, across a spectrum of frequency and severity. Because of their shared traits and the difficulties, they face in school as they get ready to leave school and enter the workforce and adulthood, we have decided to include these three disability categories. The potential applications of career theories and treatments in the areas of career behaviour, choice, and achievement can be better comprehended in light of these commonalities.

When trying to make sense of the actions, decisions, and outcomes surrounding adolescent professional development, career theories are crucial. The hypothesis is frequently disregarded or neglected throughout the process of preparing work-bound youth with disabilities for their transition into the workforce and their future careers. Given the extensive background of vocational rehabilitation programmes and research, it is intriguing to see how career development and counselling for adolescents with impairments have just recently been "discovered" (Fabian & Liesener, 2005). Whatever the case may be, recent years have seen a change in focus from disability as a pervasive occurrence that restricted employment choice and career development activities to readiness for the school-to-work transition, individual agency, and self-determination. There have been two schools of thought on the topic of disability and its impact on professional advancement and personal choice throughout the years. Some people think that people with disabilities can't possibly benefit from conventional job advice. Theoretical frameworks have been constructed around privileged groups of people whose experiences might not apply to others whose circumstances are different, according to this view. Not everyone has the intellectual capacity and access to resources needed to fully realise theoretical concepts like career maturity and career decision-making self-efficacy (Goldberg, 1992; Hagner & Salomone, 1989). On the other hand, those who hold this view would say that getting a job is more important for people with disabilities than participating in numerous theoretically-grounded developmental counselling processes (Manuele, 1983). A second, more moderate, perspective holds that most career theories can be modified to some extent to accommodate those with disabilities, since all individuals have comparable demands when it comes to job development.

A number of writers have claimed that the focus on little variations between groups has actually made things more similar, rather than different, (e.g., Ettinger, 1996; Gottfredson, 1986; Herr & Cramer, 1996). Adolescent student groups with disabilities may be able to benefit from mainstream career ideas, but it's probable that we also need to take disability's impact on professional growth and success into account. Consider the following: (a) the time needed to complete career exploration tasks will increase due to the presence of a disability; (b) the likelihood of delayed or impaired career development will increase; and (c) the range of career-related experiences that adolescents can have will be limited due to the presence of a disability (Rojewski, 1993, 1996, 1999a).

When we want to understand how teenagers act, what they choose, and what they end up doing with their careers, career theories are crucial. When working with transition planning and career preparation for disabled youths headed for the workforce, theory is frequently disregarded or neglected. Given the extensive background of vocational rehabilitation programmes and research, it is intriguing to see how career development and counselling for adolescents with impairments have just recently been "discovered" (Fabian & Liesener, 2005). Whatever the case may be, recent years have seen a change in focus from disability as a pervasive occurrence that restricted employment choice and career development activities to readiness for the school-to-work transition, individual agency, and self-determination.

A mainstream career theory, Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT; Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994, 1996), has been utilised by researchers to explain the career behaviour of populations with disabilities in recent years. This theory has been cited in various works (e.g., Hutchinson, Versnel, Chin, & Munby, 2008; Ochs & Roessler, 2001; Strauser, 1995; Szymanski, Willmering, Tschopp, Tansey, & Mizelle, 2003; Ochs & Roessler, 2001; Strauser, 1995; Szymanski, Willmering, Tschopp, Tansey, & Mizelle, 2003). Academic and professional choice and achievement can be better understood via the lens of SCCT, which centres on the interplay between the psychological constructs of self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and personal objectives as well as person, contextual, and learning aspects. According to SCCT, self-efficacy plays a crucial role in career decision-making because it "determines individuals' willingness to initiate specific behaviours, their persistence in the face of obstacles or barriers, and their level of competence in executing the behaviours" (Arbona, 2000, p. 288). Self-efficacy is defined as situation-specific estimates of one's ability to successfully perform a task or behaviour (Lent & Hackett, 1987). Learning experiences, performance results (such as academic achievement), and "how people read their capabilities and potential payoffs in view of continuous performance feedback" (Lent et al., 1996, p. 11) are all considered to play a role in shaping career choice.

There may not be many theoretical reasons, but there are a number of approaches to studying the professional actions and results of people with disabilities that are prevalent in the workforce. Adolescents with impairments have a history of having their professional actions interpreted negatively. Individuals with disabilities were characterised as having an inherent and immutable deficit whenever there was a problem or difference. Building theories or programmes doesn't make much sense from this vantage point.

The nature of the disabilities includes both common and unique career needs, experiences, and opportunities for adolescents, making it difficult to understand how they prepare for and engage in the transition from school to work and adult life. Consequently, people's vulnerability to disability-related dangers in the workplace differs in kind. Social stigma, discrimination in the workplace, a lack of appropriate vocational training and preparation, low self-esteem, and a lack of career ambitions are some of the career-related obstacles linked to disability (Rojewski, 2011).

Significance of the study:

In Pakistan, the Punjab free and compulsory education act 2014 provides free and compulsory education to all children between 5-14 years. Children with special needs and disabilities should not only be included in the general education set up according to this act but also give them equal opportunity in jobs and workplaces. About 6 % of total population of Special needs persons/children are in schools. Rest of them are out of schools or staying at home. So, study would highlight the importance of sending them in schools and make them able to be productive not only for themselves but also for their family and society. Additionally, Pakistan is a signatory of the convention on the rights of persons with disabilities, and according to this international obligation, every school in Pakistan will be inclusive till 2025 in all aspects i.e. schools, community and for workplaces. When this is the case, special education schools and teachers in inclusive schools need to meet children's educational and vocational needs of special needs community specially of HID. It becomes important for Heads of Special Education teachers to learn how to help HID improve the skills essential for their academics and vocational for better placement at their workplaces. The current study will highlight some critical agendas that would help HID for better execution in future to accommodation at their workplaces.

Objectives of the study:

To analysis the Current status of HID for education and job placement.

To observe the current services available in Pakistan for placement of HID in their jobs and workplaces.

To check the hurdles faced by HID in their Workplaces and Jobs in Pakistan.

To find out the possible solutions to implement effective plans for HID in their Workplaces and Jobs in Pakistan.

Questions of the Study:

1. What are the Current status of HID for education and job placement?
2. What are the current services available in Pakistan for placement of HID in their jobs and workplaces?
3. What are the hurdles faced by HID in their Workplaces and Jobs in Pakistan?
4. What are possible solutions to implement effective plans for HID in their Workplaces and Jobs in Pakistan?

Research Method:

The current study was descriptive research by using the survey method. A qualitative method of research was used to collect the data. Structured interviews were conducted with the participants of the study. A purposive sampling technique was used to collect the data. Due to time limitations and financial Constrains, interviews were conducted and recorded online.

Data collection:

Data were collected from two groups of the population. A total of twenty teachers were participants in structured interviews. 10 teachers from public special schools and ten head teachers from Private Special Education sector having HID students and Person were selected for this study. Data was collected on a self-made instrument having 10 basic questions.

Data Analysis:

Data were analysed using thematic analysis. After listening to the recorded interviews, researchers draw the themes from answered questions.

Table 1: Qualification of the respondents

Degrees	Valid Percent	Frequency	Percent
Masters	10	10	50.0
MS/ M.Phil	09	09	45.0
PhD	1	1.0	5.0
Total	20	20.0	100.0

The majority of respondent's qualifications, 50% had a masters degree, 45%of respondents having Ms/M.Phil degrees while 5% of respondents had PhD degree holders

Table 2: Ages of Respondents

Ages	Valid Percent	Frequency	Percent
20-25	3	3.0	15.0
26-30	7	7.0	35.0
31-35	2	2.0	10.0
36-40	2	2.0	10.0
41 & above	6	6.0	30.0
Total	20	20.0	100.0

The majority, 35% of respondent's ages were between 26-30 years, 30% of respondents ages were 41 years and above, while 10% of respondents were 36-40 and 31-35 same having years of age.

Table 3:Experiences of Respondents

Experiences	Valid Percent	Frequency	Percent
1-5 years	7	7.0	35.0
6-10 years	9	9.0	45.0
11-15 years	1	2.0	10.0
16-20 years	2	2.0	10.0
20 years and above	1	1.0	5.0
Total	20	20.0	100.0

The majority, 45% of respondent's experiences were between 6-10 years, 35% of respondents experiences were between 1-5 years, while 10% of respondents were having 16-20 years of experience.

Career with High Incidence Disabilities Choice Patterns, Work-Bound Youth

Learning Together for All Learning Environment

- (1) Education for All Right of Everyone No Child Left Behind
Eliminate discrimination Limited understanding of inclusion in the community
- (2) Benefits for students with disability Transitional Services Benefits for students without disability
- (3) Sheltered Workshops
Differing methods of teaching in class Learning each other
- (4) Shared Responsibilities Consider abilities (not disability)
Encouragement and reinforcement
- (5) Mutli-disciplinary teams
UDL Model
Media and Market fovour for HID
Vocational training and resources Lack of facilities
- (6) Teams of experts Collaborative Working (Training, Guidance, Motivation) Parent Involvement

Perceptions of Public and Private Special Education Teachers

Similarities:

Public and Private Special education perceive

Education is the right of every child. The agenda of inclusive education can be beneficial to promote this important agenda of HID too.

Residual abilities (with help of multi- disiplinary team) of HID may be helpful to capitalize career choice Patterns and work.

Parental Guidance and counselling can be the source of learning from each other.

All stakeholders of HID will learn who to respect diversity.

Media may uplift the positive portray of HID for their encouragement.

Markets at public and private can support well to HID persons in their careers to become independent.

EFA (Education for all) can be implemented by opting for conducive environment in Pakistan.

Vocational education and training will be helpful to develop a barrier-free environment for HID learners.

Children with HID can get benefits due to inclusive education and environment.

Inclusive education will be beneficial for countries like Pakistan who cannot arrange for separate infrastructure for special needs students.

Results:

Education is right of every children. "Being exceptional, any child cannot be deprived of the right to education, job or a career choice".

"No concept of Effective job placement and career choice present in Pakistan in public sector specially". Some private institutions working by making efforts themselves.

Inclusive education and vocational training for HID will be beneficial for general and special need students. Both will be accommodated in single setup.

Diversity will be accepted. Learners not only would have chances to learn from each other and plenty of methods/ techniques will be available for students.

“For effective implementation of career program HID for multi-disciplinary team, UDL model, barrier free environment teachers training and A.v.aids will be required”.

“Child with HID can benefit from inclusive education”. It will provide the environment of friendship, peer support, and a source of exposure.

“Pre-service and in-service training of general and special education teachers are required to implement exclusive program for HID students and persons in future.”.

“Effective use of assessment and diagnosis procedures and assistive technology refresher courses would help for promoting HID children/ ”.

Use of adaptive equipment, parental participation, mobility technology would help HID students/ persons, especially in job placement and career choice..

Conclusions:

“Every child with or without a disability including HID may be given equal right to education, training and job in his/ her nearby school, centre or market by addressing the needs”.

Pakistan is a signatory of the Convention on Rights of Person with disabilities may work out for inclusive education. Training and job placement of HID.

General and Special needs students both may get benefit from inclusive education.

“A multi-Disciplinary team, UDL model, and effective A.V.Aids may be provided in an inclusive education setup”.

“Public and private Special education teachers may be given preservice and in-service training for implementation of effective job placement”.

Mobility technology, adaptive equipment and assistive aids may support students with HID in obtaining job placement and career choice.

Refresher course for teachers may be helpful to promote inclusive education at their job place.

Recommendations:

Govt. of Pakistan may develop policy to address the agenda of inclusive education, training.

Stake holders of inclusive education may be sensitized about issues of inclusive education.

Teachers may be trained for upcoming agenda Inclusive education at various stages.

Children with HID may be given the chances to be included in job placement and career choices.

Limitations of the study:

The sample of the study was limited to teachers working with children with HID students/persons of Pakistan. Focus group discussions were conducted in groups. Only twenty teachers participated in this study.

Career Choice Patterns and Behaviours of Work-Bound Youth with High Incidence Disabilities

Focus Group Discussion (Special Education Public and Private Education Group)

Questions for interview

What does HID mean for you?

Right of everyone

Education, training and job choice is every child's right without any discrimination of colour, creed, religion, or disability. It is suitable for all to give an equal opportunity like normal including HID children/ persons in his/her nearby schools.

Education for all

Being exceptional, any child cannot be deprived of the right to education. Agenda of education for all also highlights our attention towards all to be included. All students should be given a chance to be educated

No child left behind

Inclusive education works for all children. Inclusive education philosophy works for entertaining all children. No child can be left behind because of his/her disability.

Elimination of discrimination

When all students will be in the same class, the same schools with the same curriculum work on all special needs students' needs. It may eliminate all bearers for all

No concept of HID job placement and career choice present in Pakistan

The majority of public schools/ centres are not working on HID job training. Very few private schools/ institutes are working on HID job training. General education is a major stakeholder not supporting this cause. The special education Department is highlighting the importance of HID job training at all levels.

How do you think HID job training will benefit all children?

i) Benefits for Special children

HID job training and career choice is beneficial for special needs children in socialization, academics, sports, and game participation. They have more benefits than.

ii) Benefits for general students

General/ normal students can get added experience of various methods, which would be handy to excel academically by including HID Students/ persons in their job and career choice.

iii) Same facilities may be availed

Instead of making separate setups and arrangements, inclusion would support both students in a single setup.

How do you think your students with special needs students and students without special needs will think about learning along with each other, will accept the challenge of HID? What do you think?

Learn the diversity

In inclusive education, training and job placement, multi-level (below average) children will teach together; they can learn through various methods.

A different method of teaching in one class

Teachers will use different teaching methods to accommodate the various levels of students. So students have a chance to learn from multiple teaching methods that would address their needs.

Learn from each other

Students will have the opportunity to learn from each other setup of inclusive education. They will share, care and learn from each other. Normal students will be motivated by seeing special students. They can help each other in many areas where they are good. It will provide a forum for friendship. It fosters a culture of respect and valuing each other. This will promote HID in all levels.

Do you think teachers can modify instructions and teaching styles to meet special children Specially HID job t? How? Example?

IEP development

An individualized education plan can support the teacher of general education to understand children's special needs. Making heterogeneous groups will also help the student to learn from each other. Placement of a child can also be helpful to accommodate the children with special needs.

Considering the abilities rather than disabilities

Every child has capabilities. There is a need to focus on abilities rather than disabilities.

iii) Encouragement and reinforcement special needs students have abilities that can be enhanced by encouragement and reinforcement. Parents, teachers, and peers have to support special needs students for betterment.

Do you think you have enough support and assistance to implement HID to meet special children's needs? What type of support do you currently receive?

Multi-Disciplinary team

A multidisciplinary team can support the delayed areas of special needs students. There is a dire need for these experts to promote and support special needs students' delayed areas.

UDL Model

The universal design of Learning can support diversified students in school. Multiple means of representation, evaluation modes, and instructions by opting UDL will be beneficial for them. Learning needs may be prior to addressing the issues of special needs students

Barrier-free environment/Favorable environment

There is a need to develop a barrier-free environment for special needs. An accessible environment can support inclusive education to apply.

Teacher training, A.V.Aids

Effective teacher training is vital for the implication of inclusive education. Without Audiovisual aids, students with special needs can not include inclusive education to address their diverse needs.

Lack of facilities

General schools lack the necessary facilities required by special needs students. Needs of infrastructure, accessible environment, facilities are essential for inclusive education.

Do you work with other teachers or professionals to support students with special needs? Who? How do they assist you in your teaching? How do you collaborate?

Team of experts/Professional consultancy

Physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists resource room will be required at general education. Collaboration also will be needed with teachers of special needs children.

Collaborative teaching

Collaborative teaching will require to address the diverse needs of children with disabilities. Teachers and professionals will not only support each other through this, but it will also be productive for students.

Parental involvement/ Peer tutoring

Peer tutoring and parental involvement boost special needs students' confidence, but it also enhances these children's academic level with exceptionalities.

Working on Residual Abilities

An effective way to promote students' abilities with special needs is to get maximum benefits by working on their residual skills. Usage of various aids like hearing aids, wheelchairs, crutches may minimize these students' dependence level.

How can children with HID benefit from inclusive education socially and academically? How will the special student be benefitted from peer studying along?

Friendship

With an inclusive education environment, children will make friendships with each other. They will not only help each other and also find some friends for the future.

Peer learning/ support

Inclusive education will provide peer support to all children to feel confident and cooperative by their peers.

Development of exposure

Exposure of normal fellows will build confidence and belonging between them. Due to this exposure, children will improve their academic and related skills.

What difficulties or barriers will children with HID face in being educated in the regular environment at school. Job and career choices?

Mobility Issues

Children with cerebral palsy have mobility issues due to their disability. Gross motor and fine motor skills especially worsen the problems of motor issues.

Placement issues

Children with cerebral palsy have placement issues due to their disability. Placement in the classroom, school, and playground keeps them away from including in their peers.

Accessibility issues

One of the prime reasons for the segregation of special needs students is the inaccessible environment prevailing in general schools, which is the foremost hurdle to becoming inclusive.

Environmental support

Environmental support is also hurting a lot in inclusive education. Issues like labelling, stigmatization, and inferior thinking by the exceptional student community became the hurdle for inclusive education.

Do you think with time and training, you can be able to include children with HID? What training would you need?

Pre-service and in-service training

Mechanism of pre-service and in-service training may be given to teachers of exceptional children. For general education teachers, some chapters in their syllabus about special needs students may be started. For special education teacher in-service, pieces of training for programs like inclusive education should be started.

Team working

Every member of an inclusive setup may work as a team member for effective collaboration. The plan of inclusive education is possible only if all the stakeholders work for the same cause.

Who would be able to assist you in catering to the student with HID in your classroom, vocational centers and job placement and choices?

Assessment and Diagnosis

Proper assessment and programs like IEP will be helpful to cope with children with special needs. So it is essential to do an evaluation, which will direct the teacher on how to go with these children.

Assistive technology

The use of assistive technology will be helpful in various areas like communication, socialization, and motor development. Hearing aids, wheelchairs, crutches, and magnifiers can support this in this regard.

Training

Teachers of general education required training/refresher courses to deal with special students efficiently. Teachers of special needs students should also be training about the latest techniques and aids to address students' diverse needs with special needs.

References:

Finnvold, J. E. (2018). School segregation and social participation: the case of Norwegian children with physical disabilities. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 33(2), 187-204.

- Powers, W. J., Rabinstein, A. A., Ackerson, T., Adeoye, O. M., Bambakidis, N. C., Becker, K., ... & Jauch, E. C. (2018). 2018 guidelines for the early management of patients with acute ischemic stroke: a guideline for healthcare professionals from the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association. *Stroke*, 49(3), e46-e110.
- Velasco Garasa, M. Á. (2017). Methods and metrics for the improvement of the interaction and the rehabilitation of cerebral palsy through inertial technology.
- Spandagou, I. (2020). Understanding Disability. In *Inclusive Education in Schools and Early Childhood Settings* (pp. 13-22). Springer, Singapore.
- Rojewski, J. W., & Gregg, N. (2011). Career choice patterns and behaviors of work-bound youth with high incidence disabilities. In *Handbook of special education* (pp. 585-594). Routledge.
- Dietz, S., & Montague, M. (2006). Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder comorbid with emotional and behavioral disorders and learning disabilities in adolescents. *Exceptionality*, 14(1), 19-33.