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Employers Views on Problems Encountered by Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities at Workplace

Alpaslan Karabulut, Assoc. Prof. Dr.
Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal University, Türkiye
karabulut_a@ibu.edu.tr
Orcid ID: 0000-0002-7355-5109

Mehmet İnce, Res. Assist., Corresponding Author
Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal University, Türkiye
mehmetince17@gmail.com
Orcid ID: 0000-0003-0849-9101

Hasan Hüseyin Yıldırım, Res. Assist.
Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal University, Türkiye
hhyildirim96@gmail.com
Orcid ID: 0000-0001-5125-8069

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Abstract

This research aims to determine employers' views on the problems experienced by mentally disabled individuals in the workplace. The study was conducted with ten employers who employed individuals with intellectual disabilities in a Western Black Sea Region province. The research data, which was conducted as a case study from qualitative research method designs, were collected through face-to-face interviews with semi-structured interview questions. The obtained data were analysed by content analysis. At the end of the data obtained, the findings of the research were gathered under a main theme and six categories. These categories are shift system, rest time, harmony and communication with colleagues, like the job, hygiene and cleaning, and tools and machines used in the workplace. According to the research findings, employers stated that individuals with intellectual disabilities have problems keeping up with the shift system and rest periods. In addition, employers stated that individuals with intellectual disabilities have problems liking their work and fulfilling the task. Employers pointed out that these problems stemmed from their inadequacies. They reported that they had problems in cleaning and hygiene, especially in the food sector. The study's findings were discussed concerning the relevant literature, and suggestions for future research were included.

Keywords: Employers, job, intellectual disabilities, case study, special education.

Introduction

The ability of individuals with intellectual disabilities to be independent and productive depends on having a profession and actively participating in working life. In this sense, individuals with intellectual disabilities should be given vocational education/training appropriate to their interests and abilities and placed in a job aligned with their education. Individuals with intellectual disabilities who are given vocational training and placed in a position should be productive individuals and continue their working life. On the other hand, a stable business life depends on employers' expectations, identifying problems in business life, and producing solutions. In this context, this study aims to determine employers' opinions about the difficulties experienced by individuals with intellectual disabilities in the work environment.

Vocational training is the first stage of acquiring a profession for individuals with intellectual disabilities. Vocational education is a program designed for students to gain knowledge, skills, and competencies specific to a particular job, trade, or occupation/occupation class (UNESCO, 2012). By focusing on pre-service education and training in vocational education, students are prepared to meet the needs of the labour market in certain occupations (Chiang et al., 2022). In this context, individuals with intellectual disabilities who do not receive vocational training and are not recruited into the workforce cannot gain their independence in social and financial terms. In addition, they cannot become producers in society. The way to prevent this situation is to provide vocational training to individuals with intellectual disabilities, employ them, and follow the employment processes.

Vocational education and training focus on the ability of individuals with disabilities to do valuable and productive work in different jobs according to their abilities (Majid & Razzak, 2015). In this sense, it is aimed at individuals with special needs to live independently, become self-sufficient, and integrate with society (Özbey & Diken, 2010). Individuals with intellectual disabilities need professional skills to integrate with the community and move from being a consumer to a producer as independent individuals. Gaining vocational skills to students with intellectual disabilities allows individuals to earn money, work in cooperation, and improve their social relations. In addition, the acquisition of vocational skills also increases the value given to individuals with intellectual disabilities (Maciag et al., 2000). For

this reason, individuals with intellectual disabilities need to acquire a profession that will participate in working life to integrate with society as independent adults.

It is not enough for individuals with intellectual disabilities to have a job alone to be independent and productive. They also need to be placed where they can work and produce. In this sense, an essential stage after completing vocational training is the employment stage. In the 84th article of Labour Law No. 1475, "The Employment Agency is responsible for collecting information for all kinds of economic enterprises and other works that are like free art, doing the necessary studies for requesting workers and organizing the job search, directing them to the profession, increasing the vocational education of the workers and training skilled workers obliged to work on the necessary measures." provision is included. In addition, it is tried to increase the employment opportunities of individuals with special needs through the quota system stipulated in Article 30 of Labour Law No. 4857. Fifty or more workers are employed within the quota system defined in Article 30 of the relevant Labour Law; a) 3% in private sector workplaces and 4% in public workplaces (EKPSS score is required for disabled employment in public workplaces). In addition, for each individual with special needs employed by private sector employers, all of the employer's shares of social security premiums at the minimum wage are covered by the Treasury. Fines collected from employers for not employing special needs workers are used for individuals with special needs to establish their own business, find a job, support technologies, work placement, and ensure their adaptation to work and workplace and in such projects. Individuals with special needs who are registered with the Turkish Workers' Organization (ISKUR) are directed to courses or on-the-job training programs to increase their professional qualifications or to be placed in jobs suitable for their situation by providing employment and vocational counselling services. In addition, İSKUR encourages individuals with special needs to set up their own businesses (ISKUR, 2018). Despite all legal regulations and supports, there are problems in the employment of individuals with special needs. Individuals with special needs face many difficulties in the labour market, such as unemployment, discrimination, and social prejudice. This situation has a negative impact on the employment rates and earnings of individuals with special needs (Akögretmen & Orhan, 2020). It is vital to investigate these problems and produce solutions because it is thought that identifying the problems experienced and revealing the answers will contribute to acquiring a profession and employing individuals with special needs.

In the related literature, there are various studies on the employment of individuals with intellectual disabilities. Research findings are generally determining employer attitudes toward individuals with special needs (Akardere, 2005; Eratay & Eldeniz-Çetin, 2013; Fırat, 1993; Hasırcıoğlu, 2006; Özmen, 1996), directing them to the profession and employing them (Soyal, 1993), physical evaluating the suitability of the employer (Ün et al., 2001), opinions and suggestions of employers and other stakeholders regarding employment (Baran & Cavkaytar, 2007; Uçar, 2016; Özdemir, 2008), planning the transition from school to work and professional life, and getting the opinions of the managers regarding this transition (Gürsel et al., 2007; Gürsel & Ergenekon, 2001), employer perceptions (Olson et al., 2001; Ozawa & Yaeda, 2007), problems experienced in the employment process (Kurt, 2020), knowledge levels of individuals with special needs regarding their employment rights (Orhan, 2015) and employment policies (Sen, 2018).

Various studies examine the employment problems of individuals with intellectual disabilities in the literature. Migliore et al. (2007) stated that most of the participants want to work in unprotected

workplaces as a result of their research examining the difference between the employment policies of individuals with intellectual disabilities and the implementation process. He also stated that, if necessary, support is provided to individuals with intellectual disabilities, they can work in unprotected workplaces. Güneş & Akçamete (2014), as a result of their research in which employers took the opinions of employers regarding the employment of individuals with special needs; stated that it is essential for them to be compatible, to work with a team, to take responsibility, to use technology, to communicate, to have academic, security and job skills to employ individuals with special needs. Employers suggested that individuals with special needs should receive some of their education at their workplaces during school. That job description should be made, and individuals with special needs should be trained according to their job descriptions. As a result of the research of Uçar (2016), in which he examined the opinions and suggestions of the stakeholders involved in the employment process of individuals with intellectual disabilities, the stakeholders suggested that the number and diversity of workshops should be increased. In addition, while teachers and school administrators said they were involved in the employment process by guiding them, parents and employers indicated that they were not. Bolli et al. (2018) drew attention to the participation of employers in three circles at the end of their research in which they measured the education-employment link. These; a) employer involvement in defining qualification standards, b) employer involvement in deciding the timing of curriculum updates, and c) a combination of workplace and classroom training. Kurt (2020) stated that at the end of his research examining the employment problems of individuals with intellectual disabilities, employers eliminated the existing prejudices and hesitations of individuals with intellectual disabilities through their success after starting their business life.

As summarized above, a limited number of studies have been found in the literature on what kind of competencies employers expect from individuals with intellectual disabilities and the problems they experience in their workplaces. However, many studies are needed to examine the expectations and problems experienced by employers who employ individuals with intellectual disabilities. In this context, it is thought that the data obtained at the end of the research is essential in contributing to the relevant literature. This research was needed because it will guide employers about the points to be taken into account when hiring individuals with intellectual disabilities and can form an idea about the problems faced by individuals with intellectual disabilities. Based on this requirement, the research aims to determine the employers' views on the problems faced by individuals with intellectual disabilities who are placed in a job. In line with this general purpose; the opinions of employers regarding the work habits of individuals with intellectual disabilities, their attitudes towards work, the problems they experience in their relations with their colleagues, the problems they experience in work-related skills, the problems they experience in displaying social behaviour in the work environment, the problems they encounter in displaying their communication skills and the problems they experience in fulfilling new job skills were consulted.

Method

Model

This research was conducted to determine the opinions of employers about the problems experienced by individuals with intellectual disabilities in the work environment and was carried out as a case study from qualitative research designs. A case study is a qualitative approach in which the researcher collects detailed and in-depth information about real life, a current limited system, or

multiple limited situations in a specific time through various sources of information and presents a situation description or situation themes (Creswell, 2013; Glesne, 2015). Bogdan & Biklen (1998) stated that the unit to be examined in case studies could be an individual or a community, and the situation of this person or community in a special process can be examined.

Research Group

To add speed and practicality to the research, easily accessible case sampling, one of the purposeful sampling methods, was used in the selection of participants (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). In this sense, the research was carried out with ten workplaces and employers in a city center located in the Western Black Sea Region, who employ mentally handicapped workers and agreed to participate voluntarily. The demographic information of the participants is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. *Demographic pieces of information about participants*

No	Gender	Age	Education Level	Professional Experience (year)	Professional Area	Number of Individuals with Intellectual Disability Employed
1	Women	34	Undergraduate	9	Textile	1
2	Men	47	Undergraduate	20	Transportation	1
3	Men	50	High School Graduate	32	Retailing	1
4	Men	48	High School Graduate	30	Automobile Industry	1
5	Men	62	Primary School Graduate	50	Food Industry	1
6	Men	54	High School Graduate	32	Automobile Industry	1
7	Women	46	High School Graduate	20	Food Industry	1
8	Women	44	Undergraduate	15	Textile	1
9	Men	39	Associate degree	19	Repair Work	1
10	Men	47	Associate degree	27	Food Industry	1

When Table 1 is examined, the ages of the employers vary between 34 and 62; three are female, and seven are male. The educational status of the participants ranged from primary school to undergraduate. Their professional Experience varies between 9-50 years. Employers serve in the food, textile, transportation, retail, automotive, and repair/repair sectors. Each employer employs one intellectually disabled individual.

Data Collection Tools & Data Collection Process

At the end of the literature review, the interview questions used in the research were determined, and the researchers created an interview form. After the interview form was created, the interview form was given its final form by taking the opinions of two experts who have doctorate degrees in the field of special education and qualitative research. A pilot study was conducted with an employer to test the questions before data collection began. As it was seen that the questions were easily understandable and answerable at the end of the pilot interview, no changes were made to the data collection tool. The study did not include the pilot interview to try out the questions.

The data of the research were collected in the semi-structured interview technique, which is one of the qualitative data collection methods. Appointments were made for the interview by determining the suitable days and hours for the employers who agreed to participate in the research. The interviews were conducted in the employers' rooms in their factories. All of the interviews were conducted face-to-face and one-on-one by the researcher. In the interviews, seven semi-structured questions were directed to the participants in order and recorded with a voice recorder. The shortest interview lasted 12 minutes 23 seconds and the longest 18 minutes 38 seconds.

Data Analysis

The data obtained at the end of the research were analysed with content analysis. After the interviews were completed, the transcription of the audio recordings was started. While the transcripts of the interviews were made, each speech was made as it was heard, without any corrections, and in the order of the interviewees. Secondly, the information in the written data was systematically coded. The primary purpose here is to reach concepts and relationships that can explain the collected data (Miles et al., 2018; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). For this, similar data were brought together within the framework of specific concepts and themes. To ensure the reliability of the data obtained, the opinion of an expert working in the field of special education and experienced and knowledgeable in qualitative research was taken. The coding made by the researcher and the expert was compared. The formula $[\text{Agreement} / (\text{Disagreement} + \text{Disagreement})] \times 100$ suggested by Miles & Huberman (1994) was used in the comparison. As a result of the calculation, the rate of agreement between encoders was 89%.

Ethical Permits of Research

In this work, we adhered to the guidelines outlined in the "Higher Education Institutions Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Directive." The directive's second section, "Actions Against Scientific Research and Publication Ethics," has a list of actions that have not been taken.

Findings

This section presents the themes, categories, and codes obtained from the information given by the employers interviewed and that constitute the research findings. The research findings were gathered under the theme of the problems experienced by employers in the work environment of individuals with intellectual disabilities. The categories and codes of the study are shown in Figure 1.

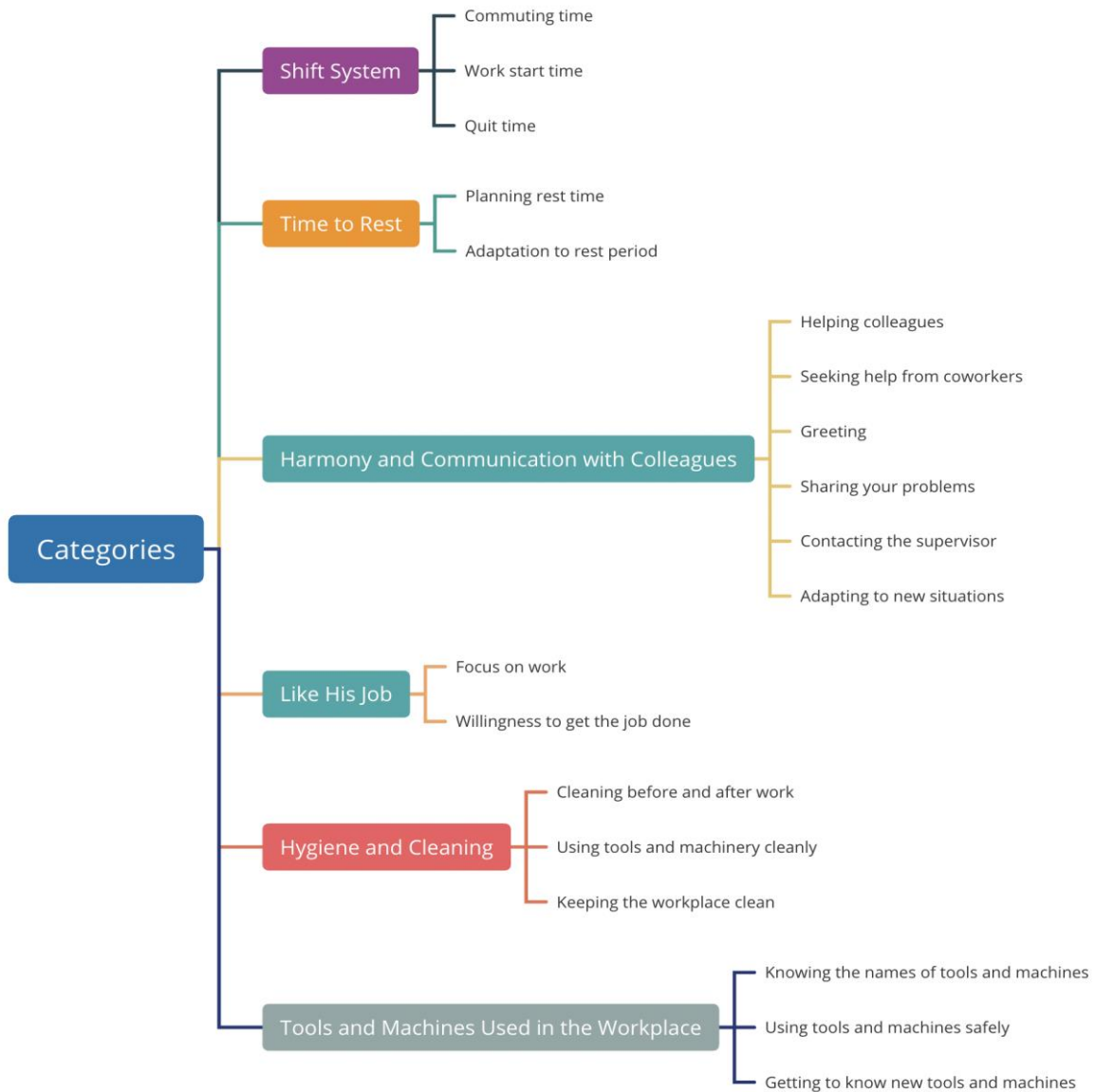


Figure 1. Opinions of employers on the problems experienced by employees with intellectual disabilities at work

As seen in Figure 1, the problems experienced by employers of employees with intellectual disabilities in their working environments are grouped under six categories. These categories are; shift system, rest time, harmony and communication with colleagues, like the job, hygiene and cleaning, and tools and machines used in the workplace.

Regarding the shift system, in the first category of the research, employers stated that employees with intellectual disabilities have problems with their arrival and departure times, starting and leaving work. Regarding this category;

"I must state that they couldn't keep up with the shift system when they started to work, and accordingly, they had problems going to and from the service. Again, there were problems with shift changes, and he could not understand when he would start work." (Participant 3).

They expressed their opinion: "They could not keep up with the shift system, and accordingly there were problems in going to and from the service" (Participant 5).

Regarding rest time, in the second category of the research, employers mentioned that their employees with intellectual disabilities have problems planning and adapting to rest time. For these categories and codes, Participant 1;

"He was dozing off during the rest breaks, which was a problem for us for a long time. Other than that, we do not have any problems". Another interviewee said, "There are times when he goes overtime during breaks, but he usually arrives on time and gets to work." he expressed his opinion.

Regarding the third category of the study, which is the category of harmony and communication with colleagues, the opinions of employers mentioned that they have problems in helping their colleagues and asking for help, greeting, sharing their concerns, communicating with their supervisors, and adapting to new situations. For this category;

"He sometimes has incompatibilities with his colleagues. I can say that it happens often, I think it is not the incompatibility they experience, but the negativities experienced by other normal workers who work with them." (Participant 5)

"When he asks for help from his friends, he wants help immediately, he doesn't want to tire himself at all, his friends say you can do it, but he gets angry because he is not helped." (Participant 3)

Another interviewee said, "When he has a problem, he does not share a request with us sometimes, he tells it to his friend who works on the same machine, but he does not share it with us. If he's going to ask for permission, if I have a secretary, he won't hesitate and come later." (Participant 1) expressed their opinions.

For the fourth category of the research, the category of liking the job, employers drew attention to the issues of focusing on the job and willingness to fulfil the job. Regarding these codes, Participant 2 expressed his opinion as follows:

"I think he loves what he does. She loves her job. In my opinion, they like their job more than normal workers. He comes back a little late from his rest breaks, but I think it's not because of his reluctance but because of tiredness."

Regarding the hygiene and cleaning category, the fifth category of the research, employers expressed their views on cleaning before and after work, using tools and machines cleanly, and keeping the workplace clean. For the relevant category, Participant 4;

"We couldn't get used to washing hands and putting in work clothes at the beginning of work, and we have serious problems in this regard. We have to remind each time." he expressed his opinion.

In the last category of the research, the category of tools and machinery used in the workplace, employers stated that they had problems knowing the names of agencies and machines, using them safely, and using new tools and machines.

"It was a long time before he taught me how to use the machine, but after that, he learned how to use it quite comfortably." (Participant 1)

"We don't use many terms in what we do, so we have almost no problems. We don't have a problem if we take care, not to overuse business terms." (Participant 2).

Discussion and Conclusion

In this research, which was conducted to determine the expectations and problems of employers who employ individuals with intellectual disabilities, interviews were conducted with ten employers. As a result of the analysis of the data collected from the employers, the findings were gathered under six categories. These categories are; shift system, rest time, harmony and communication with colleagues, like the job, hygiene and cleaning, and tools and machines used in the workplace. This section discusses the findings obtained in the research in relation to the literature.

In the research, employers stated that individuals with intellectual disabilities have problems keeping up with the shift system, and therefore they have problems commuting and commuting hours. This affects the starting and quitting times of work. Baran & Cavkaytar (2007) states that keeping up with the job and coming to work on time are the main issues that employers focus on. In this context, following up on individuals with intellectual disabilities work and establishing routines is essential. Compliance with working hours, a necessity of regular working life, is a requirement for individuals with intellectual disabilities to have a stable working life. Considering that individuals with intellectual disabilities need lifelong support, their working life becomes meaningful with the placement of the individual and the support provided during the working process (Cavkaytar & Artar, 2019). Therefore, it is necessary to provide support to individuals who are placed in a job in the methods of complying with working hours, starting and leaving the job.

Employers participating in the research stated that individuals with intellectual disabilities have problems planning and adapting to rest periods and hours. Individuals with intellectual disabilities should be supported in planning and adjusting their rest periods, and necessary stimuli should be given. Providing social support by colleagues may contribute to the compliance of individuals with intellectual disabilities with working hours and to planning resting time and sleeping. Artar (2018) listed the social supports offered as motivating the individual with intellectual disability to work, giving advice, keeping an eye on the individual, listening to the individual, and spending free time with the individual. In this sense, individuals with intellectual disabilities can develop during resting hours and other areas with problems if necessary social support is provided.

Employers stated that individuals with intellectual disabilities have problems in harmony and communication with their colleagues. Considering that getting a job, working sustainably, and participating in the social and business environment are the main objectives for individuals with intellectual disabilities (Cavkaytar & Artar, 2019), these individuals need to communicate and be compatible with their friends in the workplace where they are placed. In this sense, job placement should be considered a process, and necessary support should be provided. According to the research, communication, being compatible, and working with a team (Güneş & Akçamete, 2014), are among the features employers look for and are necessary for efficient business life. It is essential to support individuals with intellectual disabilities in these areas after being placed in a job.

The employers stated that they did not have any problems regarding the problems they experienced in focusing on the job and fulfilling the job in terms of liking the job they do. Employers who stated that they did not think that the problems experienced were caused by not being able to enjoy the job reported that they were caused by fatigue or inadequacy. The way for individuals with intellectual disabilities to love their job can be overcome by providing vocational training in line with their interests,

talents, and competencies and placing them in relevant positions. In this sense, vocational education should focus on the ability of individuals with intellectual disabilities to do valuable and productive work (Majid & Razzak, 2015). In addition, as Uçar (2016) stated, increasing the number and variety of workshops can contribute to individuals with intellectual disabilities acquiring a profession suitable for their interests and abilities. In addition, as Bolli et al. (2018) stated in the context, employers are required to participate in three processes.

They mentioned that they have problems cleaning before and after work, using tools and machines cleanly, and keeping the place they work clean, especially for the issues faced by individuals with mental disabilities working in workplaces operating in the food sector. Considering the industry, cleanliness and hygiene are regarded as an essential issue. The study of Ataman et al., (2023 indicates that individuals with intellectual disabilities point out that masks and protective gloves are necessary for hygiene. In this sense, necessary training should be given carefully and in detail in the pre-employment process. Since vocational education focuses on pre-service education and training (Chiang et al., 2022), education on hygiene should be given in the school where the individual attends.

Finally, the employers drew attention to the problems they encountered in knowing the names of the tools and machines used in the workplaces, using them safely, and using new tools and machines. In this sense, employers who stated that they did not use too many technical terms indicated that they had problems until they got used to using the machine or tool, and then they did not encounter many problems. Wehmeyer & Webb (2012) stated that in-service training and continuous support of competencies are required for individuals with intellectual disabilities to start working in a job that suits their interests and competencies and for sustainable business life. For individuals with intellectual disabilities to have a sustainable business life, they should be supported and trained about new machines and tools. It is also imperative for them to use technology and have business skills (Güneş & Akçamete, 2014). The success of individuals with intellectual disabilities in their work depends on their ability to use tools and machines. Another important point for individuals with disabilities is that deciding for himself/herself what he needs (Kösretaş et al., 2022). In this respect, the employment process, which is considered a process, should include continuous monitoring and training.

Based on the results of this research, opinions of employers working with individuals with intellectual disabilities working in different sectors can be obtained for future research. Views of other stakeholders such as families, individuals with intellectual disabilities, and educators can be consulted. Experimental research can be done. Project studies can be done on a national scale. For practical purposes, employers can participate in the preparation process of vocational training content. Employers can be informed about special education. More deterrent sanctions may be imposed on workplaces that do not employ special-needs individuals.

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Zihinsel Yetersizliği Olan Bireylerin İşyerinde Karşılaştıkları Sorunlara İlişkin İşveren Görüşleri

Giriş

Zihinsel yetersizliği olan bireylere bir meslek edindirme sürecinin ilk aşaması mesleki eğitim sürecidir. Meslek eğitim, öğrencilerin belirli bir mesleğe, ticarete veya meslek/meslekler sınıfına özgü bilgi, beceri ve yeterlilikleri kazanmaları için tasarlanmış eğitim programları olarak tanımlanmaktadır (UNESCO, 2012). Mesleki eğitimde hizmet öncesi eğitim ve öğretime odaklanılarak öğrenciler belirli mesleklerde işgücü piyasasının ihtiyaçlarını karşılamaya hazırlanır (Chiang vd., 2022). Bu bağlamda meslek bir mesleki eğitim almayan ve işgücüne kazandırılmayan zihinsel yetersizliği olan bireyler, sosyal ve maddi anlamda bağımsızlıklarını kazanamazlar. Ayrıca toplumda üretici konuma geçemezler. Bu durumun önüne geçebilmenin yolu ise zihinsel yetersizliği olan bireylere mesleki eğitim sağlamak, istihdam etmek ve istihdam süreçlerini takip etmektir.

Bu anlamda mesleki eğitim ile özel gereksinimli bireylerin bağımsız yaşamaları, kendi kendine yeten bir birey olmaları ve toplumla bütünleşmeleri amaçlanmaktadır (Özbey & Diken, 2010). Zihinsel yetersizliği olan bireylerin, toplumla bütünleşmeleri, bağımsız bireyler olarak tüketici konumdan üretici bir konuma geçmeleri için meslek becerilerinin kazandırılması gerekmektedir. Zihinsel yetersizliği olan öğrencilere meslek becerilerinin kazandırılması; bireylere para kazanma, iş birliği içinde çalışma, sosyal ilişkilerini geliştirme fırsatı sağlamaktır. Ayrıca meslek becerilerinin edinimi zihinsel yetersizliği olan bireylere verilen değerin artmasını da sağlamaktadır (Maciag vd., 2000). Bu nedenle zihinsel yetersizliği olan bireylerin bağımsız bir yetişkin olarak toplum ile bütünleşebilmesi için çalışma hayatına katılacak bir meslek edinmeleri önem taşımaktadır. Meslek edinen bu bireyler çeşitli iş yerlerine yerleştirilmekte ve iş hayatına katılmaktadırlar. Bu bağlamda zihinsel yetersizliği olan bireyleri istihdam eden işverenlerin beklentilerinin ve yaşadıkları sorunların detaylı olarak incelenebilmesi için çok sayıda araştırmaya gereksinim duyulmaktadır. Bu gereksinimden hareketle araştırmanın amacı, işe

yerleştirilen zihinsel yetersizliği olan bireylerin işyerinde karşılaştıkları sorunlara ilişkin işveren görüşlerinin neler olduğunu belirlemektir. Bu genel amaç doğrultusunda; işverenlerin, zihinsel yetersizliği olan bireylerin çalışma alışkanlıklarıyla, işe yönelik tutumlarıyla, çalışma arkadaşlarıyla ilişkilerinde yaşadığı sorunlara, işe ilişkin becerilerde yaşadıkları sorunlara, iş ortamında sosyal davranış sergilemede yaşadıkları sorunlara, iletişim becerilerini sergilemede yaşadıkları sorunlara ve yeni iş becerilerini yerine getirmede yaşadıkları sorunlara ilişkin görüşlerine başvurulmuştur.

Yöntem

İşverenlerin zihinsel yetersizliği olan bireylerin iş ortamında yaşadıkları sorunlara ilişkin görüşlerini belirlemek için yapılan bu araştırma nitel araştırma desenlerinden durum çalışması olarak gerçekleştirilmiştir (Creswell, 2013; Glesne, 2015). Bogdan & Biklen (1998), durum çalışmalarında incelenecek birimin bir birey olabileceği gibi bir topluluk da olabileceğini, ayrıca bu kişi veya topluluğun özel bir süreç içindeki durumunun da incelenebileceğini belirtmişlerdir.

Araştırmaya hız ve pratiklik kazandırmak adına katılımcı seçiminde amaçlı örnekleme yöntemlerinden kolay ulaşılabilir durum örneklemesine başvurulmuştur (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). Bu anlamda araştırma Bolu İli şehir merkezinde zihinsel yetersizliği olan bireyleri istihdam etmiş ve araştırmaya gönüllü olarak katılmayı kabul eden 10 işveren ile gerçekleştirilmiştir.

Literatür taraması sonunda araştırmada kullanılacak görüşme soruları belirlenmiş ve araştırmacılar tarafından bir görüşme formu oluşturulmuştur. Görüşme formu oluşturulduktan sonra özel eğitim ve nitel araştırmalar alanından doktora derecesine sahip iki uzmandan görüş alınarak görüşme formuna son şekli verilmiştir. Veri toplamaya geçilmeden önce soruların test etmek amacıyla pilot görüşme gerçekleştirilmiştir. Yapılan pilot görüşme sonunda soruların kolaylıkla anlaşılabilir ve cevaplanabilir olduğu görüldüğü için veri toplama aracında herhangi bir değişiklik yapılmamıştır.

Araştırmanın verileri, nitel veri toplama yöntemlerinden biri olan yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme tekniği ile toplanmıştır. Araştırmaya katılmayı kabul eden işverenlere uygun oldukları gün ve saat belirlenerek görüşme için randevu alınmıştır. Görüşmeler işverenlerin fabrikalarındaki odalarında gerçekleştirilmiştir. Görüşmelerin tamamı araştırmacı tarafından yüz yüze ve bire-bir olarak gerçekleştirilmiştir. Görüşmeler ses kayıt cihazı ile kaydedilmiştir.

Araştırma sonunda elde edilen veriler içerik analizi ile analiz edilmiştir. İçerik analiziyle temel olarak birbirine benzeyen veriler belirli kavramlar ve temalar çerçevesinde bir araya getirilmiştir. Elde edilen verilerin güvenilirliğini sağlamak adına özel eğitim alanında çalışan ve nitel araştırmalar konusunda deneyimi olan bir uzmandan görüş alınmıştır. Araştırmacı ve uzmanın yaptığı kodlamalar karşılaştırılmıştır. Yapılan karşılaştırmada Miles & Huberman'ın (1994) önerdiği [Görüş Birliği/(Görüş Ayrılığı + Görüş Birliği)] X 100 formülü kullanılmıştır. Yapılan hesaplama sonucu kodlayıcılar arası uyum oranı %89 olarak bulunmuştur.

Bulgular

Zihinsel yetersizliği olan bireyleri istihdam eden işverenlerin beklentilerinin ve yaşadıkları sorunların belirlenmesi amacıyla yapılan bu araştırmada 10 işverenle görüşmeler yapılmıştır. İşverenlerden toplanan verilerin analizi sonucunda bulgular altı kategori altında toplanmıştır. Bu kategoriler; vardiya sistemi, dinlenme zamanı, çalışma arkadaşları ile uyum ve iletişim, yaptığı işi sevmeye, hijyen ve temizlik ve işyerinde kullanılan alet ve makinalar şeklindedir.

Araştırmada işverenler zihinsel yetersizliği olan bireylerin vardiya sistemine ayak uydurmada sorunlar yaşadıklarını bundan kaynaklı olarak işe gidiş-geliş saatlerinde sorunlar yaşadıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Bu durum işe başlama ve işi bırakma saatlerini etkilemektedir. Araştırmaya katılan işverenler zihinsel yetersizliği olan bireylerin dinlenme süreleri ve saatleri ile ilgili olarak planlama ve süreye uyum konularında sorunlar yaşadıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Zihinsel yetersizliği olan bireylerin dinlenme sürelerini planlama ve uyma noktasında desteklenmesi ve gerekli uyarıların verilmesi gerekmektedir.

İşverenler zihinsel yetersizliği olan bireylerin çalışma arkadaşları ile uyum ve iletişim konularında sorunlar yaşadıklarını ifade etmişlerdir. İşverenler yaptığı işi sevme noktasında işe odaklanma ve işi yerine getirmede yaşadıkları sorunlara ilişkin bir sorun yaşamadıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Yaşanan sorunların işi sevmemeden kaynaklandığını düşünmediklerini ifade eden işverenler, yorgunluk veya yetersizlikten kaynaklandığını bildirmişlerdir.

Özellikle gıda sektöründe faaliyet gösteren işyerlerinde çalışan zihinsel yetersizliği olan bireylerin iş yaşamında karşıladıkları sorunlara yönelik iş öncesi ve sonrası temizlik, alet ve makinaları temiz kullanma ve çalıştığı yeri temiz tutma konusunda sorunlar yaşadıklarına değinmişlerdir. Sektörel olarak düşünüldüğünde temizlik ve hijyen önemli bir konu olarak değerlendirilmektedir.

İşverenler son olarak iş yerlerinde kullanılan alet ve makinalara yönelik olarak alet ve makinaların ismini bilme, güvenli olarak kullanabilme ve yeni alet ve makinaları kullanmaya yönelik karşılaştıkları sorunlara dikkat çekmişlerdir. Bu anlamda çok fazla teknik terim kullanmadıklarını ifade eden işverenler, makina ya da aleti kullanmaya alışana kadar sorunlar yaşadıklarını daha sonra çok fazla sorunla karşılaşmadıklarını belirtmişlerdir.

Tartışma ve Sonuç

Zihinsel yetersizliği olan bireyleri istihdam eden işverenlerin görüşlerinin incelendiği bu araştırmanın sonunda zengin veriler elde edilmiştir. Elde edilen verilerden ilki işverenler zihinsel yetersizliği olan bireylerin vardiya sistemine ayak uydurmada sorunlar yaşadıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Baran & Cavkaytar (2007) işverenlerin üzerinde durduğu konuların başında işe ayak uydurma ve işe zamanında gelme olduğunu belirtmektedir. Bu bağlamda zihinsel yetersizliği olan bireylerin iş takiplerinin yapılması, rutinlerin oluşturulması oldukça önemlidir. Düzenli bir çalışma hayatının gerekliliği olan mesai saatlerine uyum zihinsel yetersizliği olan bireylerin istikrarlı bir çalışma hayatına sahip olmaları için bir gerekliliktir. Zihinsel yetersizliği olan bireylerin yaşam boyu desteğe gereksinim duydukları göz önüne alındığında çalışma hayatları bireyin işe yerleştirilmesi ve çalışma sürecinde sunulan desteklerle anlamlı hale gelmektedir (Cavkaytar & Artar, 2019).

Çalışma arkadaşlarının sosyal destek sağlaması zihinsel yetersizliği olan bireylerin mesai saatlerine uymasına katkı sağlayabileceği gibi dinlenme süresini planlama ve uyumaya da katkı sağlayabilir. Artar (2018) sunulacak sosyal destekleri zihinsel yetersizliği olan bireyi çalışmak için motive etme, tavsiyede bulunma, göz kulak olma, bireyi dinleme ve bireyle serbest zaman geçirme konularında destek olarak sıralamıştır. Bu anlamda zihinsel yetersizliği olan bireyler, gerekli sosyal destekler sağlanırsa dinlenme saatleri ve diğer sorun yaşadığı alanlarda gelişim gösterebilir.

Zihinsel yetersizliği olan bireyler için işe girmek, girdikleri işte sürdürülebilir şekilde çalışma ve iş ortamındaki sosyal çevreye katılım temel amaç olarak (Cavkaytar & Artar, 2019) düşünüldüğünde bu bireylerin yerleştirildikleri iş ortamındaki arkadaşları ile iletişim kurması ve uyumlu olması

gerekmektedir. Bu anlamda işe yerleştirme bir süreç olarak ele alınmalı ve süreç içerisinde gerekli destekler sağlanmalıdır. Yapılan araştırmalara göre işverenlerin aradığı özellikler arasında yer alan iletişim, uyumlu olma, ekip ile çalışma (Güneş & Akçamete, 2014) verimli bir iş hayatı için bir gerekliliktir. Bu anlamda mesleki eğitim zihinsel yetersizliği olan bireylerin yararlı ve üretken iş yapma yeteneklerine odaklanmalıdır (Majid & Razzak, 2015).

Özellikle gıda sektöründe faaliyet gösteren işverenler temizlik, alet ve makinaları temiz kullanma ve çalıştığı yeri temiz tutma konularına dikkat çekmişlerdir. Bu anlamda gerekli eğitimlerin iş öncesi süreçte dikkatli ve detaylı bir şekilde verilmelidir. Mesleki eğitimin hizmet öncesi eğitim ve öğretime odaklanıldığı düşünüldüğünde (Chiang vd., 2022) hijyen konusundaki eğitimin bireyin devam ettiği okulda verilmesi gerekmektedir.

Wehmeyer & Webb (2012) zihinsel yetersizliği olan bireylerin ilgi ve yeterliklerine uygun işte çalışmaya başlamasının ve iş yaşamının sürdürülebilir olması için hizmet içi eğitimler ve sürekli olarak yeterliklerin desteklenmesi gerektiğini belirtmişlerdir. Zihinsel yetersizliği olan bireylerin sürdürülebilir bir iş yaşamının olması için yeni makine ve aletler hakkında desteklenmesi ve eğitimler verilmesi gerekmektedir. Ayrıca teknolojiyi kullanma ve iş becerilerine sahip olmaları da oldukça önemlidir (Güneş & Akçamete, 2014). Zihinsel yetersizliği olan bireylerin çalıştıkları işte başarılı olmaları alet ve makinaları kullanma yeterliliklerine bağlıdır. Bu yönüyle bir süreç olarak ele alınan istihdam süreci sürekli izleme ve eğitimi kapsamalıdır.

Öneriler

Bu araştırmanın sonucundan hareketle ileri araştırmalara yönelik olarak; farklı sektörlerde çalışan zihinsel yetersizliği olan bireylerle çalışan işverenlerin görüşleri alınabilir. Aileler, zihinsel yetersizliği olan bireyler, eğitimciler gibi diğer paydaşların görüşlerine başvurulabilir. Deneysel araştırmalar yapılabilir. Ulusal çapta proje çalışmaları yapılabilir. Uygulamaya yönelik ise işverenlerin mesleki eğitim içeriklerinin hazırlanma sürecine katılımları sağlanabilir. İşverenler özel eğitim konusunda bilgilendirilebilir. Özel gereksinimli bireyleri istihdam etmeyen işyerlerine daha caydırıcı yaptırımlarda bulunulabilir.