

The Role of Job Empowerment in the High School Vocational Curriculum for the Trainable Mentally Retarded Male Students in Iran

*Masoumeh Sadat Abtahi, Maryam SeifNaraghi,
Ali Shariatmadari and Ezatolah Naderi*

Department of Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University (IAU), Tehran, Iran

Abstract: The main purpose of this research is, "The role of job empowerment skill in the high school vocational system for the trainable mentally retarded male students in Iran" and in order to achieve this goal, this research has focused on the effects of each curriculum element (objective, content, time and evaluation procedure) on each element of job empowerment skill (general and social skills, self-management, economical self-sufficiency and professional rehabilitation). According to the results accessed, by means of a questionnaire, the two groups of education specialists and curriculum development experts have considered the curriculum to have a high capacity and efficiency to enhance the quintuple skills of (general and social skills, self-management, economical self-sufficiency and professional rehabilitation). Thus helping the intellectually disabled students in Iran to acquire job empowerment skill, but the other two groups, the teachers and employers, believed it lacks enough competence and efficiency to do so. The results have been illustrated in a model developed by the researcher an has been brought at the end of the article.

Key words: Job empowerment skill • High school vocational education • Trainable mentally retarded student and curriculum

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of educating the trainable mentally-retarded students is to prepare them for life and help them to learn skills in order to lead an independent or the least dependent life [1-4]. Since, a trainable mentally retarded student is the one whose intelligence is between 50/55 to almost 70 according to the American Association on mental retardation (AAMR) and studies in exceptional schools [5, 6]. So, the main necessity of the curriculum for this group of people is to provide them with an opportunity to activate their own talents for their own protection and to prevent any dissatisfaction regarding their disability in keeping their work comparing to the able ones [7-9]. The objectives of the curriculum are to train them to find a job and to keep their future occupation [10, 3, 11, 12]. Due to the fact that these students cannot succeed or qualify to do well in their studies, many believe that the best curriculum for them will be the vocational courses [13]. However, it should be emphasized that the experts in trainable retarded

curriculum development should be able to instill insight into the students' minds about their future jobs as well as educating them the basic skills and modifying the curriculum to help them towards future employment [14-17]. For this purpose, researchers have come up with this idea that instead of teaching them special jobs, it is much better to include necessary skills in the curriculum so as to enable them to hold semi-professional or non-professional jobs in the future [18-20].

The curriculum comprises of strategies that help organize the task of teaching-learning processes and includes three main questions: why should they be educated (objective)? How should they be educated (teaching strategies) and how can their learning progress be assessed (evaluation)? [21]. Hence, curriculum development is an activity that determines objectives, teaching strategies and the evaluation in the teaching-learning process(p,8).It should be pointed out that education today is not temporary for the mentally retarded students but a permanent task which should cover an individual's life span from birth to death [5, 22, 20, 23].

Since, a trainable mentally retarded person is in need of a variety of education and rehabilitation in his life, a short-term approach to vocational education will cause a serious damage to the future employment of this group of individuals. In order to meet the objectives of the curriculum and change it into an efficient program, an effective and thorough educational curriculum development together with consistent plans and strategies should be developed, administered and supervised which altogether will yield a job consistency and a relatively stable conditions to help the individual to find a job and to maintain it so that he could become self-sufficient [11, 24, 25]. Education of job empowerment will result in the individual's adaptation to the environment, boosting the sense of cooperation with others, finding a decent job, maintaining the job, job security and an independent life of these mentally retarded people [16, 26, 20]. So, hereby we can inquire how much attention has been paid to job empowerment in the current curriculum of career training of these mentally retarded students in Iran and to what extent this attention is to be paid?

Statement of the Problem and Review of Literature:

Individual and social skills Learning as well as life adaptability has been a major part of a mentally retarded person's life, which could emerge in different forms in different periods of their lives [25, 4]. By studying the behavior disorder and social deviation, psychologists have come up with the idea that most of the disorders and damages occurred to these mentally retarded people has rooted in their 'self' and 'self situation' analysis [27]. Therefore, in order to prevent these people from isolation, they ought to be educated how to deal with the difficulties in life. Job empowerment is a cognitive, emotional and practical ability and is required in order for the trainable mentally retarded people to reach a sense of achievement and pleasure in their everyday life [28]. According to [27], job empowerment is "establishing a suitable and effective inter-personal relation, carrying out one's responsibility without asking help from the others, deciding correctly, handling the challenges without committing any harm to oneself or to the others"(p,16). Job empowerment is based on this principle that a trainable mentally retarded person deserves to be rehabilitated and he or she needs to defend not only himself/herself but also his/her interests against any harsh situations in life [22, 29, 30, 28]. In sum, it could be said that 'job empowerment' refers to those sorts of activities and skills that lead to positive and flexible

behavior and bring about a sense of achievement, pleasure in one's personal life and end in job finding job satisfaction and keeping their jobs in his/her social life [15, 18, 22]. These capabilities will enable these trainable mentally retarded graduates to get on with themselves, others and the whole society well. These abilities also refer to skills and behaviors that allow these people to accept their social roles and responsibilities and to confront everyday expectations, requirements and difficulties efficiently without committing any harm to themselves or to the others and be successful in their inter-personal relationships [31, 32, 33, 34, 12].

The Common Aspect of Different Understandings of 'Job Empowerment' Is to Emphasize the Following

Subjects: Social skills, dealing with stress and negative excitements, decision making, self controlling, self asserting, occupational and professional awareness, self-managing and personal and economical self sufficiency skills [35, 36, 12].

Based on recent studies, there is a great distance between the curriculum and the real work environment [37, 38, 25, 21]. Moreover, having passed the high school, most trainable mentally retarded people have been considered 'inactive' in the society [9]. Job success depends on the skills one has already learned in schools. These skills training should continue until the person is regarded as a 'grown-up' in the society [10] It should be taken into account that these trainable mentally retarded people will face considerable difficulty in career development and job empowerment as well as inadaptability to the social environment. [3, 39, 40]. The combination of the proper career training with particular curriculum for these mentally retarded people can help the students to be informed about the available occupations and the most and the least wanted occupations. The addition of career training to the curriculum makes it possible that the curriculum process leads to an activity which prevents students from dropping out and involves the students more so that the students can gain job empowerment [41, 42].

Studies have pointed out that a smart career education program which takes into account social needs and interests has been successful in increasing the "endangered" [43] students' competence, improving other dimensions such as regular class attendance, improving the marks, improving self belief and belief in others and enhancing the student's realization of the future job opportunities.

By connecting education with work and life, curriculum development experts can take the first step in helping these students to stay in schools willingly and not to leave schools [44, 27] It is crystal clear that job empowerment will lead to a self-sufficiency and what is important here is that these people gain a job empowerment to find a job, keep one's job, succeed, have an independent life in society and adapt themselves to the social environment. [45, 46, 25]. By incorporating proper career education in curriculum for each group of the mentally retarded students, curriculum development experts could help enhancing the student's interest in their everyday life activities and hence, help them deal with the schedule efficiently [35, 47, 3, 21, 48].

[28], in his explanation of job empowerment, called those employees 'potent' who holds technical skills and abilities, make use of their general and professional knowledge in their real work environment, possess key skills and competency and own a combination of cognitive and semi-cognitive features (p,12). [25], considered job empowerment as an additive combination of qualities and personal qualifications, technical skills and key skills and competency (p, 85). [49] has divided the job empowerment dimensions into three categories including academic skills, self- management skills and teamwork skills (p,23). [27, 28], [50, 51], have rendered different categories for job empowerment skills:

- Personal competency: mathematics, reading and writing, communicative skills
- Building up confidence: ethics and self-management, professional growth and accountability
- Social skills: abilities in organizing affairs, negotiation ability and teamwork

With reference to above-mentioned items and according to [49] we can say: "job empowerment" of the trainable mentally retarded students involves the institutionalization of knowledge (what a person knows), skills (what a person can do according to his/her knowledge) and viewpoint (how a person can make use of his /her skills in life). These skills help these trainable mentally retarded people to receive positive feedback in social environments, avoid confronting negative feedback and establish the inter-personal relations more efficiently [28, 51, 23, 49].

The secretariat of the supreme council of Education Ministry and the Education Organization for exceptional Students in Iran has announced the objectives for the trainable mentally retarded students who are ready to start

working as ' achievement of personal, economic self-sufficiency, enhancement job motivation and learning job skills by focusing on vocational rehabilitation. Although the Education Organization for exceptional Students in Iran has endeavored to help these students have a sound, healthy and adaptable life, this group has faced difficulty in learning the standards of personal self-sufficiency skills.

Studies of vocational skills have pointed out that practically the goal of job empowerment has not been fully approved by the public and these students' achievement in learning job empowerment has failed or has been trifling [31, 45, 11, 15, 23, 49].

[21, 22][29][5] and [28], Researches have illustrated that the goal of social and economical independence by relying only on theoretical education cannot be reached especially the current education for exceptional students. But, a practical and skill-oriented education is necessary to account for a mentally retarded student's requirement as a member of the society. [52] have reached this conclusion that although career training is indeed a good idea; a high school vocational curriculum is in need of more vocational richness in order to arouse students' interest in skills learning. [27] and [46] have reached this idea that more vocational enrichment in the content of high school vocational curriculum will help the retarded students to improve their daily skills in life. Researches conducted so far in Iran have emphasized the enrichment of the content of the curriculum and vocational, applied and practical education for the trainable mentally retarded students. With reference to previously mentioned issues, this research is going to clarify to what extent the high school vocational curriculum in Iran has been able to help students achieve Job empowerment.

Objectives and Questions: The main objective of this research is "the Role of job empowerment in the high school vocational curriculum for the trainable mentally retarded male students" and three questions have been posed:

- To what extent should the curriculum for the trainable mentally retarded students consider the job empowerment?
- To what extent is the curriculum for the mentally retarded students considering the job empowerment for the time being?
- How different is the current curriculum for the mentally retarded students from the desired condition regarding the job empowerment issue?

The Methodology: The statistics population of the research is 45 of all the education specialists of Education Organization for the exceptional Students, all the curriculum planning experts in the high school vocational education (100 people), the whole group of teachers serving in high school vocational education in Qazvin Province (120 people) and the 15 employers. In order to get the statistics sample in the first three groups, the Cochran Test has been used and the simple random sample method has been used for the statistics sample of the employers. Accordingly, the sample consists of 80 curriculum planning experts, 40 education specialists from the Education Organization for the exceptional Students, 92 teachers and 15 employers. And simple random sampling has been used due to the limited number of vocational schools.

In order to collect the needed data, a questionnaire has been used as well as (library studies). This structured questionnaire includes 44 features of curriculum elements (objective, content, teaching strategies, evaluation procedures, time and environment) related to the high school vocational education. And it analyzes the job empowerment criteria (recognizing and evaluating personal potentials, realizing personal objectives, work commitment and work morals and self-execution of tasks, entrepreneurship abilities, keeping a job and social compatibility and individual relationships). Furthermore, this closed questionnaire (made by the researcher) and its scoring criterion is (0-10) which seeks to analyze the current curriculums for the trainable mentally retarded students and their desirability from the viewpoints of the four groups of education specialists, curriculum planning experts, teachers and employers.

The reliability test is based on Cronbach's Alpha ($=0/95$) and its validity is based on the scholars' opinions in the filed of retarded children psychology and curriculum development. This has been confirmed by them and they are satisfied with it.

In the next stage, for better use of the researcher from the selected groups' data and considering all opinions a structured interview has been carried out on the four groups. Also as this research seeks to determine the importance of job empowerment in trainable mentally retarded students' curriculum, at high school vocational level, considering the nature and objectives of the research, it can be classified as field researches and in order to analyze the collected data descriptive and

inferential statistics have been used. In descriptive analysis, frequency, percentage and cumulative percentage, mean and etc. have been used and in the inferential analysis, (ANOVA) and (LSD) incidental tests have been used.

Findings and Conclusions: How far should the trainable mentally retarded students' curriculum consider job empowerment skills?

The trainable mentally retarded students' curriculum, from the view point of all studied groups, should seriously consider the job empowerment skills. This must be an all- inclusive attention to each curriculum element. From a quantitative perspective, we can say that the studied groups believe that this issue is worth 94% in the desired curriculum. Although from their point of view there can be differences in the elements of the curriculum, in general the content of the curriculum must pay the greatest attention to job empowerment skill.

In general, the studied groups believe that in a desired situation of the curriculum for the trainable mentally retarded students, job empowerment skill should have 94% in the objectives, 99% in the content, 98% in the teaching strategies, 98% in evaluation, 98% in time and 98% in the environment (Table 1). From this perspective the studied groups all hold similar attitudes and they all have considered the above priorities in the amount of attention that each curriculum element should pay to the improvement of job empowerment skill as mentioned before, but the importance of the topic is not the same with them all (Table 2).

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) test shows that there is a significant difference between the four groups' opinions including the educational specialists, curriculum development experts, teachers and employers considering the curriculum attention paid to the job empowerment skill ($p=0.000$, $df=223$, $F=55.7$).

The incidental results of (LSD) show that the difference in ideas is significant. That is, the ideas of the education specialists, curriculum development experts, teachers and employers are different from each other on the attention of the curriculum needed to be paid to the job empowerment skill. There is also a difference in each element of curriculum; that is, environment, time, evaluation procedures, teaching strategies, content and objective.

Table 1: Statistics index of curriculum elements in job empowerment skill in desired condition:

People	Index	Curricular elements of job empowerment skill in desired condition					
		Environment	Time	Evaluation Procedures	Teaching Strategies	Content	Objectives
Education Specialists	Min	9.78	9.56	9.67	9.33	9.56	9.33
	Max	10	10	10	10	10	10
	Mid	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	9.78
	Mean	9.94	9.90	9.92	9.89	9.91	9.81
	Variance	0.09	0.14	0.13	0.18	0.16	0.16
Curriculum Planning Experts	Min	9.56	9.44	9.56	9.56	9.56	9.44
	Max	10	10	10	10	10	10
	Mid	10	10	10	9/89	9/89	9/83
	Mean	9.90	9.90	9.90	9.90	9.90	9.82
	Variance	0.13	0.15	0.13	0.12	0.12	0.15
Teachers	Min	9.11	9.11	9.11	9.33	9.44	8.56
	Max	10	10	10	10	10	9/44
	Mid	9.67	9.78	9.78	9.78	9.78	9.00
	Mean	9.72	9.75	9.72	9.77	9.78	9.03
	Variance	0.21	0.22	0.22	0.18	0.17	0.18
Employers	Min	9.22	9.33	9.33	9.44	9.44	8.67
	Max	10	10	10	10	10	9/33
	Mid	9.78	9.78	9.78	9.78	9.78	9.00
	Mean	9.72	9.73	9.76	9.79	9.80	8.97
	Variance	0.28	0.25	0.21	0.21	0.19	0.20
Total	Min	9.11	9.11	9.11	9.33	9.44	8.56
	Max	10	10	10	10	10	10
	Mid	9.89	9.89	9.89	9.89	9.89	9.56
	Mean	9.82	9.83	9.82	9.84	9.85	9.44
	Variance	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.17	0.17	0.43

Table 2: Different ideas of the studied groups regarding the importance of the curriculum attention towards the job empowerment skill (desired condition)

The Effect of the curriculum elements on the skills	Resource Change	SS	MS	DF	F	P
Environment	Between group	2.0	0.7	3	21.2	0.000
	Within group	7.0	0.0	223		
	Sum	9.0		226		
Time	Between group	1.3	0.4	3	13.1	0.000
	Within group	7.6	0.0	223		
	Sum	8.9		226		
Evaluation Procedures	Between group	1.9	0.6	3	19.2	0.000
	Within group	7.2	0.0	223		
	Sum	9.0		226		
Teaching Strategies	Between group	0.9	0.3	3	11.0	0.000
	Within group	6.0	0.0	223		
	Sum	6.8		226		
Content	Between group	0.9	0.3	3	12.2	0.000
	Within group	5.3	0.0	223		
	Sum	6.2		226		
Objectives	Between group	35.6	11.9	3	421.6	0.000
	Within group	6.3	0.0	223		
	Sum	41.9		226		
Total	Between group	3.8	1.3	3	55.7	0.000
	Within group	5.1	0.0	223		
	Sum	8.9		226		

Table 3: The incidental results (LSD) based on the four groups' opinions regarding the curriculum attention towards the enhancement of job empowerment skill (in a desired condition)

The Effect of the curriculum elements on the skills		Education specialists	Curriculum Planning Experts	Teachers	Employers
Environment	Education specialists	-	0.04	0.21	0.22
	Curriculum Planning Experts	-	-	0.17	0.18
	Teachers	-	-	-	0.01
	Employers	-	-	-	-
Time	Education specialists	-	0.00	0.15	0.17
	Curriculum Planning Experts	-	-	0.15	0.17
	Teachers	-	-	-	0.02
	Employers	-	-	-	-
Evaluation Procedures	Education specialists	-	0.02	0.20	0.16
	Curriculum Planning Experts	-	-	0.18	0.13
	Teachers	-	-	-	-0.04
	Employers	-	-	-	-
Teaching Strategies	Education specialists	-	-0.01	0.12	0.10
	Curriculum Planning Experts	-	-	0.13	0.11
	Teachers	-	-	-	-0.02
	Employers	-	-	-	-
Content	Education specialists	-	0.01	0.13	0.11
	Curriculum Planning Experts	-	-	0.12	0.10
	Teachers	-	-	-	0.02
	Employers	-	-	-	-
Objectives	Education specialists	-	-0.01	0.78	0.84
	Curriculum Planning Experts	-	-	0.79	0.84
	Teachers	-	-	-	0.06
	Employers	-	-	-	-
Total	Education specialists	-	0.01	0.27	0.26
	Curriculum Planning Experts	-	-	0.26	0.26
	Teachers	-	-	-	0.00
	Employers	-	-	-	-

Table 4: The statistics index of the curriculum elements for job empowerment skill in the current situation:

Person	Index	Curricular elements of job empowerment skill in current condition					
		Environment	Time	Evaluation Procedures	Teaching Strategies	Content	Objectives
Education specialists	Min	7.56	8.11	7.89	7.89	8.00	8.11
	Max	10	10	10	10	10	10
	Mid	9.22	9.33	9.39	9.44	9.44	9.39
	Mean	9.26	9.33	9.35	9.39	9.34	9.34
	Variance	0.61	0.49	0.54	0.51	0.49	0.51
Curriculum Planning Experts	Min	7.67	7.89	8.00	7.78	7.89	8.00
	Max	10.00	9.44	9.33	9.56	10.00	9.89
	Mid	9.00	8.78	8.67	8.67	8.89	8.94
	Mean	8.95	8.75	8.70	8.73	8.79	8.95
	Variance	0.51	0.42	0.35	0.36	0.44	0.42
Teachers	Min	0.56	0.56	0.22	0.22	0.22	1.44
	Max	3.67	3.44	3.33	3.00	2.89	4.44
	Mid	2.11	1.83	1.56	1.44	1.78	3.00
	Mean	2.10	1.92	1.61	1.44	1.53	2.92
	Variance	0.76	0.72	0.72	0.70	0.73	0.66
Employers	Min	0.67	0.67	0.78	0.56	0.44	1.33
	Max	1.89	1.67	1.56	1.67	2.00	2.89
	Mid	1.44	1.11	1.22	1.22	1.11	2.33
	Mean	1.27	1.16	1.23	1.12	1.05	2.18
	Variance	0.38	0.33	0.24	0.35	0.43	0.53
Total	Min	0.56	0.56	0.22	0.22	0.22	1.33
	Max	10	10	10	10	10	10
	Mid	7.67	8.00	8.11	8.22	8.00	8.11
	Mean	5.72	5.58	5.45	5.39	5.43	6.13
	Variance	3.60	3.62	3.73	3.83	3.81	3.19

Table 5: Different ideas of the studied groups regarding the importance of the curriculum attention towards the job empowerment skill (current situation)

The Effect of the curriculum elements on the skills	Resource Change	SS	MS	DF	F	P
Environment	Between group	2842.1	947.4	3	2358.2	0.000
	Within group	89.6	0.4	223		
	Sum	2931.7		226		
Time	Between group	2895.1	965.0	3	2965.2	0.000
	Within group	72.6	0.3	223		
	Sum	2967.7		226		
Evaluation Procedures	Between group	3080.7	1026.9	3	3332.3	0.000
	Within group	68.7	0.3	223		
	Sum	3149.4		226		
Teaching Strategies	Between group	3239.9	1080.0	3	3583.1	0.000
	Within group	67.2	0.3	223		
	Sum	3307.1		226		
Content	Between group	3204.5	1068.2	3	3181.4	0.000
	Within group	74.9	0.3	223		
	Sum	3279.4		226		
Objectives	Between group	2226.7	742.2	3	2456.2	0.000
	Within group	67.4	0.3	223		
	Sum	2294.1		226		
Total	Between group	2903.1	967.7	3	4324.6	0.000
	Within group	49.9	0.2	223		
	Sum	2953.0		226		

Table 6: The incidental results (LSD) based on the four groups' opinions regarding the curriculum attention towards the enhancement of job empowerment skill (in the current situation).

The Effect of the curriculum elements on the skills	Education specialists	Curriculum Planning Experts	Teachers	Employers
Environment	Education specialists	0.31	7.16	8.00
	Curriculum Planning Experts	-	6.85	7.69
	Teachers	-	-	0.83
	Employers	-	-	-
Time	Education specialists	0.57	7.41	8.16
	Curriculum Planning Experts	-	6.84	7.59
	Teachers	-	-	0.75
	Employers	-	-	-
Evaluation Procedures	Education specialists	0.65	7.75	8.12
	Curriculum Planning Experts	-	7.09	7.47
	Teachers	-	-	0.38
	Employers	-	-	-
Teaching Strategies	Education specialists	0.65	7.94	8.27
	Curriculum Planning Experts	-	7.29	7.61
	Teachers	-	-	0.32
	Employers	-	-	-
Content	Education specialists	0.55	7.82	8.29
	Curriculum Planning Experts	-	7.26	7.74
	Teachers	-	-	0.48
	Employers	-	-	-
Objectives	Education specialists	0.39	6.41	7.16
	Curriculum Planning Experts	-	6.02	6.77
	Teachers	-	-	0.75
	Employers	-	-	-
Total	Education specialists	0.52	7.42	8.00
	Curriculum Planning Experts	-	6.89	7.48
	Teachers	-	-	0.58
	Employers	-	-	-

Table 7: The T-Test for the job empowerment skill (current condition in contrast with the desired situation):

The Effect of the curriculum elements on the skills		Education specialists	Curriculum Planning Experts	Teachers	Employers	Total
Environment	Current mean	9.26	8.95	2.10	1.27	5.72
	Desired mean	9.94	9.90	9.72	9.72	9.82
	t	7.549	17.931	88.884	74.161	47.13
	df	39	79	91	14	226
	p	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Time	Current mean	9.33	8.75	1.92	1.16	5.58
	Desired mean	9.90	9.90	9.75	9.73	9.83
	t	8.116	26.12	97.982	98.901	57.78
	df	39	79	91	14	226
	p	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Evaluation Procedures	Current mean	9.35	8.70	1.61	1.23	5.45
	Desired mean	9.92	9.90	9.72	9.76	9.82
	t	7.367	31.274	107.539	136.58	70.69
	df	39	79	91	14	226
	p	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Teaching Strategies	Current mean	9.39	8.73	1.44	1.12	5.39
	Desired mean	9.89	9.90	9.77	9.79	9.84
	t	6.912	29.364	111.116	95.295	60.67
	df	39	79	91	14	226
	p	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Content	Current mean	9.34	8.79	1.53	1.05	5.43
	Desired mean	9.91	9.90	9.78	9.80	9.85
	t	7.572	25.248	105.973	67.356	51.54
	df	39	79	91	14	226
	p	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Objectives	Current mean	9.34	8.95	2.92	2.18	6.13
	Desired mean	9.81	9.82	9.03	8.97	9.44
	t	5.463	20.73	98.624	48.206	43.26
	df	39	79	91	14	226
	p	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Total	Current mean	56.01	52.88	11.52	8.01	33.7
	Desired mean	59.37	59.32	57.77	57.78	58.9
	t	7.49	40.338	120.118	99.583	66.88
	df	39	79	91	14	226
	p	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

How Far Is the Curriculum for the Trainable Mentally Retarded Students in High School Vocational Education Considering the Job Empowerment Skill?: The curriculum for the trainable mentally retarded students according to all the studied groups is not paying enough attention to the job empowerment skill. This lack of attention is shown in all the elements of curriculum planning. On a quantitative basis, it could be noticed that the studied groups believe that the value of improving job empowerment skill of the current curriculum is 56%.

Although from their perspective there could be differences between curriculum elements, in general, curriculum objectives are paying the greatest attention to the job empowerment skill.

In general, the studied groups believe that in the current situation, job empowerment skill should have 61% in the objectives, 54% in the content, 54% in the teaching strategies, 55% in evaluation procedures, 56% in time and 57% in the environment (Table 4). From this perspective the studied groups all don't hold similar attitudes and they have considered different priorities in the amount of attention that each curriculum element should pay to the improvement of job empowerment skill as mentioned before and the importance of the topic is not the same with them all. (Table 5).

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) test shows that there is significant difference between the four groups' opinions including the educational specialists, curriculum development experts, teachers and employers considering

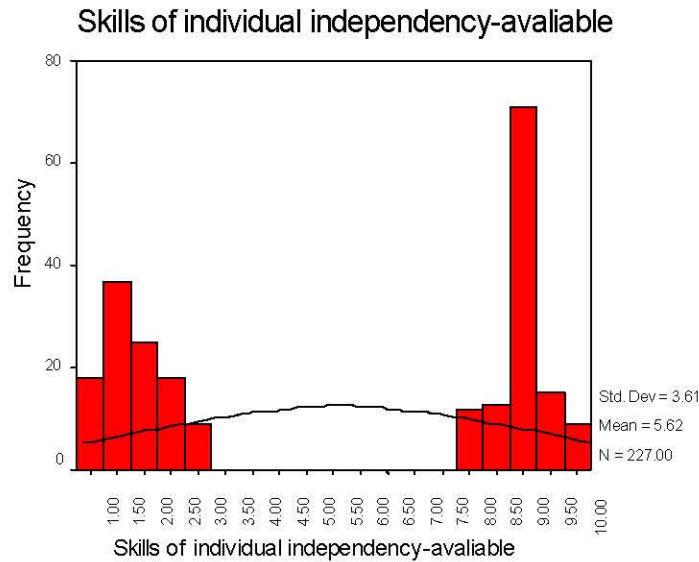


Fig. 1: The bar chart of the general indexes of job empowerment skill (current situation)

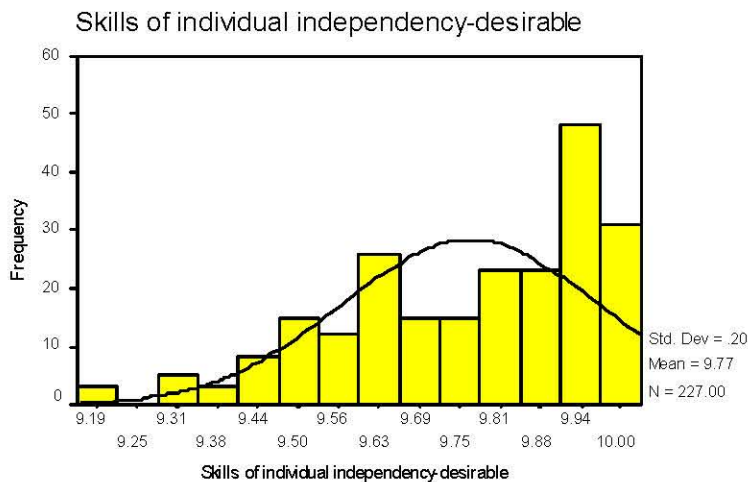


Fig. 2: The bar chart of the general indexes of job empowerment skill (desired situation)

the current curriculum attention needed to be paid to the job empowerment skill ($p=0.000$, $df=223$, $F=4324/6$). Besides, the tests carried out show that there is significant difference between the four groups' opinions about the current curriculum elements; that is, objectives, content, evaluation procedures, time and environment.

The incidental results of (LSD) show that the difference in ideas is significant. That is, the ideas of the educational specialists, curriculum development experts, teachers and employers are different from each other on the current curriculum attention needed to be paid to the job empowerment skill. There is also difference in each element of the curriculum; that is, environment, time, evaluation procedures, teaching strategies content and objective.

How different is the current curriculum for the trainable mentally retarded students from the ideal or desired condition regarding the job empowerment skill?

The basis for determining the rate of desirability of the current curriculum has been its adaptability with the desired one. On this basis, the adaptability of the two curriculums must be considered. Here the statistics test of the mean comparison (T-Test) has been used. To perform the test first the premises were analyzed and then the test was carried out. The results have shown that in the whole curriculum and in each element of the curriculum, there is a difference between the current and the desired conditions. (Table 7)

Despite this, it should be emphasized that the ideas of the four groups under study have been similar in

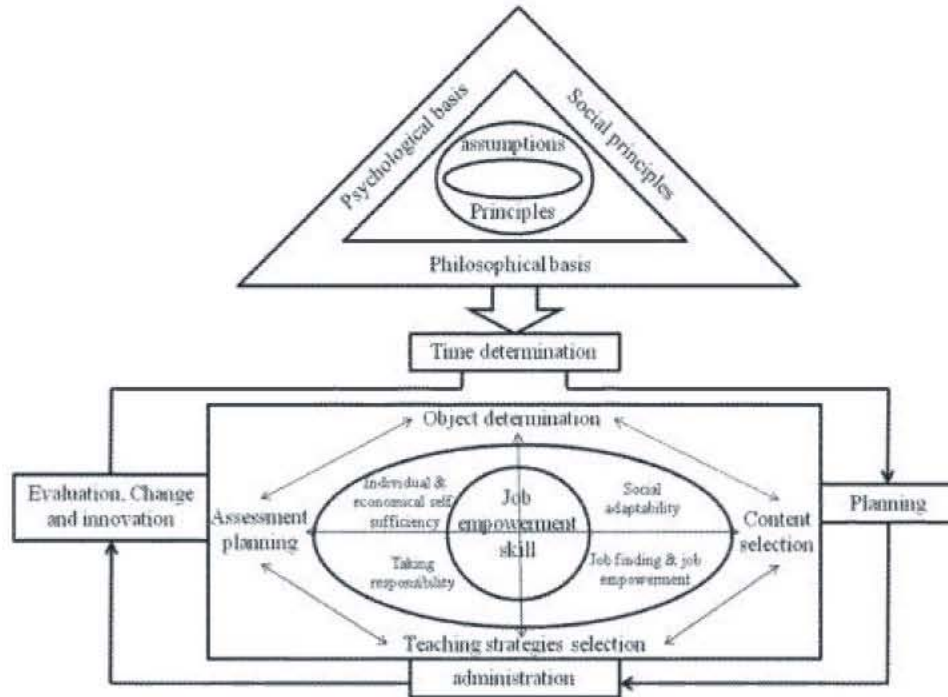


Fig 3: a theoretical educational model for high school vocational system

relation to the desired situation. (Figure 1). But in the report of the current situation, these groups had different ideas (Figure 2). The groups of the education specialists and curriculum planning experts believe that the current curriculum had paid enough attention to the job empowerment skill, whereas the other groups of teachers and employers hold different ideas and state that this attention has not been enough (Figure 1).

CONCLUSION

In the job empowerment skill education, the four groups of the educational specialists, curriculum development experts, teachers and employers believe that there is a great difference between what the current curriculum has acquired (56/1 %) and what they have already expected to acquire (98.1 %) in such a way that the acquired score for the curriculum 33.7 and the expected score was 58.9 and the statistics test has illustrated that their difference is significant. ($p=0/000, df=226, t=66/88$)

The same is true for each element of the curriculum. Objectives in the current situation receive 6.13, content 5.43, teaching strategies 5.39, evaluation procedures 5.45, time 5.58 and the environment receive 5.72 out of 10 and the statistics tests show that the achievement of

curriculum is significantly different from what the four groups have expected to get. (Table 3)

Education Specialists and curriculum planning experts have reported the current situation of the curriculum regarding the job empowerment skill much better than the teachers and employers. The first group of education specialists and curriculum planning experts believe that the curriculum score is 90.74%, whereas the second group of teachers and employers claim it to be 61.2%. Those employers who have hired the trainable mentally retarded graduates have reported the lowest score, while the education specialists have reported the highest score for the current curriculum.

Therefore, from the point of view of employers, education specialists, teachers and curriculum planning experts, the high school vocational curriculum has achieved 56.1% of what was expected from it but failed to meet the four groups' expectations. At the same time, clearly the groups of curriculum planning experts and education specialists have considered the current curriculum to have a high capacity to improve job empowerment skill but the other two groups believed it lacks enough capacity to do so not only in the whole curriculum, but also in every element of it (environment, time, evaluation procedures, teaching strategies, content and objective).

Trainable mentally retarded students' curriculum in Iran has been progressing and undergoing improvement over the past few years. Since the start of this process, the quantitative increase of the coverage of vocational education and eventually the changes and evolutions in these courses as well as founding of pre-vocational education and high-school vocational education indicate valuable ideas for the students with special needs. However, being content and happy with the current situation and ignoring lacks and shortcomings of career education in Iran can cause a setback to the current situation. "We must remember that trainable mentally retarded students show greater problems in compatibility inabilities in their work environment" [53, 54]. The viewpoints of curriculum development experts, education specialists, teachers and employers can be accounted as an effective factor in improving this education. It should be added that education especially for those with special requirements is a coherent and consistent issue. In educational systems and the learning-teaching process, the different educational factors are not separated from one another and we can not assign some experts to deal with the case and prevent others from education. (We cannot assume that some people are helpful in education and some are not)

It is deduced from the research questions that in the administrating the curriculum, it is necessary for both the planners (curriculum development experts and education specialists) and the administrators (teachers and employers) to make the best use of scientific methods and strategies to enhance their affecting roles and this happens when de-centralization method is emphasized in our educational system (decentralized system of curriculum planning). It is concluded that the education for exceptional students in Iran has done poorly in acquainting the students with job empowerment skill. Although this situation is not satisfactory and fails to help the mentally retarded students run an independent life, these results are coherent with the outcomes gained by [49], [11], [15], [22] and [28] in their studies. The job empowerment skill which helps the trainable mentally retarded students to communicate efficiently is a component of emotional intelligence that affects the interaction of the individual with him himself and the others [52, 56-59] It is crystal clear that ignoring the emotional intelligence in the educational system of these mentally retarded students as well as their social and cultural conditions are one of the reasons for the lack of job empowerment skill among these retarded students in Iran.

Results have shown that there is no congruity between viewpoints of teachers and employers with

education specialists and the curriculum development experts regarding the incorporation of job empowerment skill in the curriculum. And unlike the education specialists and curriculum development experts, the teachers and employers believe that the curriculum elements in high school vocational system have paid little attention to job empowerment skill. The significant reasons are as follows:

Teachers are among the main administrators of the educational system and based on their experience and observations of these student's requirements, they are fully aware of the necessity of enrichment of the theoretical subjects together with vocational ones for the trainable mentally retarded students in the society and are dissatisfied with the amount of attention of the curriculum paid to these vocational skills. These results are in harmony with [24], [4], [55], [25] and [18]. findings and the employers hiring these trainable mentally retarded graduates are also discontented with the educational system. One of the reasons why these students fail to acquire public knowledge and skills is the current traditional learning-teaching models and ignoring the social learning models in our educational system.

According to the curriculum development experts and education specialists, the findings have shown that the curriculum has attempted to stabilize the job empowerment skill, while teachers and employers believe that this curriculum has paid little attention to stabilizing the job empowerment skill. The possible reasons are:

Teachers as well as the employers are in direct contact with the parents and are much more aware of the students' daily activities while studying and after their graduation than the other two groups. Teachers and employers are dissatisfied with the trifle variety in the vocational education and career training. These results are in line with the findings of [60], [28], [36], [17], [51-52].

The results have shown that there is a significant difference between education specialists and curriculum development experts' viewpoints and the points of view of teachers and employers.

The courses based on practice and repetition, the emphasis on theoretical courses and neglecting the individual's difference in our educational system for exceptional students have resulted in the disproportion and disharmony of the curriculum with the students' job interests.

Today there is no discrimination between the trainable mentally retarded and the normal students. And the mentally retarded students should reach their maximum capacities. The only difference is that their

learning process is slow [61-63, 23]. Education Specialists and curriculum development experts in Iran believe that a comprehensive education should be given to these mentally retarded people; that is, they must be educated side by side with the normal students. In an interview with the teachers and employers, they claimed that the students in high school vocational system were totally dependent on their superintendents and might confront bewilderment and perplexity when the superintendent was not present; the books were voluminous and inefficient. The teachers were also dissatisfied with any shortcoming in educating life skills such as "decision-making, communication, civil responsibility and problem-solving" which all were necessary to lead a trainable mentally retarded person to job empowerment and self-sufficiency. These findings are in line with [20], [25] and [11] results.

Education Specialists and curriculum development experts' failure in providing a formative and final evaluation of the high school vocational curriculum might lead to the failure in helping these students to obtain job empowerment skill in Iran.

Regarding the opportunities and the current viewpoints, a theoretical educational model for high school vocational system is presented here to stabilize the job empowerment skill. Based on this model and with regard to the importance of job empowerment skill for these trainable mentally retarded students and concerning the diversities and challenges in the educational system so far and the necessity of a comprehensive education for the retarded students, it is necessary for the educational system in Iran to scrutinize the objectives, teaching strategies, contents, evaluation procedures and other curriculum elements and concentrate more and more on job empowerment skill based on logical outlook and facts and take other factors such as sex, abilities, social affairs and the trainable mentally retarded students' requirements into considerations as well.

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