

The Reality of Supported Employment Provided by People within Intellectual Disabilities from the Perspective of the Work Team in the Light of Global Practices

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Abstract

The current study aims to identify the reality of supported employment provided to people with intellectual disabilities from the perspective of the team work in the light of global practices. The researchers adopted a questionnaire as an instrument for data collection. The sample of the study consisted of (118) members of the work team in secondary intellectual education institutes and general secondary schools with intellectual education classes in the city of Jeddah. The findings of the study reported an average level of the reality of supported employment. The findings have also stated that there were no statistically significant differences in the reality of supported employment due to the gender variable in all dimensions except for the dimension (challenges). The previous mentioned findings came in favor of female participant. Moreover, the findings also indicated that there are statistically significant differences regarding the reality of supported employment which is due to the educational institution variable in favor of these Institutes in all dimensions except for the challenges dimension.

Keywords: *Supported employment, intellectual disability, work team, global practices.*

1. Introduction

Recently, the interest in individuals with disabilities has increased remarkably and globally in all respects. As a result, interest in integrating individuals with disabilities in all fields, including the field of employment, has increased. This step has been taken to provide individuals with disabilities with the opportunity to earn a living, to stop their need from others, and to reach financial independence, which is the highest degree of independence. In fact, such a support is what our religion has commanded through emphasizing the achievement of justice and equality. 'The International Convention on the Rights of individuals with disabilities' guarantees their right to work and to get employed as (Article 27) states that the state parties recognize the right of individuals with disabilities to work, on an equal basis with others. This right includes granting them the opportunity to earn a living in work that they freely choose or accept in a labor market and work environment that is open and inclusive for persons with disabilities. Hence, such initiative will facilitate their involvement.

(United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights [OHCHR], 2021).

Where the state parties, including the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, are obligated to provide individuals with disabilities with job opportunities in an inclusive and open work environment, and at the local level, the goals of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Vision (2030) included - in its second axis - providing integrated opportunities for all, especially those with disabilities. Further, as it was mentioned in the vision, such effort was paid to empower children with disabilities through granting them to have access to equitable opportunities for education and work in a way that guarantees children with disabilities a decent and independent life and facilitates their integration as active elements in the Saudi society. Hence, children with disabilities will be provided with all facilities and tools that will help them achieve success [7]. The relevant authorities paid great efforts to adopt regulations that mandate the provision of job opportunities and support the employment of people with disabilities.

However, the employment of individuals with disabilities faces many obstacles. This has led to a high level of unemployment among individuals with disabilities in general, and individuals with intellectual disabilities in particular. Due to their low capabilities and capabilities, although they are an effective force in the society if they are taken care of in all respects, and because they are part of society, the legitimate rights of them should not be neglected in any way, and one of their most prominent rights is to have a suitable job consistent with the level of abilities and competencies that they enjoy it [1].

Despite the efforts of the programs of the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to empower individuals with intellectual disabilities through several programmes such as: a matching program, vocational rehabilitation programs for people with intellectual disabilities, and 'Tawafuq' program that supports job opportunities for people with disabilities, but the employment of people with intellectual disabilities in inclusive and open work environments or competitive jobs is still limited.

Therefore, the need to apply best practices to support the employment of individuals with intellectual disabilities in inclusive work environments, which is what the 'Supported Employment' aims at, which is defined as: an evidence-based practice that includes a range of services provided to individuals with disabilities, including those with intellectual disabilities. Actually, the main objective is to help individuals with intellectual disabilities obtain job support services in inclusive and open work environments in order to allow them to maintain and continue working [4].

World Health Organization (WHO) indicated in its definition of intellectual disability that providing support for individuals with intellectual disabilities is very important, and that intellectual disability does not depend on the child's health conditions or disabilities only, and that it depends critically on the extent of support provided to them to achieve full participation and integration in society [12]. The American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD), by publishing a joint statement with the Association for Retarded Citizens (ARC), has also affirmed the right of students with intellectual disabilities to receive the support they need to move on and that flexible services are according of students with intellectual disabilities' choice, and that service providers must respect students with intellectual disabilities' choices and preferences individuality [7].

Al-Malky's [5] study indicated that there is a need to improve the employment of people with intellectual disabilities, as well as the importance of focusing on employment in an inclusive and open work environment. Due to its positive impact on self-esteem, self-confidence, and improving their level of independence.

The study of Al-Ajmi and Al-Battal [1] indicated that there are still difficulties facing the process of rehabilitation and employment of people with intellectual disabilities, which led to a rise in their unemployment level, and the process of their employment. It faces many obstacles, as Al-Atwi [2] mentioned that general education schools with intellectual education classes do not have specialists in providing vocational rehabilitation for people with intellectual disabilities.

Supported employment is part of any intervention provided to persons with intellectual disabilities with the aim of employment, and it is one of the effective strategies to empower persons with intellectual disabilities [14]. Rehabilitation and transition programs for persons with intellectual disabilities are evaluated by the availability of job support components in the program [4].

Through their work in the field of intellectual education and their direct supervision of the rehabilitation educational program in the secondary stage, the researchers of the current study noticed the lack of job opportunities for graduates of intellectual education institutes and programs, and the existence of a gap between the graduation of people with intellectual disabilities, schools, and their access to

work commensurate with their abilities and preferences in an open work environment. The scarcity of seats allocated to people with intellectual disabilities in private training and rehabilitation centers; due to its overcrowding in numbers. In addition to the policy of the vocational rehabilitation centers of the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development, which prevents the admission of persons with intellectual disabilities who benefit from the Ministry of Education from joining vocational rehabilitation centers after graduation; This causes an additional burden on families and students themselves. Moreover, despite the existence of systems and policies that call for supporting employment for people with intellectual disabilities, the researchers also noted - during their work - the lack of coordination between programs that provide services for the employment of people with intellectual disabilities and between intellectual education institutes and programs to enroll people with intellectual disabilities with these postgraduate programs. Therefore, this research came to reveal the reality of functional support provided to people with intellectual disabilities from the viewpoint of the work team in the light of global practices, by answering the following research questions:

1. *"What is the reality of the supported employment provided to people with intellectual disabilities from the point of view of the work team in light of global practices?"*
2. *"What are the challenges of providing supported employment for people with intellectual disabilities from the point of view of the work team in light of global practices?"*
3. *"Are there statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$) for the reality of the supported employment provided to people with intellectual disabilities from the point of view of the work team in the light of global practices according to the following variables: (gender - educational institution)?"*

2. Literature Review

The researchers reviewed a number of studies related to evaluating the reality of supported employment provided to people with intellectual disabilities from the perspective of the work team in the light of global practices, which were presented according to their recentness as follows:

Yildiz and Cavkaytar [13] conducted a study which aimed to determine the independent living needs of young people with intellectual disabilities in preparation for adulthood and employment. The sample of the study consisted of (30) participants, consisting of (10) individuals with intellectual disabilities with their parents, employers and teachers.

The qualitative approach was adopted through the utilization of semi-structured interviews as a research instrument. The findings indicated that the

individuals with intellectual disabilities face several difficulties in the independent living skills and the ability to adapt to work rather than employment skills during the preparation stage for adulthood stage and work life. The findings also reported that the needs of persons with intellectual disabilities in preparation for employment life, in the first place, was represented in: 1) personal care, 2) personal hygiene, 3) interpersonal skills, 4) self-determination, 5) employment skills, 6) sexual education and 7) safety skills. Actually, these difficulties are mostly due to the lack of knowledge, skills and support provided during this stage. Finally, the study confirmed the importance of providing students with skills related to employment life.

On the same line, Kelley and Prohn [9] conducted a study which sought evaluating the expectations of administrators, teachers, families, and children with mild, moderate, and severe intellectual disabilities (aged 14 to 21), for the employment and education of students with intellectual disabilities after high school. The study adopted the descriptive approach using the questionnaire as the research instrument for collecting the data for the study. The questionnaire, which was distributed via e-mail, has been sent to four teaching areas. The response rate was 33.6% (n=677). The data that was collected through the questionnaire was analyzed statically. The findings of the study, which focused specifically on the expectations of students and families, concluded that that students' expectations were higher than families' expectations, especially in post-secondary education, and that parents' expectations of their children's employment were low. These findings indicated that families and students need more education about the future of their children with intellectual disabilities.

A qualitative study was conducted by Al-Malki [4] which aimed to understand the participation and perceptions of supported employment in the research project for co-workers of trainees and project research staff. The study adopted the phenomenological approach as a qualitative means to answer the research questions. Group and individual interviews were the research instrument that were utilized by the study. The respondents were three research project employees, the project coordinator, and three co-workers of the trainees. The findings indicated that the participants provided a comprehensive work environment for the trainees through positive attitudes and support. It is worth mentioning that the findings of the study have important implications in the field of inclusive and supported employment.

Kaya [8] conducted a study which aimed to identify the relationship between demographic factors and variables, vocational rehabilitation services, and employment outcomes for young people with intellectual disabilities. The study adopted the descriptive approach, through which utilizing a questionnaire as the research instrument. The

results asserted that there is a relationship between employment and race; In favor of whites, and there is a relationship between gender and employment; In favor of males over females. In addition, the employment outcomes of individuals with intellectual disabilities who received special education services, were higher than those who do not receive special education services. The study has also found that this finding can be used to develop new services, improve vocational rehabilitation services and the outcomes of their employment as well. The study further recommended that there is a need to provide supported employment for people with intellectual disabilities, which has proven effective in the outcomes of their employment.

Moreover, Al-Dosari [3] carried out a study which aimed to identify the factors that are responsible for the successful transition of individuals with mild intellectual disabilities from school to work. The descriptive approach was adopted by the study. In addition, the sample of the study consisted of (86) male and female teachers with intellectual disabilities in the city of Riyadh. The study has utilized the questionnaire as the research instrument. The findings of the study revealed that all the seven factors are significant, as the existence of a transitional plan ranked first, and there were no differences in the teachers' views due to: gender and teaching experience. Finally, the study recommended that the necessity of concluding agreements with external government agencies and bodies.

Al-Nahdi [6] conducted a study that aimed to explore the best practices in the transition to work services for students with intellectual disabilities from the teachers' perspective. The sample of the study included (369) teachers of intellectual education programs and institutes in Riyadh city, who numbered 369 responses. The study implemented the descriptive approach using the questionnaire as the research instrument. The findings of the study pointed out that the best practices to support students' transition to work services are exposing them to practical experiences and vocational training during the secondary school stage. In addition, among the most important practices was giving students the opportunity to participate with their ordinary peers, the family participation in the development and development of the transition, improving the students' decision-making skills, granting opportunities for independence at school, as well as improving the students' social skills. The findings of the study also pointed out that the transportation services are still in their early stages in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Finally, it was found that secondary school students need supported employment so the students can have a smooth transition to labor services.

3. Method

The current study aimed to identify the reality of supported employment provided to individuals with

intellectual disabilities from the perspective of the work team in the light of global practices. Therefore, the researchers used the descriptive-analytical approach due to its relevance to the nature of the study, and the study community was represented by the work team (male and/or female leader, male and/or female supervisor of intellectual education, male and/or female teachers, and teachers of intellectual education for the secondary stage, male and/or female teachers of behavioral training, male and/or female teachers of speech and communication, and male and/or female mentors) in all intellectual education institutes and general secondary schools to which intellectual education classes are attached in the city of Jeddah for the academic year (2021). As for the study sample, a total number (118) of the work teams were chosen randomly.

The researchers utilized a questionnaire to collect data. The questionnaire consisted of (37) items that measure the reality of supported employment provided to individuals with intellectual disabilities from the perspective of the work team in the light of global practices distributed on four main dimensions. The apparent validity of the questionnaire was verified by presenting it to a committee consisting of (9) specialized arbitrators from faculty members in Saudi universities in special education and educational disciplines, to ensure the suitability and ability of performance to achieve the objectives of the study.

Moreover, the study's questionnaire includes the questions and objectives. Further, the questionnaire was modified based on the notes and amendments provided by the arbitrators to upgrade its capabilities (i.e., to ensure that the questionnaire represents what it was prepared for). Initially, the questionnaire consisted of (41) items, however after the modifications of the arbitrators, the questionnaire's items became (37). The internal consistency of the research instrument was also verified by applying it to an exploratory sample consisting of (33) individuals who were selected randomly from outside the target study sample. This step was taken for the sake of calculating the values of the Pearson correlation coefficients for the relationship of the paragraphs with the dimension to which they belong. In addition, Alpha Cronbach coefficient was calculated, as an indicator of internal homogeneity. In fact, the overall stability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) was (0.959), which is considered very high and indicates the stability of the research instrument. Finally, the stability coefficient was calculated using (half-segmentation method), where the stability coefficient was (0.883), which is very high and indicates the stability of the research instrument.

Based on the nature of the study and the goals that it sought to achieve, the data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program, and the findings were extracted according to the following

statistical methods: Pearson correlation coefficient and Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which were utilized to calculate the validity and reliability of the study instrument, to calculate the frequencies and percentages for personal variables, the (T-test) of the independent variables (gender & educational institution) on the dependent variable (the reality of supported employment provided to individuals with intellectual disabilities from the work team's perspective in the light of global practices), and the arithmetic means as well as the standard deviations of the dimensions and paragraphs of the instrument.

4. Findings and Discussion

The findings related to the first question, which is what is the reality of the supported employment provided to the individuals with intellectual disabilities from the perspective of the work team in the light of global practices, was demonstrated an average level of the reality of supported employment, with an arithmetic mean for the instrument as a whole (3.53). (See Table. 1) for more clarification:

Table (1): Arithmetic means and standard deviations of the dimensions of the search tool, taking into account their order in descending order according to their arithmetic means (n = 118)

Level	Rank	standard deviations	Arithmetic means	The dimension
Level	1	0.72	3.73	Challenges
high	2	0.84	3.58	supportive school environment
medium	3	0.95	3.56	Work team
medium	4	0.93	3.27	Cooperation, coordination and carrying out partnerships
medium	1	0.72	3.73	Obstacles
high	-	0.62	3.53	The instrument as a whole

The analysis of the findings demonstrated that the fourth dimension (the challenges) registered firstly an arithmetic average of (3.73), and a high degree, followed secondly by the first dimension (the supportive school environment) with an arithmetic average of (3.58), with a medium degree, followed thirdly by the second dimension (the support team) with an arithmetic average of (3.56), with a medium degree, and third dimension (cooperation, coordination, and establishing partnerships) with an arithmetic average of (3.27), with a medium degree. As for the sub-question, which discusses the challenges of providing supported employment for individuals with intellectual disabilities from the perspective of the work team in the light of global practices, where the arithmetic average of the dimension as a whole was (3.73), and with high degree (See Table. 2) for more clarification:

Table (2): Arithmetic means and standard deviations for items in the dimension "the challenges faced by teachers of students with intellectual disabilities regarding the application of evidence-based behavioral interventions" (n = 192).

Level	Rank	standard deviations	Arithmetic means	The items
High	1	1.00	3.97	Disruption of links and connections between the authorities responsible for implementing employment programs and between students with disabilities after graduation.
High	2	1.07	3.92	Negative attitudes of employers towards hiring people with intellectual disabilities.
High	3	0.84	3.87	Students' training period is short.
High	4	0.68	3.70	Students' lack of some skills that are necessary for work.
High	4	1.08	3.70	Low wages upon hiring.
medium	6	1.13	3.66	The school is not prepared to train students in professional skills.
medium	7	1.15	3.59	Low family participation in supported employment programs.
medium	8	1.04	3.58	Low family trust towards their children.
medium	9	1.01	3.53	Excessive family protection of the student, which leads to frequent absenteeism from school and poor training.
High	-	0.72	3.73	The dimension as a whole

As for the third question, which focused on the extent to which there are statistically significant differences at the level of significance ($\alpha = 0.05$ for the reality of supported employment provided to individuals with intellectual disabilities from the perspective of the work team in the light of global practices according to the following variables:

(gender - educational institution). The results indicated that there were no statistically significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) due to the effect of gender in the dimensions (supportive school environment, support team, cooperation, coordination and partnerships, and the total score), while there were statistically significant differences at ($\alpha = 0.05$) in the dimension "the challenges" where the differences came in favor of females.

Moreover, there were no statistically significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) due to the effect of the educational institution in the challenges dimension, while there were statistically significant differences at ($\alpha = 0.05$) in the dimension of "supportive school environment", which was in favor of the Institute of Intellectual Education, 'support team' which was in favor of the Institute of Intellectual Education, 'cooperation, coordination, and partnerships' was in favor of the Institute of Intellectual Education. As for the overall score, there were statistically significant differences for the variable of the educational institution and in favor of the Institute of Intellectual Education.

The findings related to the first question demonstrated that the work team who evaluated the reality of supported employment provided to the individuals with intellectual disabilities in Jeddah city, particularly in the secondary intellectual education institutes and secondary general education schools, has scored a moderate degree. This finding can be explained by the increased interest in providing supported employment for individuals with intellectual disabilities, which was confirmed by the vision of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (2030), and the education policy in the Kingdom responded to it, which calls for providing supported employment at the secondary level (the educational rehabilitation program);

However, there is still a need to increase supported employment for individuals with intellectual disabilities, by including the organizational and procedural evidence for special education with systematic practices of applicable supported employment for individuals with intellectual disabilities, and the establishment of an entity whose role is to coordinate and follow up in order to maintain links and connections between the individuals with intellectual disabilities and institutions that need to employ these groups, as well as increasing training for people with intellectual disabilities, and for training to be in an inclusive and open work environment.

The previous mentioned findings agreed with Yildiz and Cavkaytar's [13] study, which stated that there is a lack of support services provided to people with intellectual disabilities in adulthood and at work. Additionally, the previous studies have also agreed with the study of Al-Ajami & Al-Batal [1], and Almalky [5], which indicated that there is a need to increase training for people with intellectual disabilities and improve supported employment for them.

On contrary, the findings of the current study contradict with Almalki's [4] study which asserted that supported employment practices in transitional services (the research project) are high. This is due and the reason for this difference may be due to the different place in which supported employment is provided. The current study targeted the secondary school, meanwhile the aforementioned study targeted the community-based training center.

The findings of this second question have demonstrated that the challenges of providing supported employment for individuals with intellectual disabilities from the perspective of the work team in light of global practices reached an arithmetic average as a whole of (3.73), with a high degree. This may be attributed to the absence of a specific mechanism or entity; whose role is to coordinate the referral of individual with intellectual disabilities. In fact, intellectual disability after graduation from intellectual education institutes and programs to the authorities responsible for employment, so that their workers are specialized in the field of supported employment and employment for individual with intellectual disabilities, and their role extends to follow-up in order to maintain links and connections between individuals with intellectual disabilities and institutions that need to employ these groups. Furthermore, the role of the school, which ends with the delivery of the graduation certificate to individuals with intellectual disabilities, in addition to the fact that the training and vocational rehabilitation centers of the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development exclude graduates of intellectual education programs and institutes from being accepted into their centers.

The researchers, who carried out the current study, also attribute the ignorance of the families, who bear the burden of searching for programs and institutions that support the employment of people with intellectual disabilities after graduation causing them to be deprived from the chances of employment because they are not aware of the programs and initiatives that provide supported employment for their children with intellectual disabilities which is due to the lack of publicity and advertising for these programs and initiatives.

The researchers also attribute this to the weak media role in spreading positive stories for employees with intellectual disabilities; This made the employers see that the employment of this category requires a change in the work environment, and training of their current workers; In order to deal with the new category; this entails a material and moral burden on their part, as they see that people with intellectual disabilities may not be as productive and effective at work as others, and that the degree of qualification does not meet the appropriate purpose of it to reach the employment stage.

Moreover, the communication skills of an individual with intellectual disabilities may be simple; thus it is

difficult for employers and employees to give them job assignments and instructions. It is worth mentioning that it is difficult for an individual with a disability to abide by the list of laws and regulations. This requires effort from managers and colleagues, in addition to the fact that most work environments - especially at the present time - are constantly evolving and changing, and it may be difficult for people with intellectual disabilities to keep pace with this development.

The researchers also attribute this to the wrong parenting methods, such as excessive protection by their families; It prevents people with intellectual disabilities from the necessary training. However, there is a slight change in the methods of education by families of people with intellectual disabilities, with the noticeable increase in awareness programs aimed at educating families, as the phenomenon of excessive protection for them began to decrease gradually, and work to integrate them into society which led to an increase in the positive trend by these families towards the capabilities and competencies of the individual with intellectual disabilities.

Additionally, these findings are in agreement with the study conducted by Al-Dosari and Maajini [3] which sees that the reason for employers' reluctance to hire people with intellectual disabilities is; their lack of basic skills for work. Further, the findings of the current study are consistent with the study of Lindsay et al. (2019) who pointed out that the reason why employers employ people with disabilities; it is the benefits and subsidies and it is not limited to the employment of people with disabilities. The researchers believed that adopting the practice of supported employment in a systematic manner will contribute to changing the attitudes of employers. The findings that the current study are also consistent with Yildiz and Cavkaytar's [13] study which concluded that there is a lack of basic work skills for people with intellectual disabilities in adulthood and work.

The study also agrees with the study of Kelley and Prohn [9] which stated that the parents have low expectations of their children's employment. These findings demonstrated that families need more dialogue and education about the future of their children with intellectual disabilities. The findings also agree with the study of Al-Ajami & Al-Battal [1] which indicated that wrong parenting methods, such as excessive protection by their families, which prevents people with intellectual disabilities from being hired.

The findings related to the third question, which indicated that there is statistically significant differences in the reality of supported employment provided to individuals with intellectual disabilities from the perspective of the work team in the light of global practices, and according to the following two variables: (gender - educational institution). The findings also indicated that there is an absence of statistically significant differences due to the

effect of gender in the dimensions: (supportive school environment, support team, cooperation, coordination, partnerships, and total score), while there are statistically significant differences in the challenges dimension which came in favor of females. The researchers attribute this to the fact that the regulations and procedures applied to intellectual education institutes and programs for boys are the same as those applied to girls, and the organizational and procedural manual is the same for both genders. The researchers also attribute this to the work team - males and females - receiving unified training courses and workshops within the Special Education Development Project by the National Center for Professional and Educational Development.

The researchers attribute the presence of statistically significant differences in 'the challenges' dimension, and the differences were in favor of females. In addition, the working group believes that the challenges facing females with intellectual disabilities are greater than males; the lack of flexibility on the part of the female work team in following up and hiring female students with intellectual disabilities outside school; due to the conservative nature of the Saudi society, the family's protective behavior towards its daughters, and the limited job opportunities for them, like males.

The findings of the current study are in agreement with the Kaya's study [8] which reported that the findings of employing females with intellectual disabilities are lower than males, while this finding differed with the study of Al-Ajami & Al-Battal [1] which demonstrated that there were no statistically significant differences attributable to gender in difficulties. Facing the employment of people with intellectual disabilities from the perspective of workers It also differed with the study of Al-Dosari (2016) which indicated that there are no differences attributed to the variable of gender for the factors of successful transmission, and the reason for this difference may be due to the difference in spatial boundaries, where the two studies (Al-Ajami & Al-Batal, [1] & Al-Dosari, [3]) were in the city of Riyadh, while the spatial boundaries of this research were in Jeddah city.

The findings of the current study also indicated that there were statistically significant differences in the dimension of 'supportive school environment', 'support team', 'cooperation', 'coordination', 'partnerships', and 'total degree', due to the variable of the educational institution, and the differences came in favor of the Institute of Intellectual Education, while there are no significant differences and statistical significance attributed to the impact of the educational institution in the fourth dimension (the challenges). The researchers attribute this to the fact that the school environment in the institutes of intellectual education in Jeddah city includes professional workshops that simulate the realistic work environment to some extent, in addition to the fact that the work team is somewhat

complete in the institutes more than of the secondary general education schools to which intellectual education classes are delivered. The administration in institutes is also fully dedicated to meeting the needs of individuals with intellectual disabilities, unlike secondary general education schools to which intellectual education classes are delivered. This finding is in an agreement with the study of Al-Atwi [2] who stated that the public education schools have intellectual education classes attached to them and there is no specialized team in providing professional qualification.

Besides, the researchers stated that there are no statistically significant differences due to the impact of the educational institution in the fourth dimension (the challenges). that the challenges facing all educational institutions are the same since they are general challenges due to the regulations and decisions taken by the Ministry of Education. This finding applies on the institutes and programs, in addition to the presence of challenges from the outside community. This finding is consistent with the study of Al-Ajami & Al-Battal [1] which reported that there is an absence of statistically significant differences due to the variable of location in the difficulties facing the employment of people with intellectual disabilities.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study aimed to identify the reality of supported employment provided to individuals with intellectual disabilities from the perspective of the work team in the light of global practices. In addition, the current study proposes the establishment of a body whose role is to coordinate the referral of individuals with intellectual disabilities after graduation from intellectual education institutes and programs to the bodies that are responsible for the employment process, so that its employees are specialists in the field of supported employment, and their role extends to follow-up in order to maintain links and connections between individuals with intellectual disabilities and institutions that need to employ these groups, and work to bridge the gap between graduating people with intellectual disabilities and obtaining work in an inclusive and open work environment through creating a national database containing the names of graduates with intellectual disabilities and their job qualifications, and linking them with employers, in addition to preparing training courses and workshops aimed at educating officials of special education programs in the Ministry of Education, as well as work teams and families, about the concept of supported employment and its positive impact on empowering people with disabilities intellectual.

The study also suggests returning field training sessions to the educational plan for the secondary stage of rehabilitation for individuals with intellectual disabilities, linking them systematically to supported employment, and including systematic practices of supported employment for

individuals with intellectual disabilities which are applicable in organizational and procedural manuals for special education, and the use of media in order to encourage positive attitudes towards employing individuals with intellectual disabilities in inclusive and open work environments, and to include programs for preparing special education teachers (the career support and employment specialist track), so that they are required to hold a master's degree in special education. The current study also suggests carrying out more researches and studies on the reality of supported employment in different geographical environments, and carrying out a longitudinal study that tracks employment services received by individuals with intellectual disabilities after graduating from educational level over a period of ten years, and in addition, conducting a qualitative study to disclose the practices of supported employment programs and initiatives provided to individuals with intellectual disabilities with the aim of improving the level of supported employment provided to individuals with intellectual disabilities.

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