

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

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Abstract: This paper 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 accessed results, by means of questionnaires, two groups of education specialists and curriculum development experts have considered the curriculum had high capacity and efficiency to enhance general and social skills, self-management, economical self-sufficiency and professional rehabilitation. Thus, developed curriculum assisting the intellectually disabled students in Iran to acquire job empowerment skill, but the other two groups, the teachers and employers, believed that lack of enough competence and efficiency may cause the developed curriculum deficiencies. The obtained results have been incorporated in a developed path model discussed in detail about how the curriculum was designed and also the model was established on what reliable resources were founded.

Key words: Job empowerment skill • Vocational school • Mentally retarded • Curriculum • Disabled student

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]. According to American Association on mental retardation (AAMR) and studies in exceptional schools, a trainable mentally retarded student is the one whose intelligence is between 50-55 to almost 70 [5, 6]. The main necessity of curriculum for this group of people is to provide them with an opportunity to activate their own talents for their protection and to prevent any dissatisfaction regarding their disability in keeping their work comparing to those having full ability [7-9]. The objectives of the curriculum are to train them to find a job and to keep their future occupation [3, 10-12]. Due to the fact that these students cannot succeed or qualify to do well in their studies, many believed 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 inspire insight into the students' minds about their future jobs as well as educating them on the basic skills. Also with proper modification of curriculum one can assist them towards future employment [14-17].

For this purpose, many researchers have investigated on the idea that instead of teaching them special jobs, it is much better to include necessary skills in the curriculum; that would enable them to hold semi-professional or non-professional jobs in their future [18-20].

The curriculum comprises of strategies that help to organize the tasks of teaching-learning processes that includes three main objectives such as educational skills; teaching strategies to be educated and assess and evaluate their learning progress [21]. Hence, curriculum development is an activity that determines objectives, teaching strategies and the evaluation in the teaching-learning process. 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, 20, 22, 23]. Since, a trainable mentally retarded person is required variety of education and rehabilitation in his life. 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 all together will yield a job consistency and a relatively stable conditions to help the individual to find a job and maintain their professional skills till 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 for an independent life of mentally retarded people [16, 20, 26].

Studying the behavior disorder and social deviation, psychologists have come up with the idea that most of the disorders and damages may occurred to these mentally retarded people has rooted in their self situation analysis [27]. Therefore, in order to prevent these people from isolation, they ought to be educated and learn how to deal with such difficulties in their life [28]. Job empowerment is based on this principle that a trainable mentally retarded person deserves to be rehabilitated [29, 30]. 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 while being successful in their inter-personal relationships [12, 31-36].

Based on recent studies, there are great differences exist between the curriculum and the real work environment [21, 25, 37, 38]. 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, 39-42]. Other studies have pointed out that a smart career education program which takes into account social needs and interests has been successful in competence, improving other dimensions such as enhancement of the student's realization of the future job opportunities [43-46]. 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 [3, 21, 35, 47-52].

Research has been conducted so far in Iran emphasized on enrichment of the curriculum and vocational, applied and practical education for the trainable mentally retarded students. With reference to previously stated 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. The main objective of this research is to find out about role of job empowerment in high school vocational curriculum for the trainable mentally retarded male students. The purpose of present research is to find out how much attention has been paid to job empowerment in current curriculum of career training of these mentally retarded students in Iran.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Model: Due to 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.

Study Group: The statistics population of the research was 45 education specialists in education organization for the exceptional students, all of the curriculum planning experts in high school vocational education. The whole group of teachers serving in high school vocational education in Qazvin Province was 120 teachers and 15 employers. In order to get the statistics sample in the first three groups, the Cochran test has been used and the simple random sampling method has been conducted for the statistical analysis. Accordingly, the sample consists of 80 curriculum planning experts, 40 education specialists from the Education Organization for the exceptional Students, 92 involved teachers and 15 employers. Simple random sampling has been used due to the limited number of vocational schools.

Data Collection: In order to collect the required data, a questionnaire has been used as well as literature review. This prepared questionnaire designed which includes 44 features of curriculum elements (objective, content, teaching strategies, evaluation procedures, time and environment) related to high school vocational education. The major feature of questionnaire was to analyze 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 ($\alpha=0.95$) 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.

Data Analysis: 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. The inferential analysis acquisition with SPSS 15.

Findings and Interpretations

The Findings and Interpretation of Results Should Be Able to Answer the Following Question: 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; the studied groups believed that this issue has worth of about 94% in the desired curriculum. Although about diversity of point of view; there were differences in the elements of curriculum, in general the content of the curriculum must pay the greatest attention to job empowerment skill.

In general, the studied groups believed that in a desired situation of the curriculum for the trainable mentally retarded students, job empowerment skill should have about 94% of the objectives $\left(\frac{\text{total mean (obj)}}{10} \times 100 \right)$, 99% of the content, 98% in teaching strategies, 98% in evaluation, 98% in time and 98% in the environment (Table 1). From the perspective, the studied groups all hold similar attitudes and they all have considered the above priorities in distribution of attention that each curriculum element should pay to the improvement of job empowerment skill as mentioned before, but the importance of the individual topic was not the same with all of them (Table 2).

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) test showed 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 are also some differences in each element of curriculum; that is, environment, time, evaluation procedures, teaching strategies, content and objectives. The second question may be validated about the curriculum for trainable mentally retarded students: How far has the high school vocational education considered the job empowerment skill? The curriculum for the trainable mentally retarded students according to all of the studied groups has not paying enough attention to 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% (Table 4).

$$\left(\frac{\text{total mean for features}}{\underbrace{\text{desire course}}_{10} \times \underbrace{\text{features of curriculum elements}}_6} \times 100 = 56\% \right)$$

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 current situation, job empowerment skill should have 61% $\left(\frac{\text{total mean (obj)}}{10} \times 100 \right)$ in objectives, 54% in content, 54% in teaching strategies, 55% in evaluation procedures, 56% in time and 57% in environment (Table 4). From the perspective, the studied groups all of them did not 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 all of them (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 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 showed that there were significant differences between the four groups' opinions about the current curriculum elements; that is, objectives, content, evaluation procedures, time and environment.

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

People	Index	Curricular elements of job empowerment skill at 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	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00
	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	.44
	Max	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00
	Mid	10.00	10.00	10.00	9/89.00	9/89.00	9/83.00
	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	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	9/44.00
	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	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	9/33.00
	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	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00
	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

Alpha level = 0.05

Table 2: Studied groups regarding importance of the curriculum attention towards job empowerment skill (at desired condition)

Effect of the curriculum elements on 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 four groups' opinions regarding the curriculum attention towards the enhancement of job empowerment skill (at 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 current situation

		Curricular elements of job empowerment skill in current condition					
Person	Index	Environment	Time	Evaluation Procedures	Teaching Strategies	Content	Objectives
Education specialists	Min	7.56	8.11	7.89	7.89	8.00	8.11
	Max	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00
	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	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00
	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 job empowerment skill (in 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		

SS: Sum of squares; MS; Mean of square; DF: Degree of freedom; F: faction; P: Statistic P-value

Table 6: The incidental results (LSD) based on four groups' opinions regarding the curriculum attention towards the enhancement of job empowerment skill (in 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: t-Test for 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	9.260	8.950	2.100	1.270	5.720
	Desired mean	9.940	9.900	9.720	9.720	9.820
	T	7.549	17.931	88.884	74.161	47.130
	DF	39.000	79.000	91.000	14.000	226.000
	P	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Time	Current mean	9.330	8.750	1.920	1.160	5.580
	Desired mean	9.900	9.900	9.750	9.730	9.830
	T	8.116	26.120	97.982	98.901	57.780
	DF	39.000	79.000	91.000	14.000	226.000
	P	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Evaluation Procedures	Current mean	9.350	8.700	1.610	1.230	5.450
	Desired mean	9.920	9.900	9.720	9.760	9.820
	T	7.367	31.274	107.539	136.580	70.690
	DF	39.000	79.000	91.000	14.000	226.000
	P	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Teaching Strategies	Current mean	9.390	8.730	1.440	1.120	5.390
	Desired mean	9.890	9.900	9.770	9.790	9.840
	T	6.912	29.364	111.116	95.295	60.670
	DF	39.000	79.000	91.000	14.000	226.000
	P	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Content	Current mean	9.340	8.790	1.530	1.050	5.430
	Desired mean	9.910	9.900	9.780	9.800	9.850
	T	7.572	25.248	105.973	67.356	51.540
	DF	39.000	79.000	91.000	14.000	226.000
	P	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Objectives	Current mean	9.340	8.950	2.920	2.180	6.130
	Desired mean	9.810	9.820	9.030	8.970	9.440
	T	5.463	20.730	98.624	48.206	43.260
	Df	39.000	79.000	91.000	14.000	226.000
	P	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Total	Current mean	56.010	52.880	11.520	8.010	33.700
	Desired mean	59.370	59.320	57.770	57.780	58.900
	T	7.490	40.338	120.118	99.583	66.880
	Df	39.000	79.000	91.000	14.000	226.000
	P	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

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

The other question discussed about may be; how different is the current curriculum for the trainable mentally retarded students from the ideal or at desired condition regarding job empowerment skill? The basis for determining the rate of desirability of the current curriculum would be its adaptability with the desired condition. 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 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 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).

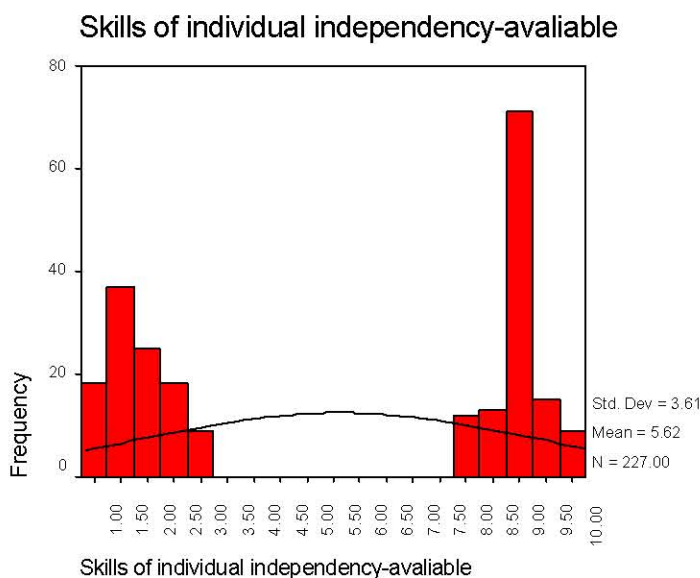


Fig. 1: The bar chart of the general indexes of job empowerment skill (current situation)

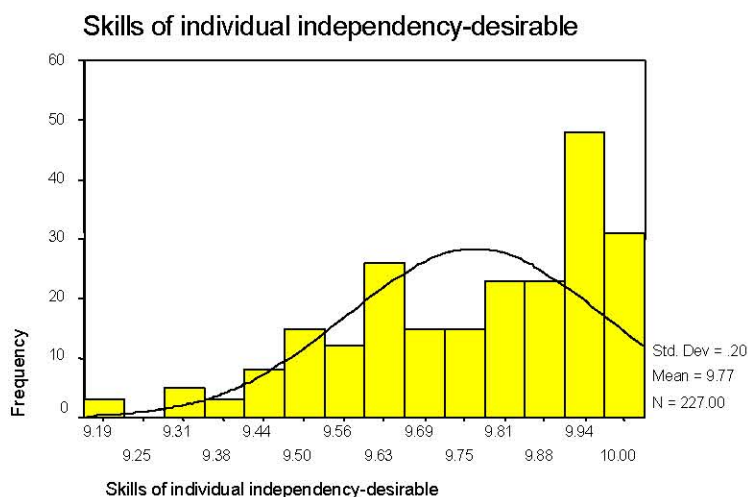


Fig. 2: The bar chart of the general indexes of job empowerment skill (desired situation)

These four groups have asserted similar and coherent ideas regarding to the desired situation which is the fact that curriculum should pay attention to job empowerment skill (Figure 2).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In 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 %) (Table 1), in such a way that

the acquired score for the curriculum 33.7; (Total Current Mean, Table 6); and the expected score was 58.9 (Total Desired mean, Table 6) and the statistical test has illustrated that their difference is significant ($P=0.000$, $DF=226$, $t=66.88$).

The same situation is true for each element of the curriculum. Objectives in the current situation received 6.13, content 5.43, teaching strategies 5.39, evaluation procedures 5.45, time 5.58 and environment received 5.72 out of 10 and the statistics tests showed that the achievement of curriculum is significantly different from what the four groups have expected to achieve (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. Therefore, from the point of view of employers, education specialists, teachers and curriculum planning experts, the high school vocational curriculum has achieved 56.1%

$$\left(\frac{\frac{\text{total mean for features}}{10} \times \frac{\text{features of curriculum elements}}{6} \times 100 \right) = 56.1\%$$

of expectations. Comparing what they had expected was low; it seems they have 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. However, 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 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. One must remember that trainable mentally retarded students showed as great problem 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 noted 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. No one can assign some experts to deal with a case and prevent other cases from education.

It was found that research in 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 which is emphasized in most

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 other research studies [11, 15, 22, 28, 49]. 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 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.

The obtained results showed 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.

It is believed that, 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 the research outcome of similar studies reported in the literatures [4, 18, 24, 25, 55]. The 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 most of educational systems.

According to the curriculum development by 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 issues need to be discussed are related to teachers and employers.

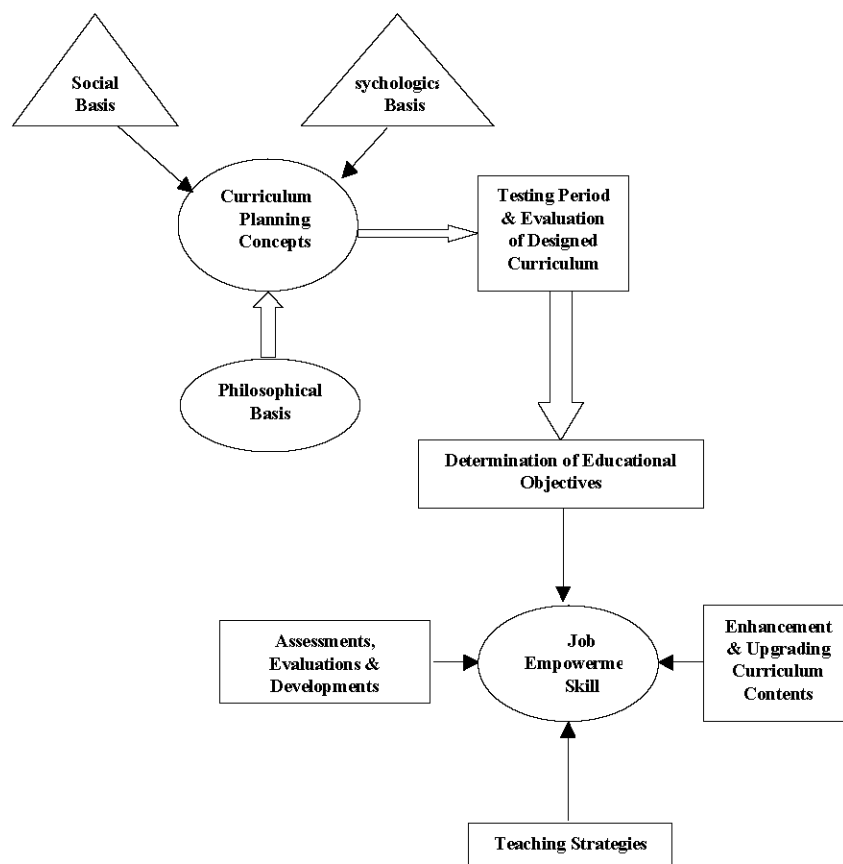


Fig. 3: Theoretical educational model for high school vocational system

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 compatible and in line with the findings reported in the literatures [17, 28, 36, 51, 52, 60]. 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.

Today's goal; 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 [23, 61-63]. Education specialists and curriculum development experts in Iran believed 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. The above findings are also in line with the reported results in the literatures [11, 20, 25].

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 (Figure 3). Based on the presented 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. The following model is based on concepts of curriculum elements concentrated on three fundamental sources such as philosophy, social and psychological resources. The designed curriculum by experts has been evaluated and experimented for mentally retarded students. Based on research objectives for job empowerments on basis of three resources such as teaching strategies, assessment, evaluation and further enhancements for upgrading were successfully achieved.

CONCLUSION

There was a considerable gap in preparing students with the skills needed to be successful in the workplace. Employ ability skills are crucial for all students regardless of the type of disabilities. Job empowerment skills sustain benefits such an increase of social adaptability, taking responsibility, self management, individual and economical sufficiency. The goal to empower students to make choices as they progress through the lifelong developmental vocational experience is a critical feature of job empowerment interventions. The important role of job empowerment in the future of young people with trainable mentally retarded male students, can provide the link between the classroom and the world of work that will enhance future career success and satisfaction. From the present research findings it was concluded that designing curriculum element for mentally retarded students absolutely enhanced the job empowerment skill of high school vocational system in Iran. Based on fundamental believes on curriculum design and educational planning and use of experts viewpoints, a theoretical educational model for high school vocational system was developed to stabilize the job empowerment skill. The developed curriculum assisting the intellectually disabled students in Iran depended on job empowerment skill, but the other groups, the teachers and employers, believed that insufficient competence and efficiency may cause the developed curriculum with deficiencies. The concepts statistically were evaluated and legitimate

questions regarding curriculum elements were discussed and compared with the reported similar studies in the literatures. It was found that the findings of present research were in line and comparable with the existing literatures.

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