

## **Title: Psychosocial strengths and challenges related to work among persons with intellectual disabilities**

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**Major Finding: Participants with intellectual disabilities value and are committed to their work; they have work habits that are well-developed and social environments that they perceive as supportive.**

### **Participants:**

- 30 participants from 4 community-based day activity centers in Sweden
  - 17 female, 13 male
  - Ages 22-62; mean age=39.93
  - All had mild to moderate intellectual disabilities
  - All were engaged in daily activity and had adequate verbal communication skills for participation in an interview
  - Half worked in large day activity centers with coworkers with intellectual disabilities; others worked in sheltered work placements or in the community

**Method:** Participants were interviewed in their work environments using the second version of the Swedish Worker Role Interview (WRI). Questions were verbally adapted to meet each participant's communication needs.

**Analysis:** Statistical analysis, including a Mann Whitney U-test and two-way ANOVA on study variables, was completed using SPSS version 14.0.

### **Findings:**

- WRI items were found to have generally high ratings, indicating a number of psychosocial strengths of the participants positively affecting their worker role.
- The ability to assess abilities and limitations (personal causation) was the psychosocial factor identified as most interfering with work success. Younger participants generally rated as more able to assess their abilities and limitations accurately.
- Differences were found between men and women's perceptions of work-related psychosocial and environmental factors.

**Conclusion:** Persons with intellectual disabilities demonstrate characteristics of volition and habituation that contribute to their work success and they experience their environments as supportive.

**Implications for future research:** Future research should involve more extensive and thorough studies involving larger sample sizes.

### **Evidence-based practice implications:**

- **Practitioners working with clients with intellectual disabilities should consider factors, such as personal causation, that influence success at work.**
- **The WRI may be effectively used to evaluate clients with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities by adapting interview questions to each client's cognitive level.**