AN EXPLORATION OF THE FACTORS THAT LEAD TO THE SUCCESSFUL EMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Social Practice
UNITEC New Zealand, 2019
DECLARATION

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This Thesis entitled: An Exploration of the Factors that lead to the successful Employment of people with intellectual Disabilities

Is submitted in partial fulfilment for the requirements for the Unitec degree of:

Master of Social Practice

CANDIDATE’S DECLARATION

I confirm that:

- This Thesis Project represents my own work;
- The contribution of supervisors and others to this work was consistent with the Unitec Regulations and Policies.
- Research for this work has been conducted in accordance with the Unitec Research Ethics Committee Policy and Procedures and has fulfilled any requirements set for this project by the Unitec Research Ethics Committee.

Research Ethics Committee Approval Number: 2016-1002

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ABSTRACT

Employment is an important aspect of being a participating and valued member of the community. The term social inclusion is commonly used to describe the need to incorporate people with intellectual disabilities in different facets of the community, including employment. This research examines how six people with intellectual disabilities (ID), who are supported by IDEA Services Ltd in South East Auckland, with shared similarities, have fared differently in mainstream employment. Three of the people were successful in obtaining and keeping jobs, while the other three were unsuccessful. A strength-based approach is used to demonstrate the fact that, given the right environment and support, there could be a possibility of more people with intellectual disabilities succeeding in the mainstream employment sector.

Literature shows how different models have been used historically, in working to gain employment for people with ID and how currently there are some models, both internationally and nationally, which appear to be working well. The concept of social role valorisation (SRV) as an aspect of normalization is taken into consideration when looking at inclusion with ID, from the historical perspective. Though it has its limitations, SRV is important in that it emphasizes the fact that people with ID should not stand out, but be given as much opportunity as possible, to participate as the rest of the members of society who do not have a disability. It also stresses the importance of training people with disability, to give them skills that help them to fit into the community. An important aspect from literature is how the social model plays a vital role for people with intellectual disabilities in getting and keeping jobs.

Two international and one local successful model are used as examples of what has been done to give people with ID a chance in the employment sector. There are specific characteristics that the models possess, which have made them successful in helping the people to obtain and maintain employment. However, possibly both internationally and locally, there is more that needs to be done to get more people with ID into employment.

The transformative emancipatory paradigm as part of the methodology, takes centre stage in this research because of its focus on social justice. A mixed methods
approach is used, which includes a focus group and semi-structured interviews, which are qualitative. At the same time, it makes use of a quantitative survey assessment. The focus group is made up of the six participants with ID, while the semi-structured interviews encompassed the support network of the people with intellectual disabilities, including the employers. The main tool for quantitative data collection was the Supported Independent Living Assessment adapted from Australia and adjusted to suit the New Zealand context. Government policies, including international conventions like the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with a Disability and IDEA Services policies are also examined in terms of their role in the employment of people with intellectual disabilities.

A non-random, purposive quota sampling method was used to select the participants with intellectual disabilities. This gave an opportunity to acquire an information rich sample, which was diverse enough to give the research validity.

The study shows how the three people with intellectual disabilities have been able to obtain and keep jobs. It examines the environmental factors and the personal attributes of the people, and the role these have played in their success in the employment sector. On the other hand, it also examines the possible causes for the other group of three participants with ID not being able to have the same kind of success. The role each factor has had on those who have been successful and those who have not, is examined to see how it may be replicated for the successful cases or enhanced for those who have not been successful. In addition to that, the personal characteristics of the participants from the two groups are also examined to see the role they play in their success or lack of success.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe a great depth of gratitude to the six participants from IDEA Services who have an intellectual disability. Their enthusiasm in applying themselves to help make this research a success was unparralled. They were willing to share their experiences freely and give me as much time as I needed, in order to get all the information that was required for my research. The support network of these six participants went out of their way to give their full cooperation, and I want to thank them whole heartedly. These included the IDEA Services support staff, the Poyl-Emp job placement staff and the employers, who were willing to give me time out of the busy schedules.

IDEA Services as an organization has been very supportive of my research and I am not sure I would have managed to finish it without their backing. The support ranged from having given me the approval to do the research within the organisation, to backing me financially to finish it. I want to especially thank my Area Manager in IDEA Services South East Auckland Area, Sarah Beacom, for her unwavering support through the challenging times that I faced while doing the research and giving time to focus on the research.

I want to acknowledge my supervisors Dr Geoff Bridgeman and David McNabb for the time and effort that they put into helping me to think creatively and come up with a research, that I am sure will be beneficial to the people supported by IDEA Services and people with intellectual disabilities in general. Their encouragement kept me going and their knowledge helped to explore avenues that I had not imagined.

Throughout the duration of my research, Lee-ann Wightman has stood by me, providing peer supervision with our regular skype catch ups. Completing the research would have been difficult without her support and encouragement. I will forever be grateful to her, for pushing me to carry on when challenging times arose.

I can’t thank my wife and children enough for their patience and support while I was focusing on the research, sometimes at the expense of family time. My wonderful wife, Mable, thank you for your support and for always being there for me. You have been so gracious throughout this whole time. My two daughters, Tafadzwa and
Shammah, thank you for the support you gave me, while doing your own studies or working. I could not have finished this research without you being there for me.
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INTRODUCTION

Prologue
After migrating from Zimbabwe in 2004, I immediately found a job working for IDEA Services Ltd, supporting people with intellectual disabilities (ID). My previous work experience overseas was in human services, first as a high school teacher and then as church minister. While my previous work provided me with the opportunity to empathize with people, the structure of the intellectual disability sector in Zimbabwe is completely different from the New Zealand sector. People with all forms of disability in Zimbabwe have essentially been labelled as the “forgotten tribe”, with minimal resources available to them (Choruma, 2007). There are two extremes in families’ responses to people with intellectual disabilities. One end of the spectrum is embarrassment (Choruma, 2007), while the other end is where the family provides all of the support, without any government help. It was therefore a cultural shock for me, both to settle in a new country and work with people with ID.

IDEA Services Ltd provided excellent training that helped me settle in the sector and instilled the passion to support the people with ID, that has become part of who I am. Over the years that I have worked for IDEA Services limited, I have come to appreciate the unique characteristics of each person with ID, whom I have had the privilege of working with. Along the wide spectrum of ID, lie people who are unique, and have their own strengths and abilities. This has been apparent in the range of individuals I have supported, in different scenarios. The most amazing thing I have encountered is the ability of some of them to complete tasks that, not only require patience and intricate detail, but tasks that some people without IDs would find daunting.

The earlier part of my employment with IDEA Services Ltd was a hands-on role, where I supported people with ID in a vocational centre and in community activities. Initially this involved supporting the people in centres where there was a contract work component. Some companies within the community, who needed simple repetitive jobs done, would give the contract to one of the vocational facilities. This is a hangover from the institutional days where some of the people were used for
simple jobs, with miserly or no remuneration for their effort. As a matter of fact, the New Zealand government introduced the Disabled Persons Employment Promotion Act in 1960, which promoted the employment of people with disabilities in Sheltered Workshops, with exemptions from complying with the same employment conditions used elsewhere (Emerson, Hatton, Baines and Robertson, 2016).

While the concept of contract work could be viewed in a negative way, in the sense that, just as in the institutional days the people were paid less than the minimum wage, there is evidence that the people had a sense of achievement and a boost in their self-esteem. The argument by parents of some people with ID, on the eve of the Minimum Wage Reform Bill in 2005 shows how, for some of the people with ID, it’s not about the money, but about having a valued role in the community (NZ Herald, 17 March 2005). Apart from supporting the people in doing contract work, I also supported them in community and centre-based activities that included art, crafts, computer activities and sports.

The Minimum Wage Reform bill forced IDEA Services Ltd to discontinue the contract work, because either the organization or the companies would have to increase the wages, which was not feasible. The emphasis was then placed more on the activity centres. However, the company was still cognizant of the fact that there were some people it supported, who wanted and indeed could be included in society as contributing members in the employment sector. This therefore, led to the creation of the Supported Employment Coordinator role, which acts as a bridge to get some of the people into mainstream employment.

Moving from the Support Worker role in 2012, I took on the role of Outcomes Facilitator, which gave me an opportunity to find out what the different individuals that were part of my case load really wanted to fulfil with their lives. The role involved sitting with the individuals with ID and their support network to find out, through appropriate means, what the individual’s goals in life are. Appropriate means of communication would include the use of pictures, concrete objects or other sensory tools. One of the themes that were prevalent in the goal setting meetings, was the desire by some of the people to get into mainstream employment. Hence the reason I became passionate in taking on this research.
Introduction

Having worked in a hands-on role with IDEA Services before moving to the role of Outcomes Facilitator and then my current role of Service Manager, I have developed an understanding of why having some form of valued and contributing role in society is important for some of the people in South East Auckland who have an ID. However, a question also needs to be asked, as to whether my understanding of this is correct or not. Is there a possibility that some of the people just want something that occupies their time, or they actually want to make a living through having a constant income? A number of the people seem to have overcome the public’s negative or uninformed perception of ID, and have been able to get and maintain a job, while there seems to be some insurmountable hurdles for the majority of people to get into the job market.

While governments and companies that provide support for the people with ID have policies that support and indeed promote inclusion, questions still have to be asked. The governments in the western world’s (including New Zealand) policies in relation to employment of people with ID can be summarised by this statement, “the government believes that employment is an important route to social inclusion and that all those who wish to work should have the opportunity and support to do so” (Chadsey, 2007, p 460).

Has this been the case for those people with ID who are employed? Are there other factors that can be taken into consideration? Is it about policy or societal change that is required? I decided to go with the strength-based approach in my research, because of the negative perception the public generally has in relation to people with ID (Morin, D. et al, 2013). In my hands-on role, I encountered a variety of responses, when supporting individuals to participate in community related activities. Due to being cognisant of the fact that there is a shift in the public’s interaction with people with ID and that some of the people are involved in the employment sector, I wanted to find out what is working well and what is not working well. From there, I wanted to
find ways to replicate the successful cases, if possible, to help increase the numbers of people with ID in employment.

The participants in my research have specific characteristics which have to be examined. South Auckland, according to Goodyear and Fabian (2014) is diverse in terms of its ethnic makeup. While 74% of the New Zealand population identifies as European, less than 50% of the city's population identifies as European, with 17% as Māori, 27% as Pacific and 15% as Asian, and the balance made up of other groups. The same statistic will probably be reflected in the area of ID. Gender, age and historical aspects also must be taken into consideration. Historical aspects stem from the fact that the older generation were institutionalised, while the younger adults have not had the same experiences. Whether this is a contributory factor or not is one of the questions I must grapple with.

Rather than focusing on the problems or impediments, the research took the strength-based approach, which assumes that there are opportunities, possibilities and potential for people with intellectual disabilities in the employment sector. This led me to consider the topic above and subsequently the question:

What are the factors that lead to the successful employment of people with ID?

Sub questions

1. What role do support networks play in gaining and retaining employment?
2. What role do gender, age and ethnicity play in gaining and retaining employment?
3. What are the personal attributes of those successfully employed and what is their role in getting and keeping employment?
4. What is the impact of employers’ perceptions about people with ID, in their decision to employ people with ID?
5. What role does the economic employment environment play in influencing the employment of people with ID?

Answers to this question and the sub questions subsequently brought together the factors that have led to the successful employment of specific groups of people with ID (three of the participants). These factors were then considered with the aim of
articulating and exposing ways of increasing the probability of people with ID getting successfully employed.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

Intellectual Disability

Depending on the literature one is looking at, ID is also termed as learning disability, developmental disability or in earlier studies, mental retardation or mental handicap. In this research the definition of the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) and that of the World Health Organisation (WHO) was used. The AAIDD (2018) defines ID as a disability characterized by significant limitations in both intellectual functioning and in adaptive behaviour, which covers many everyday social and practical skills.

Intellectual functioning is defined as general mental capacity, such as learning, reasoning and problem solving (AAIDD, 2018). The AAIDD offers further definitions:

- Adaptive behaviour as the collection of conceptual, social, and practical skills that are learned and performed by people in their everyday lives.

  • Conceptual skills—these include language and literacy, money, time and number concepts and self-direction.

  • Social skills—interpersonal skills, social responsibility, self-esteem, gullibility, naïveté (i.e., wariness), social problem solving, and the ability to follow rules/obey laws and to avoid being victimized.

  • Practical skills—activities of daily living (personal care), occupational skills, healthcare, travel/transportation, schedules/routines, safety, use of money, use of the telephone. (AAIDD, 2018, p.1)
The necessity for on-going personalized support is also given weight in the definition, in that it is recognized as important in ensuring that the person with ID adapts to their social, cultural and environmental terrain.

**Successful employment**

Lard, W. (2009), discusses young people with ID as those who were able to stay in employment for at least six months on the minimum wage and working at least ten hours a week. Successful employment is a relative term. People with ID performing the same tasks and having different and valued roles as their counterparts without a disability would be described as participating in the mainstream and this includes employment. Their ability to maintain the job for a specific period would be classified as successful employment. A considerable aspect of this research involves defining successful employment from the point of view of the person with an ID and different members of the support network (Brotherton, M. et al., 2016).

**Support network**

The support network is a group of individuals or organisations that provide emotional and practical support to the person with an intellectual disability (IHC 2014). The support network for the person with an ID includes family, support workers, the service organisation and the employers.

Personal success attributes are those qualities both inherent and acquired, that contribute towards the person with ID’s achievement of personal goals. Raskind et al. (1999) cited by (Higgins, Raskind and Herman, 2003), list some of the personal success attributes which include, self-awareness, proactivity, perseverance, appropriate goal setting, effective use of social support systems and emotional stability/emotional coping strategies.
Perception

Perception has an array of meanings, one of which is the process through which information from the outside environment is selected, organised and interpreted to make it meaningful (Singh, Syal, Grady and Korkmaz, 2010). How one perceives something depends on several factors; in this study, historical information or misinformation, subjective judgment without adequate knowledge, can all influence employers’ perception of people with ID.

OUTLINE

Chapter two examines a wide range of literature that looks at how intellectual disability is defined in different parts of the world and how historically there have been changes in how it is perceived. The most important aspect of the literature, however, is the concept of inclusion for people with ID specifically in the area of mainstream employment. There is also an investigation into how the concept of normalization has played a role historically in ensuring that people with ID were given opportunities to participate in the job market. The literature also looked at how ID has moved from being viewed from the medical model to the current focus of the rights-based approach which is part of the social model. There is an emphasis on the fact that ID may not really be the issue in whether the people with ID’s are employed or not, rather it is society that creates a disabling environment.

The literature review goes further to explore some models of employing people with ID’s, that have been successful in various parts of the world as well as in New Zealand. The underlying factor in looking at these models which have had apparent success, was to find out what is working and what is not working in order replicate where possible, the principles that have yielded positive results.

Chapter three looks to the methodology and methods used for collection of the data. To obtain information from the participants with ID’s, a focus group was used and also some semi structured interviews. The main method used for the support
network and employers of the people with ID’s, was semi structured interviews. Some government and IDEA Services policies were also considered.

An analysis of the data is carried out in chapter four, considering both the quantitative data which was mainly provided through a supported living skills questionnaire. This chapter also looks at the profiles of the participants with ID’s and goes through a thorough examination of each one of them, in the form of mini case studies.

The literature review and the findings are discussed in chapter five. This marries the existing literature to what the researcher found, comparing the similarities and the deviations from the so called “normal.”

Finally, chapter six gives the recommendations and possible areas which, if carefully considered will help to create opportunities for people with ID’s to participate in mainstream employment.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

Scope of the Issue – Definition of Intellectual Disability

Intellectual Disability, which is defined as a Learning Disability (Wistow and Schneider, 2003) has been researched from different perspectives over the years which, depending on the models used, range from the medical to the social model. More recently, following the adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) in 2007, it is viewed more from a social model and rights-based perspective. Shakespeare and Watson (2001), discuss the social model of disability as a social construct surrounding disability which is different from the disability itself. It is a culturally and historically specific phenomenon that distinguishes between disabled people as an oppressed group and the non-disabled people that are the causes or contributors to that oppression (Shakespeare and Watson, 2001).

The literature has been progressively changing. Maulik and Harbour (2010) show some of the misconceptions the general population has had towards people with ID; including how they have been seen as being not fully human (Ife, 2010). This meant that they were researched on or researched about, ‘nihil de nobis, sine nobis’, nothing about us without us, has been the clarion call in the sector in more recent times to try and counteract past injustices, and to affirm a rights basis for engagement (Chu, Utengen, Kadry, Kucharski, Campos, Crockett, & Clauson, 2016).

Progress has been made from the historical classification of people with intellectual disability, or mental deficiency, as it was then labelled in the early twentieth century. Other diagnostic labels included ‘idiot’, ‘imbecile’, ‘defective’ and ‘moron’ (Sandys, 2007, cited in Parmenter, 2011).

Only those termed high-grade defectives with some social skills and limited ability to participate in academic and vocational education were given the chance to be part of the labour market (Allen, 2013,). These labels derived from eugenics theory, which is a pseudo-science, whose idea was to improve the genetic quality of the human race and was one of the core reasons for the discrimination of people who were
different from a perceived ‘normal’, ethnically, culturally or have a disability by those who deem themselves to be physically and morally superior. This theory, developed by Galton in 1883 believed that only the best type of people should be encouraged to breed, while those with less desirable characteristics should be discouraged or prevented from doing so (Allen, 2013).

Eugenics resulted in the institutionalization of people with ID’s in western societies, as a way of preventing them from potentially breeding more defective individuals. It is in these institutions that the earliest records of the people being involved in vocational training are found. The ‘high grade defectives’ were given the opportunity to gain basic skills to do routine jobs (Stace, 2013).

Although, following the establishment of the welfare state in New Zealand after the Second World War, there was less support for eugenic policies, people with ID’s continued to be repressed by eugenic ideologies and policies. The majority of children with disabilities were separated from their families and locked up in institutions. The idea of having a disabled child was so shameful that families were forced to deny the very existence of their family members, who were locked away in institutions and cut off from connection with the ‘bad blood’ of their intellectually disabled siblings (Stace, 2013).

The World Health Organisation’s definition of ID recognises how training and rehabilitation can changes lives. It emphasises the fact that labels placed on particular individuals should not be a permanent description of their ability. According to the World Health Organization, certain aspects of ID and the capacity to adapt socially can potentially change over time, through training and rehabilitation, irrespective of the extent of the impairment. Diagnosis should only be based on how the individual is currently functioning (World Health Organization, 1993). An understanding of ID from this perspective makes it imperative that at least some people with ID’s get some opportunities of inclusion in the employment sector.

The definition of the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) was used in conjunction with the World Health Organisation’s definition in this research. The AAIDD defines ID
as a disability characterized by significant limitations in both intellectual functioning and in adaptive behaviour, which covers many everyday social and practical skills. This disability originates before the age of eighteen AAIDD (2018), p. 1.

ID means a significantly reduced ability to understand new or complex information and to learn and apply new skills (impaired intelligence). This results in a reduced ability to cope independently (impaired social functioning), and begins before adulthood, with a lasting effect on development. However, the definition (AAID, 2018) goes on to describe how other considerations, such as environmental and cultural diversity, need to be included. The individual with ID also usually has strengths which, if they are offered personalized support over a sustained period may lead to improvement in their life functioning.

Disability depends not only on a child’s health conditions or impairments, but also and crucially on the extent to which environmental factors support the child’s full participation and inclusion in society. The use of the term ID in the context of the WHO (2007) initiative “Better health, better lives” includes children with autism, who have intellectual impairments. It also encompasses children who have been placed in institutions because of perceived disabilities or family rejection and who consequently acquire developmental delays and psychological problems.

Historically the medical model was used in dealing with identified people and classifying their level of ID. The publication of the eleventh edition of the AAIDD in 2018 (AAID, 2018) signified a change in the classification of people with ID from IQ linked levels (mild, moderate, severe and profound), to the notion of the level of support they require (Luckasson, Borthwick-Duffy, & Buntinx, 1992 as cited in Parmenter, 2011). This assessment classification used by the AAIDD corresponds with the European Union and ICD-10 (Open Society Institute, 2005). This therefore means that the concept of ID has shifted more towards the social and rights-based
models. These models consider that other factors, including environmental elements, apart from a person’s impairment, stand as barriers to inclusion and the person’s participation in general community activities, which includes employment (Parmenter, 2011).

The IDEA Services Employer Resource includes in their description of a person with an ID, that they are a person first with knowledge, skills and abilities as well as goals and aspirations, meaning that they have the right to be given opportunities in the employment sector, if that is what they aspire to do (IDEA, 2012).

IDEA Services’ definition of ID concurs with the WHO definition and the AAIDD, 11th Edition, which not only discusses, intellectual functioning [an IQ of less than 70, originating before the age of 18] and adaptive behaviour [conceptual, social and practical skills], but also includes that availability and appropriateness of supports for the individual with ID (IDEA, 2018). The sum of all these definitions shows the necessity of a social or rights-based approach to ID.

In defining and assessing ID, there is an agreement among WHO, AAIDD and IDEA Services in stressing that a range of factors must be considered. These factors include access to the community environment typical of the individual’s peers and culture. Professionals should also consider linguistic diversity and cultural differences in the way people communicate, move, and behave.

Finally, assessments must also assume that limitations in what individuals can do, often coexist with strengths, and that a person’s level of life functioning will improve, if appropriate personalized supports are provided over a sustained period. Only on the basis of such broad-based evaluations can professionals determine whether an individual has ID and tailor individualized support plans.

**Composition of population with ID**

People with ID have always been part of the human population. According to Parmenter (2011), they are reported to make up one percent of the world’s population, which is probably an underestimate of the actual figures. The figures are problematic as there is no real consensus on the criteria for impairment, activity
limitation, or a sufficient uniformity of definition. Additionally, there is doubt on whether national datasets are comprehensive enough.

The New Zealand levels of ID show a correlation with the international figures (1% of the world’s populations). A 2008 population study showed that there were 31,847 people identified as having ID, out of a population of 4,293,447. This essentially meant that 0.7 percent of the study population were classified as having ID (Ministry of Health, 2011).

Table 1: People with and without ID

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<th>Population</th>
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<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>With intellectual disability</td>
<td>31,847</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Without intellectual disability</td>
<td>4,261,600</td>
<td>99.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4,293,447</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministry of Health study population, 1 July 2007–30 June 2008

In addition to the statistical information showing the number of people with ID’s, there is also a degree of variation in terms of age, gender and culture. The Ministry of Health study was made up of people with ID which could be divided as follows: 9,029 children aged 0–14; 8,987 adults aged 15–64; and 3,831 older adults aged 65 and over.

**Gender**

There is a gender imbalance when it comes to people with ID’s. Men seem to have a higher representation than women. The 2008 study by the Ministry of Health produced results that showed that 18,921 (59.4%) were males and 12,926 (40.6%) were females and this was across all the ages. This contrasts with the New Zealand general population, according to the 2013 census, males made up 48.7 percent of the population and females made up 51.3 percent (Zealand, 2014).
Ethnicity

In the study 5,185 people or 16.2% of people with ID’s were Māori, while Māori, made up 14.9% of the general population in 2013.

1,636 Pacific people made up 5.1% of people with ID, while making up 7.4% of the general population.

1,141 Asian people made up 3.5% of people with ID, on the other hand making up 11.8% of the general population.

23,885 Other/European people made up 74.9% of people with ID, and 76.9% of the general population.

This shows a higher prevalence of ID in Māori, than in other groups. In fact, the 2013 Census identified 2% of the non-Māori population as having an ID and 3% of the Māori population (Statistic New Zealand, 2014).

The people with ID who took part in the study, reflected both the gender and ethnic distribution of the people with ID in the employment sector. The group is made up of four males and two females, four people of European descent, one Māori, and one Pacific Island person.

Luckasson et al., 1992 as cited in Parmenter, (2011), noted above, show the shift from IQ based assessments to support needed based ones. The group in the study, using the old model, would have been classified as having a mild to moderate ID and all of them, except one, are in a supported living situation. This means, they require minimum staff support and can do a relative number of activities independently, which were reflected in the assessment.
Table 2: Disability rates by impairment type, all ages, 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impairment Type</th>
<th>Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensory</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: Statistics New Zealand 2014

Statistics New Zealand data (table 2), shows that there has been a consistency in the rate of ID, remaining at roughly 2% between the 2008 and 2013 census. The results of the 2018 population census have been criticized as inconclusive, because of the low response rate, particularly for Māori, and Pacific communities (Statistics New Zealand, 2018).

Context – unemployment

The economic climate in the country over the period 1989 – 2015 (see figure 1.), shows the employment rate of the general population and how changeable it is. People with ID’s will be the most affected by any increase in unemployment. In New Zealand as in Britain, “people with learning disabilities are amongst the most socially excluded and vulnerable groups” (Department of Health 2001, p.14)
According to the statistics based on the 2006 census in New Zealand, the ten most common occupations include jobs that people with ID’s are most likely to be employed in (Statistics New Zealand, 2014). These include, Cleaner, General Labourer and to some extent Sales Assistant. The six participants with ID taking part in the study would generally fall within these categories.

Statistics New Zealand, 2014

The ten most common occupations in New Zealand in 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sales Assistant</td>
<td>93,840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Clerk</td>
<td>58,527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Manager</td>
<td>50,955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Labourer</td>
<td>36,879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration Manager</td>
<td>34,695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleaner</td>
<td>34,593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Manager</td>
<td>33,183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Representative</td>
<td>31,071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary School Teacher</td>
<td>29,989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caregiver</td>
<td>28,614</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Statistics New Zealand, 2014
From the context of the employment sector for the general public and for people with ID in particular, a methodical examination of the accomplishments and questions surrounding the efforts of the professional organisations and government agencies is important as one way of ensuring that demand for community-based employment for people with ID is met. This analysis has to take into consideration the views of all the stakeholders, including the people with ID themselves, as well as the employers because of the fact that they are ones who will be affected by the policy initiatives (Hosp, Huddle, Ford, & Hensley, 2016).

Literature has increasingly emphasised the importance of having the involvement of people with ID in everything that affects them, including employment (The New Zealand Disability Network, 2017). The term Supported Employment is generally used in literature from different parts of the world when discussing the employment of people with disabilities.

The New Zealand Disability Support Network (2017), on its website, has defined Supported Employment as

> a concept that looks to find ways to assist people disadvantaged in the labour market due to a disability to reach their career aspirations and to improve and expand inclusive employment opportunities and services for all people with a disability (p. 1)

As a concept, it is something that is not stagnant, but continually developing and encompassing new ideas of providing support both to the employer and the person with a disability.

There is an increase in awareness of the idea of employing people with ID’s. The Workability conference, hosted by IHC in 2016, is a NZ example of the ongoing attempt by the ID sector to bring awareness to the general populace about the attributes people with disabilities have and how, given the opportunity and the resources, they can make valuable contributions as members of the community. Documentaries from various parts of the world provide wide range information that contributes towards the continuous data analysis. An example of this is a BBC documentary aired on New Zealand TV (24/10/2017), entitled Employable Me showing two men, one who has Tourette’s syndrome and the other who has autism.
They both told of how they had applied for hundreds of jobs without any success. It was when focus was put on what they were able to do, rather than what they could not, that they found success in the job market. A Canadian and Australian version of the same series also revealed how limitations in social functioning contribute to limitations in the ability for people with ID to get and keep employment (Leelefever, 2007).

The three members of the group in the research, in their interviews, show that their abilities were focused on and opportunities were provided for them to thrive and excel at what they were doing.

**Changing nature of work**

Sociologists discuss work as an aspect of human society that contributes to self-worth, apart from it just being a means of earning a living and contributing to one’s lifestyle (Matthewman, 2013). Paid work can be viewed from a number of positions, as a place where dreams are brought into reality, where financial independence and social standing is gained. When a person does not have some form of employment, it can bring about stigmatization from society and in the case of people with disability, they may be viewed as a charity case.

Globalization has brought about changes in the different facets of government, political, cultural and socio-economic factors which influence the labour market (Matthewman, 2013). Additionally, the emerging of the new technologies that reduce the necessity of manual labour, has had an impact on the types of jobs that are available. This coupled with mass production of goods through mechanization and moving of jobs offshore to countries where labour is relatively cheap, has meant that employment prospects for all New Zealanders, irrespective of whether they have a disability or not have become limited (Matthewman, 2013).

While people like Henry Ford could be blamed or credited for the introduction of mass production in the manufacturing sector, the level of mechanisation they introduced was appropriate for people who did not require high skill levels or intellectual capacity, but needed only to be able to deal with one component on the assembly line. However, further industrialization and computerization has gradually
removed the necessity for unskilled or semi-skilled labour. A single highly skilled individual with the aid of computers could literally run the car assembly line.

The focus on mass production and mechanization which reduce the number of skilled people working in the organizations means the majority of the work is done by machines, there are other expectations put on the less skilled labourers, which would be challenging for people with ID’s. Some of the demands are an expectation to offer emotional labour, meaning that if their position requires interaction with members of the public, there are social skills that will be required of them. For example, people in the service industry are supposed to be charming and friendly, regardless of how the public treats them (Matthewman, 2013).

**Workplace Culture**

Workplace culture has great influence on how people either flourish or fail in a work environment, irrespective of whether or not they have an intellectual disability. Fillary and Pernice (2014), discuss workplace culture as a notion that encompasses a commonality of things that are learnt and shared by a group in an employment setting. This includes the different interactions that bind the members together, causing them to share similar assumptions and interpretations. The workplace culture is the sum total of how employees are orientated, how people, as well as processes are assessed, extending to the strategies followed, the job set out, the traditions, observances and available social opportunities (Fillary and Pernice, 2014).

The case study conducted by Massey University’s Fillary and Pernice (2014) amplified recent research which demonstrated the importance of the workplace environment and its impact on the people with ID, and how this contributes to enhancing their social inclusion and therefore job retention (Chadsey, Shelden, Horn de Bardeleben & Cimera, 1999, as cited in Fillary and Pernice, 2014). Fillary and Pernice (2014) describe how the use of a tool called the Workplace Survey developed by Hagner (2000) clarified the some of the elements that assist people with ID to obtain and keep jobs. The survey included examining 31 elements through question that focused on the “following five areas: orientation and review, workplace policies, job design, workplace customs and practices, and workplace social opportunities” Fillary and Pernice (2014, p 177)
The study involved nine workplaces employing nine people with ID and showed the importance of workplace culture in any study analysing aspects of employment for people with ID. The Workplace Survey plays a pivotal role in the success of the study.

An understanding of a particular workplace’s culture will have an impact on whether a person with an ID succeeds or fails in their employment. However, employers can set the tone or determine the culture of the workplace in such a way the person with an ID is set up to succeed.

**Models of ID Support**

Institutionalization was a global phenomenon, which was based on the idea of eugenics, as already discussed. Institutionalization involves the replacement of spontaneous or experimental behaviour, with behaviour, which is expected, patterned, regular, and predictable (Horton and Hunt, cited by Dua, 2018). This means that people with ID, to an extent, were put into institutions with the intention of programming them to think and act in a certain way.

Religious charitable organizations, noticing the mistreatment that was rampant in the institutions, brought about a charitable approach which was, however, based on a rationale that viewed the people with ID as a catastrophe of society that requires generosity from other people in order for the effects of the impairment to be reduced. The essence of this mentality is that society focuses on the impairment, while disregarding its contribution in disabling the individuals, viewing them as needy, objects of pity (Hughes, 2013).

Evidence of this was seen in an eighteenth-century incident involving the death of Hannah Mills, a Quaker in a York Lunatik Asylum in England, which resulted in the formation of a humanitarian institution by the Yorkshire Society of Friends. It was called a “retreat” rather than terms like ‘madhouse’, ‘insane asylum’ and ‘lunatick house’ that were commonly used at that time (Hunt, 2003). This formed the basis of what became
known as ‘moral treatment’. This was a more humane treatment, albeit not the most effective. Initially, the institutions were run by lay superintendents, but eventually they were taken over by medical personnel, revealing the depth of its connection to the medical model. This marked the beginning of the involvement of charitable and religious organizations.

It also meant that governments left the welfare of people with disabilities in the hands of religious organizations and other non-governmental organizations, directly and indirectly – which formed the basis of the charity approach. This exacerbated the acceptance of the stereotype of disability being viewed as a dependency, where in a sense, the people were a burden to society. The charity approach was dependent on well-wishers with a welfare mentality and attitude of philanthropism (Neilson, 2000). However, the charity approach, without a strong philosophy based on the rights of residents, was as bad as institutionalization.

Although the treatment of the people in the charity-based institutions was more humane, it still did not provide the most appropriate treatment for people with ID. The emergence of Darwinism in the mid to late nineteenth century led to a setback in the treatment of the so-called “insane”. Social Darwinists postulated that insanity was in fact hereditary and therefore, could not be cured. Kaspirek (2016), in her analysis of Nathaniel Hawthorne’s 19th Century novels, deduced that, though fictional, the novels revealed the prevailing notion of that period in history which reflected the medical, moral and domestic ideology that insanity was hereditary and environmental. This contributed to a downward spiral and the reoccurrence of appalling institutional conditions (Darton, 2000).

The fact that institutions did not provide the solution to the issues related to ID led to an attempt to reverse this mind-set through deinstitutionalization. Jack Tizard, a New Zealand Psychologist who spent his professional life in England, contributed to the initial work of deinstitutionalization of people with ID in the 1950s and 1960s, providing the foundation to the ‘ordinary life’ models for them. His work, including an
article in the British Medical Journal, put forward evidence of the advantages of people with intellectual disabilities staying in smaller group homes rather than large institutions (Tizard, 1960).

While it was the idea of national governments to protect society against ‘undesirable elements’ from the human genome, the residual effect on the people with ID’s treatment in the institutions is still apparent. In most cases, the institutions were set up with good intentions, but the consensus, internationally, is that the people had unpleasant and often cruel experiences (Johnson and Traustadottir, 2005).

Deinstitutionalization, however, should not be considered as the be all and end all for people with ID. They also mention the fact that society sometimes still does not give them the same opportunities as the rest of the community (Johnson and Traustadottir, 2005).

Today in 2019, Robert Martin, the first person with an ID to be elected to sit on the United National Council for Persons with a disability, spoke out at the inception of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with a Disability, about the great change in services for people with disability, while emphasizing that there is still much more to be done (Crisp and Chen, 2014). However, the fact that Robert’s position in the UN is being seen as progress at this juncture in history, means that society’s perception of people with ID has not caught up with the change (IHC Learning and Development, 2018). Organizations like IHC Advocacy and the Donald Beasley Institute continue to push for the recognition of the rights of people with ID, in order for the general populace that grew up when institutions were in vogue, to have a better understanding of the of needs and rights of people with ID.

With the evolved understanding of human functioning, society’s perception and interaction with people with ID has eventually changed. Several different models have resulted from these perceptions. The Social and Rights based models have become more prominent in recent times and have been considered the most appropriate, within the context of this research.
Medical Model

Historically, the medical model, which emerged from the eugenics movement, did have a programme of helping people with ID out of institutions based on the premise that ID was an indication that something was ‘wrong’ and that it can be ‘cured’. The government provided the solution to the problem by institutionalizing the people, to take care of their so called ‘special’ needs without taking into consideration of the ‘human’ needs Ballard, (2016).

As already mentioned, ID was traditionally viewed from a medical perspective, where the focus was on a person’s disability, which was taken as a sickness requiring finding ways to reduce or eradicate it (Parmenter, 2011). This is in agreement with Unger’s (2002) idea that the medical model emphasized the clinic or centre based approach of ‘fixing’ or ‘curing’ people with ID. ID is often associated with a vast array of other health problems that lead to limitations in functioning, physically, mentally and emotionally, hence reinforcing the view that intellectual disability was a medical problem that needed to be dealt with from that perspective. The mixture of these problems and the ignorance regarding the causes of impairment, coupled with fear and shame, have resulted in children with ID being isolated from their community and society. This concept stemmed from the eugenics mind-set.

The medical model attributed the problems related to a disabled life entirely on the individual. Its key facts originate from clinical diagnoses, which leave it up to the experts to determine the kind of treatment a person with an ID receives or indeed whether they get medical attention. An issue that arises from this is the question about how the treatment or the lack thereof is determined by nondisabled people.

Not only did the medical model attribute the problems to the individual, but it also shaped the negative perception of society towards people with disabilities. The model defined and grouped people by their disability, the blind, the deaf, the physically disabled, the intellectually disabled, rather
than individuals experiencing challenges resulting from a disabling society. According to Clapton & Fitzgererald (2016), at the height of its popularity, the medical model, reserved the power to reduce individuals to medical labels, which shaped their future based on a medical prognosis. In other words, they were confined in an inescapable box.

**Normalization and Social Role Valorization**

To essentially counter the effect of the medical model, which was problem focused and its underlying principle of treating the disability as sickness, the concept of Normalization was conceived. It is the social process through which ideas and actions become taken as normal and applicable to everyday life. In the field of intellectual disability, the concept of normalization was conceived in the Danish Act No, 192 of 5 June 1959, which was grasped and propagated by Bengt Nirje, the Swedish Ombudsman of the Association for Retarded Children. Nirje became one of its biggest proponents.

He put forward eight key components of normalization, which were that people with ID should have:

- a normal rhythm to the day
- a normal routine to life
- a normal rhythm to the year
- the normal developmental experiences of the life cycle
- having one’s choices, wishes and desires taken into consideration and respected
- normal economic standards of facilities similar to those others are accustomed to (Nirje, 1969).

Wolfensberger (1994), adopted the theory of normalization from Nirje and incorporated it as part of the propagation of the concept of Social Role Valorization of people with ID. Wolfensberger and Thomas (2005) defined Social Role Valorization (SVR) as
The application of empirical knowledge to the shaping of the current or potential social roles of a party (i.e., person, group, or class) -- primarily by means of enhancement of the party’s competencies and image -- so that these are, as much as possible, positively valued in the eyes of the perceivers. (Osburn, 2006, p.4)

This shows that an understanding of this concept is of utmost importance for anyone who is looking at creating opportunities for people with ID in the employment sector. SRV has an underlying notion of ensuring that, for a person to participate fully in all aspects of society, they must not stand out in terms of appearance and their contribution must be valued enough for them to be accorded every advantage that their particular society has to offer (Wolfensberger, Thomas, & Caruso, 1996). One does not need to exert extra effort to partake in the so called ‘good things’ in life, if they are considered to be contributing members of their community. If people with ID are to have their social roles valued, their participation in all aspects of life, from the education sector to employment, must be assured and indeed encouraged from the highest echelons of government and society (Wolfensberger and Thomas, 2005).

SRV has the effect of masking the person’s shortcomings and elements of their personality that are viewed negatively, at the same time, giving them more opportunities that would otherwise not be available to them. The public will focus on those aspects that benefit them and give less attention to the negatives, to the extent that some co-workers of people with ID mentioned that they sometimes forget about the disability while dealing with the person (Unger, 2002).

Therefore, there are two ways of achieving SRV; namely magnifying the positive aspects of the person in the eyes of society and giving them the skills that enable them to function within their community at the highest possible level. This is an especially relevant and important consideration for any group in society that is either devalued or in danger of being devalued including people with ID.
Nirje (1969) did not necessarily agree with Wolfensberger’s prescriptive approach to normalization. He did not expect the principle to result in people with ID receiving the same treatment and behaving the same as everyone else, but rather removing the barriers that prevented them from being able to live lives that are as normal as possible for them, in their circumstances (1st April, 2009, Therapeutic Care Journal). This concurs with the social model, which focuses on the shortcomings of society, rather than on the deficiencies of people with ID.

**Social model**

The social model emanated from a United Kingdom based activist group, called the *Union of Physically Impaired Against Segregation* (UPIAS), in 1970’s. The basis for the formation of the group was that people were not in fact limited or oppressed by their disability, but rather a disabling environment of political, social and environmental barriers. The term “social model of disability” was coined by Mike Oliver, who had joined the group and started creating an academic disability programme (Oliver and Sapey, 2012) in 1983.

The social model of disability developed into more or less a political strategy or ideology which propelled people with disability and their support network to challenge and mobilise against barriers that were oppressing them. The strategy of was a non-deficit or strength-based approach, where the focus was removed from the disability towards removing the barriers hindering the people from succeeding in specific circumstances.

The New Zealand Bill of Rights Act (1990), as well as the Human Rights Act (1993) helped to put into policy the rights of people with ID to be accorded the same rights at the rest of the people in the New Zealand society without a disability. However, the theory and practice are not always congruent. The cost of removing disabling barriers is quite high because these have been entrenched in society over long periods of time.
The social model, therefore, is a construct designed to ensure that there is a marrying of the theory and practice.

The social model forms the basis of the New Zealand approach to disability. It is described as a social construct, which includes the fact that society creates barriers for people who have impairments that affect their physical or mental functioning. Whether these barriers are physical, organizational or person-based aspects of society, the effect is that the people with disabilities’ capacities to have their wants, needs and goals met is hindered. The social model is the basis of the New Zealand approach to disability (Office of Disability Issues, 2002).

The more recent view and action in the area of disability in general and intellectual disability in particular, is based upon the social model. The advent of the UN Convention for the Rights of People with Disabilities (2007) gave impetus to the social model. It emphasizes the fact that employment for people with disabilities should be taken from a rights perspective.

Parmenter (2011) concurs with this notion and discusses several components that contribute as barriers in restricting people with ID, apart from the person’s impairment. Societal attitudes and environmental elements stand more in the way of their participation and contribution to their community, than their disability. Parmenter (2011) goes on to suggest that providing reasonable accommodation [Discussed in a later section] in an employment environment, will function as a support that reduces the effect of the impairment. The social model, therefore, emphasizes capabilities, choice and workplace supports in maximizing the work potential of people with disabilities (Unger, 2002).

The social model was supported by a New Zealand government commissioned study in September 2008, chaired by Russell Fairbrother entitled an Inquiry into the quality of care and service provision for people with disabilities Human Rights Commission (2013).
The study showed the government's good intentions to help people with disability lead lives that are as free as possible from disability related constraints. The government claims to have listened to the people, their families and other stakeholders, in terms of people with ID living lives of their own choosing. This is in line with various bodies of literature that show how society creates a disabling environment for people with ID (Goodley, 2001), and that their issues, which encompass participating in the employment sector, should be viewed and tackled from a social model perspective.

There is no denial of the disability in the social model, however it is society where the people with ID exist that generally fails to provide the resources which enable the people to participate effectively as members of their community. In other words, it is society which puts barriers and attitudes that disable the people (Shakespeare, 2006). The totality of the conditions that restrict people with disabilities from this participation in society, whether it comes from individual’s misconceptions or institutional inequity, is that disability is entirely and without doubt a social construct (Samaha, 2007). On 26 September 2008, the same year as the Fairbrother study, the New Zealand government ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons, which it had signed on 30 March 2007. This formed part of the basis for the New Zealand Disability Strategy, which was revised in 2016 to ensure that there is provision of better support for people with disability to achieve their goals and aspirations (Office of Disability Issues, 2018).

The New Zealand Disability Strategy’s vision is, “New Zealand is a non-disabling society - a place where disabled people have an equal opportunity to achieve their goals and aspirations, and all of New Zealand works together to make this happen” (New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016-2026, p. 6). This includes a “new approach to supporting disabled people that offers greater choice and control over the supports they receive, so that they can plan for the lives they want” (New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016-2026, p. 6) called Enabling Good Lives. A report of this new approach was commissioned by the then Minister of Disability
Issues, Tariana Turia, in 2011. Shakespeare and Watson (2001), question whether the social model is too black and white, focusing on the fact that society creates the disabling environment. They argue that the medical model can augment the advantages of the social model, in that it recognizes that in some instances disability needs to be dealt with from a medical perspective.

Social Model and Education

Education is one of the building blocks of any society and mainstreaming of children with ID has had a positive impact on people’s perception of people with disabilities. However, there seems to be a consistency in the literature indicating that children with ID are less likely to have friends and associates at school than children without disabilities (Wiener, 2004). On the other hand, one of the benefits of deinstitutionalization is that the current crop of employees and employers have grown up with people with ID, they do not therefore see them as any different in the workplace.

However, a New Zealand Herald article on 9 March 2014 reported the exclusion of a 14-year-old student with Asperger’s syndrome, highlighting how teachers lacked the skills to deal with students on the Autism Spectrum. While the law and UNCPD clearly discusses the rights of children with disabilities to have the same access to education, with all the necessary resources to make their school experience worthwhile, this article and subsequent ones over the years, reinforce the fact that there is still more required to be done for people with intellectual disabilities in the education sector. The educational experience forms the basis of the employment experiences of people with ID.

The advocacy arm of IHC continues to fight for the right of children with a disability not to be treated any differently from other students without a disability. It conducted surveys in 2014 and 2020 which showed the unlawful and discriminatory practices of some schools in New Zealand which denied children with disability their right to enrol in certain schools. In an interview with the New Zealand Herald as recently as February 2020, the IHC Director of Advocacy, Trish Grant (NZ Herald, 21 February 2020) was quoted at say, 27% of children with disabilities had been denied
enrolment into schools of their choice. However, this continuous highlighting of the discriminatory practices in society could provide the impetus for change not only in education, but also in employment for people with ID.

**Social inclusion**

Until recently in New Zealand, (the last institution, Kimberly was closed in 2006), as in the rest of the Western world, people with ID were confined to institutions and not allowed to participate in ‘ordinary’ life. They were segregated from any form of involvement from the rest of the community and given derogatory and devaluing labels such as ‘handicap’ or ‘patient’. Any form of employment was done in sheltered workshops, which were segregated from the rest of the community. There has been a change in attitudes and treatment of people with ID in relation to community participation and employment in particular. Disability activists, academics, policy makers and support agencies have contributed to this paradigm shift to a view that takes a non-deficit approach. The emphasis of this approach focuses support on what the person can do rather than what they cannot; meaning the quality of their lives is augmented by ensuring that they acquire respectable positions like ‘employee’ within their community (Grant, 2008).

People with ID have been proven, through research, in Britain for example, to be on the fringes of society’s resources which are freely accessible to the rest of the community (Department of Health 2001). The British social policy was acknowledging that there were factors that were disabling the people and measures were outlined to remove the barriers. Consequently, an extremely important statement came out of the study, which is;

> The Government believes that employment is an important route to social inclusion and that all those who wish to work should have the opportunity and support to do so.

(Department of Health 2001, p.84).
The New Zealand government in the Disability Strategy also indicates that it will push for people with ID to take part in all forms of employment, and as much as possible in paid work, to help them to make a valued contribution to society.

Statistics show a proportionally limited number of people with ID in open waged employment, however, with right support system, supported employment is seen widely as the approach that ensures that the people with ID feel valued (Wistow and Schneider, 2003).

The Association for Supported Employment, cited by Wistow and Schneider (2003), defines supported employment as, ‘real work for real pay’. Consequently, the advantages of this concept to society and to the people themselves are deniable and on record. This additionally puts the people in a new light, as it gives them motivation and goals to work towards, as well as the independence for wealth creation through having their own means of production. The net result of this is an increase in their social and self-worth.

Rights Based approach

The social model could be considered to take a right based approach to the treatment of people with ID. The division by Ife (2010) of rights into natural rights, state obligations and constructed rights makes it imperative for both societies in general and governments in particular ensure that people with disabilities have every aspect of their life catered for in the same way as any other member of society. This means there is availability of all the resources, specialized or otherwise, that they may require without being made to feel like a burden to the community. The label ‘a person with disability’ should therefore become redundant with everything they require to live and do everyday things in everyday ways being at their disposal.

Parmenter’s (2011, p.14) assertion that “an intact intellect has historically been highly valued and often seen as the essential characteristic of being fully human”, appears to line up with the fact that people with ID had no
rights and in fact had no citizenship (Stevens et al., 1967 cited in Parmenter, 2011). This essentially means that when it comes to being included in different aspects of human endeavours, including employment, they were at the back of the queue.

There is a general agreement within the ID sector that the rights of people with ID’s are not taken into consideration in environmental design. This means, therefore, there is disabling of people by society, particularly in the employment sector. The New Zealand Human Rights Commission can provide evidence that at least 50% of the complaints that they process are related to employment (The New Zealand Disability Strategy, 2016).

The International Labour Organization (ILO) has had a long track record, since 1955, of ensuring that its standards cater for people with all types of disability, but has recently put more emphasis on the need for training and employment opportunities for people with ID, which shows a deeper understanding of their status and rights as contributing citizens (Parmenter, 2011).

**Declaration of Human Rights**

The Convention on the Right of Persons with a Disability's Article 4(3) makes it imperative that governments should make it a priority that people with disabilities rights are catered for and protected in policy formulation and legislation in the different government departments. The views and contributions of people with ID are expected to be considered in the decision-making process of everything that affects them (Disability Action Plan 2014-2018).

The Declaration of Human Rights encourages people to use rights as a way of influencing action and validating their voice in decision making. Robert Martin, a delegate from New Zealand to the United Nations Disabilities Committee, the first person with ID to make that milestone, is
evidence of the change in how people with ID are viewed (Crisp and Chen, 2014).

**Cultural Considerations**

Employment and the type of education that one receives cannot be divorced. Though there is more equality in educational opportunities for people from different cultural backgrounds, including Māori, according to Bevan-Brown (2001), Māori, were historically believed to be more inclined towards practical subjects. They were channelled towards an education that prepared them for manual labour, which was in fact marginalising them.

The Treaty of Waitangi is given a focus in all aspects of IDEA Service’s service provision and philosophy. Cultural consideration, whether one is Māori, Pacific Islander or any other cultures, is made when supporting people with disability into the open labour market (IDEA, 2017). The South East Auckland Area, in particular, has people from many different cultural backgrounds and the group of people in this research shows evidence of this.

According to Statistics New Zealand website, the Māori, population is 15% of the total population of the country. In IDEA Services, 17% of the population identify as Māori, which is slightly higher than the ratio of people without ID. An understanding of this means, that at an operational level, the organization has bi-culturalism front and centre (Statistics New Zealand, 2014).

The three principles of Partnership, Protection and Participation are embedded in the company’s policies and principles. The individual supports that includes personal planning which is part of IHC My Support. My previous role in the company, which focused on personal planning, emphasized the importance of Bi-Culturalism, as well as multi-culturalism in terms of the choices that they make in setting their goals. The use of Te Whare Tapa Whā (Durie, 1998) model in personal planning, was particularly important in supporting the people of Māori, background to set goals that gave a holistic look at the support they are given. Having some form of employment came up regularly in the personal planning meetings.
The fact that the organization recognizes bi-cultural relations means that it endeavors to do everything to ensure that the people’s lives meet their cultural needs. Our area, IDEA Services South East Auckland, set aside a culturally focused residential facility called Whānau Whare. The managers, staff members and activities are tailored to support the people with their cultural needs.

The staff members, including the management team, encourage people to have a karakia before meals, and before and after meetings. They are encouraged to learn and share their pepeha. Powhiri are undertaken to welcome new staff members and service users. The service users and staff participate regularly in kapa haka festivals. This is important considering the fact the IDEA Services Northern Region, where South East Auckland Area is located, has the highest number of service users of Māori, decent with ID in the whole organization. Right from the interview stage the staff members get an understanding of the place of bi-culturalism and the Treaty of Waitangi.

From the interview process to the different aspects of training offered by the organization as well as the day to day activities in the organization, bi-culturalism is interwoven in everything. The staff members also support the people to participate in activities like Matariki, Polyfest and Pasifika Festivals. Both staff members and people with intellectual disability participate in noho marae to get a better understanding on the Māori, culture. (IDEA Services Interview Guide, Page 9)

**Government policies on the right to work**

The vision of the New Zealand Government Labour Government in collaboration with the Disabled Peoples’ Organisations (DPOs) includes taking into consideration the wellbeing of people with disabilities. A holistic approach needs to be taken which ensures that people get the dignity and respect accorded to the rest of the society in which they live. These give them the opportunities for socialization and participating productively on an equal basis within their community (Disability Action Plan 2014-2018).

This partnership between the government and DPOs, puts a great deal of emphasis on the human rights issues. It has resulted in the government and DPOs cooperating
towards achieving shared results. Consequently, the aim is to increase employment and economic opportunities for the people with different disabilities, including ID. The alliance provides a different perspective that increases employer confidence and provides the impetus for them to give the people a chance to prove themselves in the employment sector and giving them the resources to fulfil their potential. It recognises the obligations in the CRPD, particularly Articles 24 and 27 (Disability Action Plan 2014-2018), which state that:

To achieve this result, the Disability Action Plan will make sure there is a concerted effort on the government’s part in the following areas:

i) Ensuring that there is growth in the educational achievement of the people with ID which in turn will increase the probability of them getting into some form of employment.

ii) Ensuring that there are more opportunities for the people who are progressing from school and vocational education to the job market.

iii) Providing more opportunities for more people with ID in paid employment on an equal basis with others, including providing guidelines for reasonable accommodation.

iv) The government taking the lead in employing the people with ID so that it sets an example to increase employer confidence when employing the people with ID.

The New Zealand Disability Strategy, which was developed in 2001, aimed to eliminate barriers that prevent people with disabilities from reaching their potential and taking part in all aspect of their community (New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016-2026). This has been revised and expanded over the years to the current one whose vision is,

New Zealand is a non-disabling society – a place where disabled people have an equal opportunity to achieve their goals and aspirations, and all of New Zealand works together to make this happen

(NZ Disability Strategy 2016-2026, p.6).
The NZ Disability Strategy’s focus for the future has a number of outcomes in mind which are part of the NZ government policies. One of the outcomes has to do with employment of people with disabilities and will enable employers to gain confidence and willingness to employ people in meaningful positions that utilize their strengths. The employers, at the same time, should be offered ongoing support, guidance and tools to create a fair working environment. Where specialized equipment may be required, reasonable accommodation should be understood and provided by employers.

The cry of people with ID has been that they need ‘real skills and real jobs’. Through the Ministry of Social Development, the New Zealand government took a proactive stance in 2007 to provide the resources necessary to equip the people to be effective and useful members of their community as well as employees. The strategies of the government included a Transition to Work Grant and a Course Participation Assistance which ensured that the people are assisted at all stages from job seeking to family support and course fees (Grant et al., 2007).

**Employer Attitudes towards employing people with Disabilities**

From the perspective of the Ministry of Social Development in New Zealand, based on a study they commissioned, the conclusion was that a lot of research has been done on the feasibility of employing people with disabilities. On the other hand, very little has been done to ascertain the attitudes of the employers towards hiring people with disabilities in the New Zealand context (Woodley et al., 2012).

Of the 106 employers who took part in the Ministry of Social Development Research, 60% said they were unlikely or less likely to employ a person who was moderately intellectually disabled (Woodley et al., 2012). The report goes on to take cognizance of the fact that the way staff, customers and clients might react could be giving employers social permission not to hire people with disabilities (Woodley et al., 2012).
The literature also seems to show a correlation between employer’s experience with disability and their likelihood of employing someone with a disability. Although the graph below (figure 2), from the research shows employers’ relationship with people with disability in general, this also appears to be the general trend with people who have an ID.

Unger’s 2002 study of employer attitudes towards people with disabilities indicated that previous experience with employees with ID or any disability for that matter, plays an important role in whether an employer hires some with ID or not. This, therefore, supports the assertion that, the more exposure and positive experiences employer have with people with ID, the more likely they will employ other people with ID.

Figure 2

Employers’ Connection with Disability

![Graph showing employers' connection with disability](image)

Unger, 2002 (p. 29)

Figure 2 demonstrates the importance of having a family member or close associate with ID in determining whether an employer will employ a person with a disability or not. If an employer has a family member with a disability, the likelihood increases; 50% of the group with some association with disability actually have family members with a disability. Only about 37% of people with no connection to someone with a disability are likely to employ a person with a disability.
People with ID are said to have a better reliability record than some of their non-disabled counterparts. According to Unger (2002), reliability in attendance and low turnover could put the people with ID in good stead with employers, who would be willing to compromise performance for these recommendable qualities. This means that some employers are willing to devote time and training resources in exchange for reliable, dedicated workers as well as improving their workforce diversity, and corporate public image and social responsibility.

Different studies that took a number of variables into consideration have been carried out, which reinforce the lack of evidence to support some employers’ concerns. Poor interpersonal relationships, reduced productivity, costs involved in making modifications and higher insurance premiums are among the factors that lead to a reduction of potential employers who are willing to take on board people with ID (Unger, 2002). The results of the research are further skewed by the fact that many of the people taking part in the surveys have no hands-on experience of employing people with ID or of supervising them.

Robles (2012), discusses hard skills, which are the technical knowhow and expertise of the job, versus the soft skills, which include social skills. She emphasizes that company executives actually place a great deal of weight on the interpersonal skills when considering employees for positions in their companies. Among her top ten soft skills were “integrity, communication, courtesy, responsibility, social skills, positive attitude, professionalism, flexibility, teamwork, and work ethic” (Robles, 2012, p 455).

**Successful models of transition to work**

The Samhall project in Sweden is an example of a model that has had relative success. In a sense, it is a mixture of the sheltered workshop model and open community-based employment in mainstream companies (Skedinger and Widerstedt, 2003).

The Swedish government created a state own profitable company, Samhall, with one of the objectives of the company being to act as the last resort employer, when all other pathways to employment have been thoroughly examined (Skedinger and
The aim of the Swedish government in establishing Samhall was to provide employment for people with different kinds of disabilities, however, the principle goal was to give people with extreme disabilities opportunities to have occupations that are meaningful. The ultimate aim is to gradually integrate them into mainstream employment where they can participate inclusively with general population. Where necessary, the Swedish government subsidizes the employee’s wages, modification, transport and anything else that ensure a smooth transition into the new positions. The most important consideration in the Samhall project is given to people with ID, as well as those with multiple diagnoses. In other words, there is cream skimming for these prioritized groups, making them the highest percentage of employees at Samhall and potentially opening doors of community integration for them (Skedinger and Widerstedt, 2003).

The company of course has other goals, including making profit and reducing its reliance on financial input from the government. This raises potential conflict between its objectives. An interesting observation can be made on the operation of Samhall. Companies generally want people with a high capacity for work and try as much as possible to minimise turnover of the trained and productive employees. Samhall on the other hand goes in the opposite direction, employing people with limited work capacity for work, training them to make them more productive before releasing them where possible to work in mainstream companies. This unorthodox way of functioning as a company makes it necessary to have government intervention to cater for the additional costs that arise from addition costs that Samhall faces. This government intervention ensures the company’s additional costs that are necessitated by the provision of reasonable accommodation or adjustments being made in the work environment to suit the people with disabilities are covered. Unlike employees without disabilities, Swedish law protects employees with disabilities from being dismissed when there is reduction in the demand for the goods and services produced by Samhall, which also makes it imperative that the government provides support to the company (Skedinger and Widerstedt, 2003).

**The Bedford Group in Australia**
An Australian based not for profit organisation is another example of a success story in terms of employment provision for people with disabilities, including those with ID. Presenting at the IHC Workability International Conference 2016, the Bedford Group CEO, Sally Powell and the Chief HR Officer, Marnie Brokenshire expressed how the group has developed a commercially viable venture that delivers meaningful employment outcomes for people with disabilities. The group’s drive and goals include the fact that work should not be a veneer for welfare, but should ultimately result in outcomes that have economic and social value. One of its aims is to build and run businesses that are sustainably independent of government funding.

Bedford’s strategy includes giving people opportunities to work on real commercial contracts with well-known global brands. They also provide both training and assessments to ensure suitability of the environments for the individual’s needs and capabilities (Bedford website, 2018). The wide range of training that the group provides demonstrates its commitment to the success of the employees it helps to place. The training ranges from personal hygiene, behaviour management to the ability to tell the time.

**The Hell Pizza partnership with IHC**

Active in Hell is a strategic partnership between IHC and Hell Pizza which was initiated in 2013, as a way to offer people with ID the opportunity to get training in the hospitality industry while getting paid. The strength of the training lies in the fact that it is paid, tailored for the individuals, and relatively short (six weeks). However, it gives the people with ID the opportunity to receive on the job training, the possibility of getting permanent employment with Hell Pizza and an avenue to move into other catering businesses.

We’ve always wanted to pay the trainees because first and foremost they deserve it, they’re working hard and they’re providing real work in the stores so they should be paid, but also we wanted it to be as close as possible to a real life work environment where they were turning up at certain times, doing certain roles, being responsible for their work and being rewarded accordingly for it.
Since the inception of the programme, 82 young people with ID had graduated by end of 2016, thirty-six of them just in 2016. In 2017, the company's goal was to fill a total of 69 positions throughout its 69 stores around the country. By the end of 2016, eight of the graduates had acquired either full time or part time positions within the Hell Pizza group (IHC, 2017). This may seem like an insignificant figure considering the number of people with ID, but the fact that companies are opening up and giving them a chance could be considered a step in the right direction.

**Barriers to Employment - Reasonable accommodation**

The concept of 'reasonable accommodation' has been receiving a great deal of emphasis in the disability sector in the 2000’s to support the idea of equal opportunities for all. The Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EECC) in the United States of America has described reasonable accommodation as a device that enables individuals to enjoy equal employment opportunities (Parmenter, 2011). In other words, it forces employers to provide more resources that apparently put the people with ID at an advantage, while in fact levelling the field for them.

The preferential treatment legislated as part of the welfare reform USA law was described by the Supreme Court as requiring employers to treat people with disabilities differently, hence taking away the barriers their disability put in the way of them producing the same results as their counterparts without disabilities (Carroll et al., 2014). This conforms to Article 2 of the CRPD, which describes it as a right that requires adaptations to be made in a work environment to mitigate disadvantages brought on by the disability.

The reasonable accommodation is not only limited to physical barriers but should be taken holistically to include the possibility of instructions and information being available in an easy to read format. In other words, they should be given room to
gain the necessary skills or opportunities to operate at their skill level without being put in a vulnerable position to encounter discrimination (Parmenter, 2011).

(Crawford, 2011), comparing the data of the job accommodations in Canada,

![Table 4](image)

between people with ID and those with other disabilities discovered that, people with ID required more employment supported and yet got less than people with other disabilities based on Canada’s flagship survey, the Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS) of 2006 (table 4, which is table 16 in Crawford, 2011).

The survey seemed to indicate the necessity of reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities in general and those with ID in particular, hence the question of whether employers would rather employ people with other disabilities rather those with ID, in view of what on the surface appears to be greater costs in making modifications. Reasonable accommodation should, therefore, be considered an important concept when the government provides support to employers employing people with ID.

IHC’s (IDEA’s umbrella body) Mission Statement reveals its roots within the social model, it says, “IHC will advocate for the rights, inclusion and welfare of all people with intellectual disabilities and support them to live satisfying lives in the community”
(IHC, 2018). This forms the basis of IDEA’s values of *Inclusion, Responsiveness, Support and Empowerment*. It has remained as the core vision of the organization and forms the basis for its approach in relationship to getting the people it supports into mainstream employment (IHC, 2015). There is historical evidence that people with ID were employed in the mainstream, particularly in the Second World War, without their contribution being recognized as a result of their being institutionalized (Hand and Reid, 1996). Parents of people with ID who established IHC in a sense sought to overcome these injustices.

Supported Employment is one of IDEA Service’s key strategies for accomplishing its four values of responsiveness, inclusion, empowerment and support. As a consequence, the majority of its Area offices have a dedicated Supported Employment Coordinator responsible for supporting the people with ID into jobs and staying in them. The main aim of this arm of the organisation is to provide a balance between the mainstream support they receive on the job and the support from IDEA Services Ltd.

The objective of supported employment in IDEA Services is to find a job and place a person in the job, providing them with support until they can do it themselves. The job should be real and paid at the same time having all the necessary accommodations put in place in order for them to succeed (Bray and Gates, 2003). IDEA Services, as part of its advocacy activities has also been involved in carrying out studies to both prove the shortcomings of the government’s and its own programmes.

Citing Peach (2006), the IHC’s 2017 Valuing All: Leave No One Behind report, provided evidence that investing in support for employment for disabled people is an investment worth making. A cost benefit paper by Workbridge with Allen and Clarke found that if disabled people had the same rate of employment as the general population the return on investment would be more than eight times the placement costs. This would yield over $1.1 billion a year in welfare savings, tax revenue, and increased economic activity (IHC 2017, Page 17).

(Bray and Gates, 2003), of the Donald Beasley Institute concurs with the IHC, 2017 Valuing All: Leave No One Behind report in acknowledging the reason
why people with ID want and should get jobs. These include the fact that the people want jobs to increase their independence, make a living, prevent boredom, and have some kind of career.

Policies and programmes

IDEA Services Ltd has specific guidelines which dictate how its Supported Employment sector operates. It emphasizes the fact that everyone should be given an opportunity, taking into consideration their ability, to be included in their community, including open employment. The person with an ID should be accorded the resources, the opportunities and individualized support to be successful on the job. The employers will be given the required information and where necessary, the training and subsidies that help them to appropriately bridge any barrier that might hinder the favourable outcomes expected (IDEA, 2017)

A transition plan is mandatory for the success of the programme. IDEA Services Ltd in conjunction with education providers takes practical step that ensure a smooth transition from school to work. This includes a period of two to three years of work trials and job skills training. Apart from that matches, suitability and potential for natural supports in the work environment will form part of the process. IDEA Services Ltd’s support workers’ function in providing agency support will be structured to fade once the person has settled on the job. Where IDEA Services Ltd does not have the required expertise, its commitment to the people it supports means that it will redirect them to more specialized agencies like Workbridge.
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

Methodology

The type of research that I undertook uses specific methodologies and methods. After having considered the different paradigms, what stood out to be the most appropriate for my research was the transformative paradigm (Mertens, 2007). Two features stand out in the transformative paradigm, firstly a commitment to social justice.

The basic beliefs of the transformative paradigm provide an overarching framework for addressing the issues of social justice and consequent methodological decisions. The role of the researcher in this context is reframed as one who recognizes inequalities and injustices in society and strives to challenge the status quo.

(Mertens, 2007, p 212)

Sweetman, Badiee and Creswell (2010) extend the discussion of the place of social justice in what they call transformative emancipatory research (p 2), by listing a set of criteria that identify the presence of social justice aim in the research. These include:

(a) Do the authors openly reference a problem in a community of concern?
(b) Do the authors openly declare a theoretical lens?
(c) Were the research questions (or purposes) written with an advocacy stance?
(d) Did the literature review include discussions of diversity and oppression?
(e) Did the authors discuss appropriate labelling of the participants?
(f) Did data collection and outcomes benefit the community?
(g) Did the participants initiate the research, and/or were they actively engaged in the project?
(h) Did the results elucidate power relationships?
(i) Did the results facilitate social change?
(j) Did the authors explicitly state their use of a transformative framework?

The second feature of Mertens’ (2007) transformative paradigm is a commitment to using research methods, which engage a rich perspective of the topic of enquiry from the participants in the research. This favours the interpretivist paradigm, which privileges the participants’ view of the world and a phenomenological approach in which the participants’ lived experience is the focus of the research (O’Leary, 2014). People with ID are among the most marginalized communities and it is important that our social research methodologies be sensitive to that (Sweetman, at el, 2010).

The interpretivist paradigm and phenomenological approach is part of a mixed methods approach, ensures that people with intellectual disability’s voices are heard or at least the research creates an advocacy platform. Goldberg, Higgins, Raskind and Herman (2003), also argue that a qualitative approach can provide a richer understanding of characteristics, attributes, qualities and environmental factors which affect life outcomes for people with ID, making it one of the appropriate approaches I used in this research. In other words, this approach accepts and values the fact there is a search for a holistic meaning and the research is conducted in the natural settings, and small numbers and non-random sampling strategies are used (O’Leary, 2014).

Sweetman et al. (2010) add to this the importance of the use of a mixed methods approach in transformative research. They define the mixed methods as the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods. So, to the methods derived from the interpretivist and the phenomenological approaches, transformative research includes methods drawn from a post-positivist methodology. Whereas the interpretivist and the phenomenological approaches are about understanding the subjective experience of participants and describing this as a narrative, the positivist
approach takes an objective stance which can only be applied by reducing data through measurement to numbers which may allow predictions to be made around the best ways to ensure social justice. The positivist approach in quantitative research often, therefore, focuses on specific truths which rely “on hypotheses, variables and statistics … generally on a large scale, but without much depth” (O’Leary, 2014, p.121) but increasing the accuracy of the predictions set out in the hypotheses.

However, the mixed approach is gaining traction from the fact that more and more social science researchers are acknowledging the value of taking advantage of the strengths of each method. This means that richness is brought to the research, through the use of both inductive and deductive reasoning being enhanced by numbers and statistics, as well as dialogue, narratives and pictures (O’Leary, 2014).

In essence therefore, the transformative mixed approach’s emphasis on approaching social justice issues is of great value because of its potential to give voice from a human rights perspective, to the marginalized that are not generally given the privilege in research. It is cognizant of the fact that “assumptions that explicitly address power issues, social justice, and cultural complexity (are addressed) throughout the research process” (Mertens, 2007, p.212).

The fact that in general, research tends not to serve the sector of society that does not hold positions of power in the study, also means that the human rights of those not holding power may not necessarily be accounted for (Mertens, 2007). These power imbalances require a thorough examination, including social justice and cultural considerations which the transformative paradigm framework provides. People with ID, as already noted, are part of a marginalized sector of society, while they are encouraged and supported to have a voice, anyone doing research that involves them needs to be constantly aware of social justice and cultural matters (Mertens, 2007).

Kaupapa Māori theory correlates with the transformative paradigm, in its emphasis on the self-determination or Tino Rangatiratanga of research participants, among other principles (Smith, 1990). The people with intellectual disability’s voice in the focus group discussion, as well as in the formal and informal meetings that formed
part of the data collection, to an extent align with this principle. The cultural
consideration taken in the research ethics application as well as the use of Māori
terminology in respect to one of the participants took into consideration “Taonga
Tuku Iho – The Principle of Cultural Aspiration” (Smith, 1990), is part of the Kaupapa
Māori theory. Kaupapa Māori which literally means the Māori way of doing things;
entails taking a Māori worldview in conducting research, therefore showing respect
and consideration to the cultural norms in doing the research (Cram and Mertens,
2016).

As a researcher, the paradigm that I use is dependent upon the philosophical
framework that I hold intentionally or unintentionally. Denzin and Lincoln (2005),
cited in Mertens (2010, p. 10), “summarize the meaning of paradigm as a set of
beliefs that guide action; and specifically in the research context, reflect the
researcher’s worldview that is composed of four sets of philosophical beliefs:
axiology (ethics), epistemology (knowledge), ontology (reality), and methodology
(inquiry).”

Ontology assumes the existence of “… multiple realities that are socially
constructed,”(Mertens,2005, p.3) … including the necessity of being “….explicit
about the social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, gender, and disability values
that define realities.” (Mertens 2005, p.3). While epistemology, extends on this
assumption and explains that knowledge of the realities depends upon the two-way
flow of information between the researcher and the participants. Mertens (2005, p.3)
goes on to explain how “knowledge is socially and historically located within a
complex cultural context.” Whether as a researcher, the methodology I chose is
quantitative or qualitative or mixed methods, it was imperative that our definition of
the problem came from a mutual understanding between me and the participants.
This meant that there was room to make adjustments in order to take into account
cultural complexities and power issues including discrimination and oppression
(Mertens, 2005, p.3).

Basically, the transformative mixed methods approach was used in the research.
Interviews and a focus group which fall in qualitative frame were used. This was
augmented by the use of a questionnaire in the form of a Supported Living Assessment, which comes from the quantitative frame.

Another way of looking at my research is considering it as six mini case studies. Case studies can include both quantitative and qualitative data. O’Leary (2014) explains a case study as “a method of studying elements of our social fabric through comprehensive description and analysis of a single situation or case” (p.194). In other words, the mini case studies that developed as the research evolved, gave depth, richness and added credibility to the study. Though case study leans more towards the qualitative frame, the use of quantitative data as in the case of the questionnaire provided an important dimension in answering the research question.

The different factors that have led to the successful employment of one group of three were examined in detail. Their gender, age, cultural background was encompassed as part of the study. However, the personal attributes they possess, and the value of the support network also received attention. On the other hand, there was be a comparative analysis of why the other three have not had the same kind of success, stemming from the similar factors, even though they have generally similar characteristics.

**Sample**

Six participants with ID from IDEA Services South East Auckland, three of whom have been in employment for the past one year, were chosen. The other three participants are people who apparently have similar characteristics but have not had the same fate in open employment and were used to provide a comparison. This information was obtained from the company data base. The sample had a gender and multicultural mix to reflect the South Auckland’s human geographical terrain. Comparison of the two groups allowed me to ascertain whether the different factors that have led to the successful employment of one group are environmental and therefore teachable or otherwise replicable. Factors such as personal attributes and
skills, the value of the support network and employers’ attitudes and the theory and practice of IDEA’s employment policies will receive attention.

Non-random or convenience sampling was used to pick out the six people from the IDEA Service data base. This is also known as purposive sampling. This is a useful method in this research because it enhances understanding of individual experience and perceptions by selecting ‘information rich’ cases, which is individuals who provide the greatest insight into the research question (Devers, Kelly & Frankel, 2000, O’Leary, 2014). The choice of the sample was also based on the fact that, I have noticed some consistency and longevity in the employment of one group and the opposite in the other group. Apart from that, I have created some kind of rapport with them which helped in their willingness to participate in the research (O’Leary, Parle-McDermott, Molloy, Kirke, Johnson, Conley and Mills, 2014). The whole group was made up of four males and two females, who included one Māori and one Pacific Island participant.

The sample for both the in-depth interviews and the focus group as already mentioned was therefore based on the qualities that the people bring to the research. By default, it involved the support network of the particular individuals with ID who were participating in the research.

I picked the group of people from my part of my caseload in my previous role as an Outcomes Facilitator. For the employed group, I worked down from the person who has been in employment for longest period, making selections until all the criteria have been met. I looked at the people who are roughly around the same age group, have worked for almost the same length of time. For the not in work group, the participants selected were the closest match to those in the employed group in gender, culture and age. I selected people from my own caseload as I have created a level of rapport with them which increased their comfort in doing the research and lessened some of the communication barriers that people with ID may have. Also, because I know them well, I can assess their skills informally and expeditiously. My interaction with both the support networks and the people with ID in my previous role created a platform for me when recruiting the participants.
However, the recruitment of the participants followed the informed consent process where each of the participants was approached and given the option to participate in the research or not. For ethical reasons and to avoid perception of coercion, the IDEA Services Supported Employment Coordinator and support staff approached the participants to obtain their consent. The support network of each individual was approached, and each individual given the option to take part. To ensure there was no appearance of coercion from the fact that the participants were known to me, the support workers were tasked to ask them and give them the option to participate or not to participate in the research.

**Methods**

Three main methods were used for the data collection phase of the research, semi-structured interviews, a focus group and an assessment tool. IDEA Services Ltd’s policies were also considered.

Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews were used as a data collection method and were conducted to ascertain the attributes possessed by the people with ID who have been able to obtain and maintain their job. The interviews helped in analysing and giving a rich description of the impact of the personal attributes. The role of the support organisation, the family and employer’s perception of people with ID all came under scrutiny as these interviews were tailored for each target group.

An analysis of the responses contributed towards answering the research question. DeRoche and Lahman, (2008) emphasize the value of semi-structured in-depth interviews as a way to obtain more detailed information than what any other method could provide. Interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim and as part of the ethical consideration consent was sort and accuracy of transcription checked with the participants. Informed consent was sought prior to conducting the interviews and an alternative method of recoding the interviews were negotiated in the event that participants were not comfortable with voice recording.
Although the interviews were based on predetermined questions, they were allowed to unfold in a conversational manner which offered the participant the opportunity to explore issues they felt were important (Clifford, French and Valentine, 2010). To provide a comparative holistic analysis of the factors, the semi-structured interviews were conducted with the people, support staff, employers and other members of support organizations. Most questions were open-ended which gave room to the participants to express their experiences in a personalised manner.

For IDEA Services Ltd the Supported Employment Coordinator was a key informant as he has specialized knowledge and knows what is going on (O’Leary, 2014) because his work involves looking for employment placements, supporting the people on the job as well as supporting the employers.

The interview questions considered the following aspects; what do the different research participants consider ‘successful employment’ to be? What are the specific attributes that contribute to the successful employment firstly, from the person with ID’s point of view and secondly, the support network’s point of view? What is the role of the support network in this success?

All three of the participants with ID who have had success with employment were happy to give me the contact details of the managers or supervisors of their workplaces. I was easily able to contact them by phone and organise appropriate times for the interviews. While the supervisors all preferred to meet with me on the workdays of the participants, after the introductions, the participants consented to me interviewing their supervisors in their absence. I assured the supervisors that I would limit the sessions to half an hour and kept to the time limit. To protect the identity of the people with ID participating in the research it was important to use pseudonyms instead of their actual names.

For Darrell who is not in mainstream employment, the business owner for whom he does contract work felt more comfortable having the interview at the IDEA Services day programme workshop. Though it was quite a busy and noisy place, we were able to find a quiet space. For Samantha’s employer, our contact was through email until we were able to agree on a set time for the interview.
The Poly-Emp staff members were happy to give me as much time as I needed and were open to sharing some of the resources which they use for job the training and placements. Poly-Emp Employment & Advisory Service is a Charitable Trust established in 1993, with the purpose of assisting graduating students with disabilities into paid employment (Poly-Emp, 2017). The interview with the two staff members gave flesh and richness to the interviews which I had with the employers. Four out of the six participants have gone through the Poly-Emp programmes and so the staff had valuable information on each of the participants, in terms of their personalities, work ethics and support networks.

I conducted the interviews with the IDEA Services Supported Employment Coordinator and the support workers in their work time and environment. While they were happy to meet me outside their work time, the management of the company suggested that I meet them during work time in order not to overexert the staff and also to show understanding that they are invested in the research.

**Focus groups**

A focus group composed of the six people with ID was conducted to explore the specific factors that lead to the successful employment of the people with ID. The group was made up of a mixture of people with disability who have held jobs for the past year or more and those who have not had level of success. The focus group meeting was approximately one and half hours and I provided refreshments for the meeting.

Collins and Hussey (2009) describe the use of focus groups as a method to collect data relating to the feelings and opinions of people who are involved in a common situation or discussing the same phenomena. Interviews and observations are used as part of the data collection. The interactions between and dynamics of the group increase the richness of the data collected. Focus groups are about listening, paying attention and being open to what people say, at the same time being non-judgmental. It also involves creating a comfortable environment for people to be able to share (Krueger and Casey, 2000).
Since there were a number of occasions when I was able to meet the people with ID in connection with the research, the focus group was used to bring them together to bounce ideas of each other and therefore draw from each other’s responses giving more richness to the conversations and data. The focus group of the people with ID met once over the duration of the research. However, I was able to get clarity on some of the answers that the participants gave in the focus group discussion through the informal and regular contact that I had with them.

My previous role in the IDEA Services gave me the skills to be able to facilitate the focus group, coupled with the trust that has been built with some of them over the years; I was able to use language that was suitable for people with ID.

The pre-planning for the focus group meeting took some time and required coordination and negotiation. Two of the female participants used to be flat mates, but one of them decided to leave IDEA Services Ltd during the course of the research. Though she agreed to keep participating in the research, she was not available to be part of the focus group. She was willing to comment and add her own thoughts to the ideas that stemmed from the focus group. The home which the two women used to share was in suburb in South Auckland. Though they were flat mates and received similar support from the organisation, one was able to get and maintain a job, while the other was not able to hold a job consistently.

Two of the participants are men who share a house on the other side of Papatoetoe. One of them has been able to get and keep a job, while the other has not been able to do so. The third male participant lives in a home which he shares with three other flat mates. His home has full staff support. He spends the day in a day programme centre and has sleepover staff at home. The last male participant lives in Pakuranga in a Supported Living home with two flat mates.

All six research participants have different programmes in terms of their work hours and activities. It was therefore challenging to organize the focus group meeting. We therefore organized to have the meeting at the end of the day, between 4.30pm and 5.00pm. Fortunately, the organization is supportive of the research and I was offered a van to pick up the participants for the meeting. However, having contacted them the day before the meeting, I picked up the male participant who attends the day programme in Manukau and drove to Pakuranga to pick up the second male.
participant. We got there at 4.00pm as per our arrangement, but he was nowhere to be found. We waited for about half an hour and he simply did not turn up and had not informed his flat mates of his whereabouts. Since it was peak traffic time, it took a lot longer to go and pick up the other three from Papatoetoe and we only got to the Airport McDonalds at about 5.30pm. The expectation for a meal kept their enthusiasm intact.

The choice of McDonald’s for the meeting was my suggestion and resonated well with all the members of the group. It is their favourite fast food place and everyone knows exactly what to order. I used the meeting rooms at the different McDonalds branches when I ran personal planning meetings for the different people on my caseload. Sarah, one of the members works at a different branch of McDonalds and was very aware of how the systems work. This easily made everyone comfortable and it was their ‘happy place’.

Two participants with ID did not manage to take part in the focus group, including the male participant who lives in Pakuranga, who is in employment and the other, a female participant, who is not in employment. As already pointed out, they were however, willing to be interviewed separately. Their ability to express themselves and to reasonably comprehend the questions meant that the interviews enriched the data. The already existing relationship with the participants helped with ease of communication with them. How the risk of being known to these participants was alleviated was clarified in the ethics.

**Skills Assessment**

All six participants were assessed using the Independent Living skills checklist devised by the Family and Community Services (2015) of New South Wales; these were modified for New Zealand conditions and cover such areas as money, housing, employment, health and well-being, daily living skills and personal and social development. These skills were chosen because they are not specifically aimed as ID, but at young people in general transitioning to work and living in the community.

This skills assessment as a quantitative data collection method, ensured that I could ascertain the level of understanding of all the participants in supported living skills,
hence eliminating or substantiating the value of these skills in whether one was able to get and keep a job or not. The skills assessment was not merely used as an add-on, but to provide depth to qualitative data collected through interviews and focus group discussion.

Different categories, which ranged from Daily Living Skills to Legal Rights and Responsibilities, formed part of the assessment. Since the assessment was quite long (125 questions) and would require some concentration, I asked the support workers to help the participants with ID to answer the questions over a period of up to two weeks, giving them the opportunity to do it at their own pace and convenience. The answers to the questions were classed into three categories which in turn would help in the data analysis. They were; 1 = not able to do the task, 2 = able to complete the task with minimal help and lastly 3 = independently able to do the task.

Data Analysis

The data was analysed as an ongoing process in the research. Hence the realization that PloyEmp staff needed to be interviewed stemming from their constant mention in the process of collecting the data. According to Pope and Mays (2009), in most qualitative research the analytical process begins in the data collection phase as data already gathered is analysed and fed into the process and helps shape the ongoing data collection. This provided opportunities for reflection on the different processes being used and the value of the data to the research. The process of data analysis and interpretation in fact determines the outcome of the research and whether the research question has been answered or not. This in turn determines the validity of the research.

The recordings of both the interviews and the focus group discussions were transcribed and stored in a systematic way. Mays and Pope (2006) note this is important irrespective of whether all the data was analysed or only sections of it. Also, that the depth of the data collected and the subjectivity involved in the process makes it difficult to analyse qualitative data. Participants’ nonverbal communication through body language and other cues can add more meaning to the data when analysed correctly.
The data was coded according to specific themes that emerged from the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. A thematic analysis was used following the grounded theory approach (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis is a means of “identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organises and describes your data set in (rich) detail. However, frequently it goes further than this, and interprets various aspects of the research topic” (Braun and Clarke, , 2006, p.6).

The analysis of the Supported Independent Skills assessment involved creating excel spreadsheets to group the individuals according to their responses to the questions and colour coding them to make it easier see the variations clearly. The spreadsheet were also used in coming up with graphical representation of the results, making it easier to read the pattern and come to some conclusion of how the participants’ scores may or may not have an impact on their employment prospects and their ability to maintain the job.

Mini case studies emerged from the analysis of the research and became a major aspect of examining the themes resulting from the semi-structured interviews and comparing them with the scores from the quantitative data. Considering each of the participant in detail brought more richness to the research. Each individual’s skills, networks, training and personal attributes were analysed to provide a picture of the probable resources they may or may not possess, leading to them being or not being able to get and keep employment.

**Ethical Considerations**

The ethical considerations for a research dealing with people with ID are vast and thorough detail and informed consent processes were followed. IDEA Services has an informed consent process that was used and made reference to as part of the research. Applications were made to the Clinical Director, the Northern Regional GM and the South East Auckland Area manager because this is part of the IDEA Services policy when conducting any research relating to and involving the people it supports. For the integrity of the research and as part of the ethical consideration, maintaining the dignity and wellbeing of the participants is paramount (O'Leary, 2014)
Following the ethics approval application to the Unitec Ethics Committee (Application No. 2016-1002), the purpose of the research was articulated in a clear format to all the participants involved. For the people with ID in particular, consultation was undertaken with People First Organisation to develop an easy read interview format. Prior permission was sought to audio tape interviews and focus groups. Participants were asked to check and approve the transcripts of the tapes before they were used as part of the data analysis. The data acquired and analysed for the research was treated confidentially and anonymity assured as per Unitec Ethics Committee regulations and IDEA Services policy. It would be stored in a locked place at the completion of the research for a period of up five years. Participants had a right to withdraw from the research at any time without explanation.
CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Participant Profile
Six people with ID (Service Users) were chosen as part of a non-random or purposive sample to take part in the study. Three of the people had been able to obtain and maintain employment at the time of the study for at least two years of continuous employment. On the other hand, three had not been able to do so, while there was no apparent difference in the members of the two groups. The make-up of the two groups was also similar in that they were both made up of two males and one female (table 5). The rest of participants in the research were part of the support network that had made one form of contribution or the other in the employment of the six people with ID.

While there is a small number of people within IDEA Services Ltd South East Auckland who have been employed for twenty or more years, it was decided that a group as close as possible to being new entrants into the organization take part in the research. The group of people with ID was therefore made up of two people in their twenties one male, one female, two in their thirties, one male, one female and two over forty, both male, one employed and the other not. The group as a whole was made up of people from different ethnic backgrounds, four New Zealand European or Pākehā, one Māori and one Pacific Island person. There were four males and two females. The sample of participants with intellectual disabilities corresponded roughly with the New Zealand, which is broken down roughly, according to the 2013 New Zealand population census into, Māori population 15%, Pākehā 74 % and Pacific Island people and other ethnic groups, 11% (Statistics New Zealand, 2014)

There was a high percentage of female participants in the support network, particularly in terms of those people employed by the support organisations, namely IDEA Services Ltd, 83% [5 female support workers and one male, supported employment coordinator] and Poly-Emp 100% (table 5). This aligns with the statistics derived from the New Zealand 2013 Population census which shows that the service industry is female dominated. The male employers, who participated in the research, employed the two male service users who had maintained their jobs in the
labourer and related elementary services. So, while the support network for the people with ID is female dominated, when it came to the jobs, it appeared, both for those who have kept their jobs and those have not, the skill level required, was basic. They were either employed in manual labour or simple routine jobs, namely Warehouse Yard / Packaging, hospitality / cleaning and filing.
Table 5. Key characteristics of the service user participants and the staff and employers supporting them. *range for the Independent Living Skills is 1=not achieved, 2=partly achieved, 3=achieved (Pseudo- names were used for all the participants)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service User</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Associated condition</th>
<th>Accommodation (SIL=supported independent, NIJ=not in job)</th>
<th>Independent Living Skills mean score*</th>
<th>Job type</th>
<th>Employer</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Support Employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>SIL</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>Warehouse Yard Packaging</td>
<td>Peter</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Manager – Garden supplies</td>
<td>Liz</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>SIL</td>
<td>Alice and Cynthia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerald</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>40-49</td>
<td></td>
<td>SIL</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>Warehouse Yard Packaging</td>
<td>Mike</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Warehouses foreman</td>
<td>Lee</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>SIL</td>
<td>Gordon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>Down's Syndrome</td>
<td>SIL</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>Hospitality / Cleaning</td>
<td>Annah</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Fast food shop manager</td>
<td>Aroha</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>SIL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samantha</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>20-29</td>
<td></td>
<td>SIL</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>Office assistant</td>
<td>Supriah</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>HR Manager</td>
<td>Aroha</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>SIL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craig</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>Down's Syndrome</td>
<td>SIL</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>Warehouse Yard Packaging</td>
<td>Not able to be interviewed</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Not able to be interviewed</td>
<td>Jas</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>SIL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darrell</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>NIJ</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>Warehouse Yard Packaging</td>
<td>Shirley*</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Business owner - packaging</td>
<td>Susan</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Support Worker (Vocational Centre)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Shirley is not Darrell’s original employer, but brings work to him in the Vocational Centre.
The total number of employers who participated in the research was five, three female (60%) and two males (40%). The sixth employer of one of the service users who had been in employment could not be reached to take part, but the insight from the support worker and focus group discussion gave a picture of the possible reasons why he has not been able to keep his job.

Of the six Service Users, one lived in a residential group home, while the other five were in a Supported Living situation. The service user who lived in a residential group home did not necessarily have any say in terms of his home and his finances were managed by the organisation through the Service Managers and support workers. He had constant supervision because of some challenging behaviour with which he presented. However, from a causal observer’s point of view, his interaction in the focus group, as well as the responses from the support workers and the warehouse packaging employer who worked with him in the day programme centre, his life skills were almost at a par with the other five. His mean score of 1.82 (table 5) on the Independent Living Assessment was not much different from the rest of the group.

From the employer’s perspective, the focus group discussions and the staff support worker’s point of view, he apparently had qualities and capabilities which would make him manage, on face value, to succeed in a mainstream employment situation. The packaging business owner’s comment about this service user portrays the picture of a person who commands respect and capabilities that would see him function substantially well within society. Her comment was, “he just has this mana about him and he kind of has the respect of all the others clients that are here, which is quite interesting for me outside looking in to see” (Shirley, 2017).

Of the two female service users, one had not been able to hold a job, and yet had the overall highest Independent Living Assessment score of 2.74. The type of job which she was doing was quite menial and did not require much skill. She was doing filing. One of the reasons given by her former employer for laying her off was the move by the company from a paper based working environment, where a filing assistant was required, to computer-based systems. Her skill level therefore made her redundant. She is a casualty of mechanisation and computerisation, which has not only affected people with disabilities, but members of the rest of society, where
scraping the role and using computers or machines is more economical. As pointed out she scored the highest on the personal development skills and was the most articulate in terms of communication and yet she could not hold a job.

Other factors may therefore contribute to this outcome. The range of jobs in which the service users are involved or have been involved in, could generally be considered uninspiring, being in the hospitality industry, warehouse/yard/packaging and office assistant. The amount of support the people receive both from IDEA Services Ltd and the rest of the community might beg the question of whether it is viable to put the people into employment or not.
Analysis of the Independent Living Skills Assessment Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill groups (= no. of items)</th>
<th>In job (IJ)</th>
<th>Not in job (NIJ)</th>
<th>Difference (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Money (19)</td>
<td>8.67 (46%)</td>
<td>7.67 (40%)</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing (13)</td>
<td>4.67 (36%)</td>
<td>3.67 (28%)</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and Training(9)</td>
<td>2.67 (30%)</td>
<td>3.00 (33%)</td>
<td>-4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment (13)</td>
<td>5.67 (44%)</td>
<td>7.33 (56%)</td>
<td>-13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Wellbeing (24)</td>
<td>16.67 (69%)</td>
<td>16.00 (67%)</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Living Skills (19)</td>
<td>10.33 (54%)</td>
<td>11.00 (58%)</td>
<td>-4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal and Social Development(14)</td>
<td>4.33 (31%)</td>
<td>11.67 (83%)</td>
<td>-52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Rights and Responsibilities(14)</td>
<td>6.33 (45%)</td>
<td>8.00 (57%)</td>
<td>-12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>61.33 (49%)</td>
<td>69.00 (55%)</td>
<td>-6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 is a summary of the results of the Independent Living Skills Assessment and overall shows that the service users who were not able to hold the jobs they were placed in had 6% more Independent Living Skills than those who remained in work. The NIJ group were, on average, independent in 55% of the 125 tasks on the assessment, whereas the IJ group were independent for 49% tasks. There seemed therefore, to be very little difference in the competence score of all the participants based on the Independent Living Checklist, who are all in Supported Independent Living (SIL), except one.

The data shows less areas of competence for the IJ group - in three out of eight categories. The IJ group demonstrated more knowledge in the areas of Money, Housing and Health and Wellbeing, specifically in the more practical skills. There are, however, some skills within the same categories where the NIJ did better. The areas where they showed the most understanding were quite complex, such as
interpreting payslips, purchasing goods on lay-by terms as well as filling in tax returns.

There seems to be a trend in the responses which shows that NIJ do better on the more academic areas (form filling) whereas IJ are better on the practical areas. The questions that the IJ do best, in the Money category, in fact the areas where all three service users scored the highest include, understanding the consequences of not paying bills, budgeting, using prepaid mobile phones instead of going on a monthly plan and being able to defer gratification. In other words, making good choices and managing their money well.

The category which shows the largest difference is Personal and Social development, where the NIJ group scored a high 83% in the skills that were tested, which ranged from being able to hold conversation with good eye contact to knowing the difference between passive, aggressive and assertive communication. They also exhibited understanding of boundaries through being able to see “no” to dangerous relationships and to overbearing salespeople. This is discussed in more detail below. These are traits which would have been expected to be more pronounced in the IJ group. In other words, the personal and social development skills involved looking at socialization and interpersonal skills which would be useful in a work environment.

The next two areas where the NIJ service users do significantly better are employment, 56% and Legal Rights and Responsibilities, 57%. Though their responses in the employment related questions meant they understood the expectations of what was required to do well at work. However, the knowledge and practice do not seem to correlate. This is the same as the Legal Rights and Responsibilities category, which required them to understand some quite complex concepts. The concepts included understanding the legal age for entering into enforceable contracts purchasing or selling property, as well as entering into a marriage relationship.

This strength in practical areas is carried through to the Housing category, showing an understanding of making the right choices when it comes to accommodation. The fact that the NIJ group seems to do better in the more academic areas in the
Housing category creates a dichotomy between knowledge and practice. Samantha, the service user who has moved out of IDEA Service Ltd is within this group. In trying to ascertain her reasons for leaving the organization, I was given the impression by the Supported Living Manager, that this is the norm with her. Though she has the knowledge of what is expected of her, it seems as if her disability hinders her from putting it into practice. The question, therefore, that IDEA Services Ltd, as an organisation might need to seek an answer to, is how best the service users can be supported to build a bridge between this chasm of knowledge and practice.

IJ do slightly better in three areas under employment - behaviour and attitude, appropriate dress and good work history. This suggests that overall IJ are more stable, more in control of their lives, they fit in better and maybe are in less need of social support at work. Where they do better may tell us something about where to focus attention in the future. Programmes and practical steps may need to be taken to help other service users develop these skills. As already discussed, the NIJ group does well in more complex subjects, like preparing for an interview, following up after the interview, pay and conditions of employment. These again though, being good skills to acquire, put the NIJ group in a more theory focused dimension, as opposed to the pragmatic notions that are likely to impress employers more.

The whole group, both IJ and NIJ score extremely well in the Health and Wellbeing area, 72% and 70% respectively. This says a lot about the training and resources IDEA Service Ltd commits to ensuring the service users have as much knowledge and understanding as possible of their health and wellbeing. The fact that a dedicated Health Advisor Position has been part of each IDEA Services Ltd branch offices goes a long way to explain the value the organisation puts in this area. Hence, probably the reason why there seems be a grasp of the skills associated with Health and Wellbeing. While both groups scored highly in Health and Wellbeing, their scores in Housing and Education and Training were quite low, between 28% and 36%. Could there be a way that the organisation would raise these scores? Perhaps having specialties, just like the health advisor, providing regular support both to the service users and the support workers? Whether the company has the resources and capacity to do so is another question.
While there are areas in all the categories where there are similarities and differences between the two groups, the most pronounced difference is in the Personal and Social Development area. The NIJ’s score was much higher, 83% in comparison to the IJ score of 45%. The NIJ job group appears to have highly developed social skills which, in theory would be an advantage within a work environment. However, it is possible that this apparent high level of Personal and Social Development skill may mean they have a greater need for attention, which would work against them in a working environment.

Though some employers purport to have a social conscience, they are in business to make profits and may not have the time or resources to cater for a demanding employee. The areas in this category where the NIJ group does better include, understanding other people’s unacceptable behaviour, which they demonstrate a capability to manage. They also exhibit an awareness of their social environment, including the ability to seek out more knowledge to widen their social consciousness.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill areas</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I can budget for regular bills and unexpected emergencies and have a savings plan. (Money)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand the advantages of having a prepaid mobile phone rather than being on a monthly plan.(Money)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to look for housing e.g. newspaper ads, real estate agents, noticeboards, internet, word of mouth. (Housing)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to read food labels for nutritional information and expiry date. I know which items need to be kept in the fridge or freezer and can recognise when food has gone off. (Health and Wellbeing)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although the total scores on table 6 of the Independent Living Skills assessment analysis shows only a difference of 6% between the IJ and NIJ group (56% vs 49%), when it came to the actual areas the NIJ scored better in a lot more areas that the IJ group (table 8). The NIJ group scored higher particularly in Personal and Social Development in 7 out of the 14 areas, while the IJ group did not have any area
where they scored higher. The areas of self-awareness skills of the NIJ group are invaluable in society but seem not to have given them any advantage in the employment sector. However, they have developed skills which could be harnessed in teaching them to improve in the skills necessary for obtaining and maintaining jobs.

An alternative view to this is to offer society a different perspective of the people with intellectual disabilities and make use of those areas where they have strengths. Hand and Reid (1996) mention how in the Second World War, people with ID were employed in the mainstream to augment the limited workforce that was available when other people had gone to fight in the war. Bruner (1961) put forward a hypothesis in education that in essence said any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development. Of course, the service users which IDEA Services Ltd supports are not children. However, their ability to grasp some relatively complex concepts demonstrated on the area of Personal and Social Development in the assessment makes them candidates for this kind of thinking.

As already discussed in previous paragraphs, while the IJ group does better in fewer areas than the NIJ group, those areas where they excel appear to be more practical. They answered 2 out of 9 questions better in the money category, compared to the NIJ group’s 1 out of 9. There are similar figures in the housing category.

Table 8 gives an overview of all the skills where the NIJ group performed better than the IJ group that is in 11 areas, while table 7 below shows the skills where the IJ group did overall better, which is in four areas. Some of the skills are quite abstract and require analytical thinking, for example knowing the difference between gross and net pay. The relevance of this knowledge, in terms of whether they get and maintain a job or not is the question. One wonders what percent of the mainstream workforce understands or cares much about their gross pay.

The NIJ group are also strong in social skills that give them opportunities to build relationships in the work environment. The ability to manage conflict as well as seek clarification in social interactions is valuable in personal development. Samantha,
Table 8: Difference = the number of IJ service users achieving independence - the number of NIJ service users achieving independence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill areas</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I can read a pay slip and understand the difference between gross pay and net pay. (Money)</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know that I should follow-up the interview with a phone call, letter or email. (Employment)</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know where my nearest medical centre and Family Planning clinic are and where to go for help with emotional problems and dealing with addictions. (Health and Wellbeing)</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know what can cause infestations of cockroaches, bed bugs, fleas, lice, maggots, ants and mice and what products to use to get rid of them. (Daily Living Skills)</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can hold a conversation with others and maintain comfortable eye contact. (Personal and Social Development)</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand that there are social boundaries and these differ depending on the type of relationship (e.g. family, friend, boyfriend / girlfriend, professional). (Personal and Social Development)</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can say 'no' to salespeople if I’m not interested in what they are selling and understand there’s usually a catch to giveaways offered over the phone. (Personal and Social Development)</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to manage conflict and keep my cool and how to use questions to clarify or obtain information. (Personal and Social Development)</td>
<td>-2</td>
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<tr>
<td>I understand the difference between gossip and sharing information. (Personal and Social Development)</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can identify and avoid relationships that may be dangerous or unhealthy and can say ‘no’ to my friends. (Personal and Social Development)</td>
<td>-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know that when I turn 18 I gain the legal right to: enter into enforceable contracts buy or sell property, marry without parent or guardian’s consent sue or be sued, make a will inherit property join armed forces without parent or guardian’s consent. (Legal Rights and Responsibilities)</td>
<td>-2</td>
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one of the service users in this group clearly demonstrates this in the interview; she would ask me to repeat the question or to explain what I meant. She also showed assertiveness and self-advocacy in mentioning her reason for leaving IDEA Service Ltd as, “--- I don’t like people treating me like ah…, they treated me like I am a little kid. I am an adult, I am not a kid” (Samantha, 2017).

Samantha’s objection to being treated like a “kid” concurs with IDEA Services Ltd policy, which states that the people supported by the organization are adults and should be treated as such (IDEA Services Ltd, Learning and Development, 2018). The discrepancy between theory and practice, however, is always a question matter that needs to be taken into consideration.

Analysis of information pertaining to participants with ID

A look at each of the individuals with ID who took part in the research reveals similarities and differences that can give an indication of why some of the people with ID have been able to get and keep jobs while others have not. While this research was not necessarily a case study, this section provides mini case studies of the participants with ID to give richness to the data. This in turn contributes to shaping the picture of the factors that contribute to people with ID obtaining and maintaining employment.

Darrell’s Story

Looking at the NIJ group including staff and employers, we find the expression used by Shirley [the business owner who provided Darrell with packaging work at the day programme] to describe Darrell underpins this enquiry into respect. She had great regards for him and used the Māori concept of “mana”. One of the meanings of “mana” as defined by the Māori online dictionary (2018) is “- - - prestige, authority, power, influence, status, spiritual power, charisma”. In other words, she associated respect of the person to the honour bestowed upon him because of the position he holds in the particular environment and how he carries himself within his community.
She said about him, “…he just has this mana about him and he kind of has the respect of all the other clients that are here, which is quite interesting for me outside looking in to see.” Tracey’s statement was especially relevant to Darrell who is the only participant of Māori descent amongst the service users.

An important aspect that needs to be portrayed about Darrell is that he did not make it in open employment, not because of inability, but because as already stated, he has challenging behaviour. The Royal College of Psychiatrists, British Psychological Society and Royal College of Speech Language Therapists (2007), describes an individual as having challenging behaviour when their actions are of such intensity, frequency or duration as to threaten the quality of life and/or the physical safety of the individual or others and is likely to lead to responses that are restrictive, aversive or result in exclusion.

Although Shirley would not be strictly described as an employer in the mainstream, however, her description of Darrell and how she related to him reveals how he potentially would have fared in employment. She described how he took on a leadership role once the Supported Employment had taken a back step to ensure that Shirley developed a working relationship with the service users at the Day Programme. He was able to demonstrate this through creating working combinations of his fellow service users to produce the best results for the job. Using unorthodox solutions for unexpected situations which he found himself in while doing the work, showed evidence of his ability to think outside the box. Shirley discovered that “- - - he’s able to kind of pre-empt problems, you know, see what’s going to cause a problem coming up. So he’s got a lot of problem solving ability.”

These characteristics were also reinforced in the quantitative data where Darrell showed this skill which was surprisingly more apparent in the NIJ group than the IJ group. He excelled in the Personal and Social Development questions such as, “I know how to manage conflict and keep my cool and how to use questions to clarify or obtain information.”
Shirley’s analysis of Darrell’s actions and reactions gave a clear picture of a person who has skills and qualities that would be useful for anyone hoping to obtain and maintain employment.

And he’s very good with people, he’s very good at managing people, if he kind of sees conflict, sort of starting to arise between a couple of people, he will send them out, in a really nice way. And if he makes a mistake he’s very quick to own that mistake or to apologize, which is good. Yeah, he’s really good at reading people. And even me, he can kind of see if I’m getting a bit frustrated with something. And he has quite a bit of perspective about what’s going on around him, which I don’t think happens in every workplace, but he’s great.

Not only does he have good work ethic, but he also has personality traits that are desirable in the mainstream or in different social environments in general. She highlighted how, “- - - he is always polite and always friendly and very gracious, and he is a really good teacher”.

Shirley, Darrell’s employer in further describing his strengths and the apparent discrepancy that exists between people with an ID and those who don’t, pointed that there are “people without a disability” who don’t do a good job at all, but are kept in employment. They may be lazy, but it seems they’re not having a disability affords them more opportunities. On the other hand, people like Darrell not being given the opportunity and yet they could easily do a better job. In conclusion from our conversation, though, his is not necessarily a community-based job per se, Shirley showed that without the challenging behaviour he could possibly obtain and maintain a job.

When I acknowledged the support that she was giving to Darrell and his friends at the Day Programme, since he is not really in the mainstream, her response was echoed by the employers of the rest of the service users. Her view was that there were reciprocal benefits between the people with ID and members of the community who had the opportunity to interact with them.
Yea, well it is mutually beneficial, it really is, it's a shame that they
don't get more opportunities. I mean, I was in Mitre 10 the other day
I watched them dealing with someone and I was thinking he could do a
better job than what this guy is doing, because you know they are just
lazy. Not through lack of intelligence obviously, just lazy.

Within the focus group discussion, when the group settled down, Darrell immediately
took up a leadership role offering to get a knife for Sarah who had said that she
usually likes to chop up her food. He also clearly displayed this leadership skill in
when he effortlessly slid into the co-facilitator role in the discussion. He clarified the
questions for the other participants and probed them to extract more information
from their answers.

Sarah’s communication is extremely difficult to understand, so a lot of repetition is
required to make sure the group understands what she is saying. When I asked her
what she did for a job at McDonald’s her speech was not clear enough for the rest of
the group to understand, Darrell repeated the question until he was clear that she got
the question. Without any prompting he went on to ask her how she gets to work a
number of times, he asked: “how do you get to work? How do you get to work Sarah,
how do you get to work?”

This continued when he asked John where he works and recalled how I had pointed
out John’s workplace when we had driven past earlier. Speaking to John he
enquired, “Where do you work?” After John responded, without missing a beat he
turned to me to ask, “That’s the place where you were showing me?” As the
discussion progressed and the other service users, especially those who have been
able to acquire and maintain jobs became more expressive, Darrell, either lost
confidence or lost concentration. He became withdrawn and was a bit absent from
the discussion. The change in Darrell’s demeanour could be attributed to the fact
that the other service user’s description of their work experiences showed him in a
bad light.
Figure 3 shows that Darrell had the lowest score in Money and Housing, this could be due to the fact that he is the only one in the group who lives in a residential group home. This means that he has little or no say in how his money is distributed and used, neither is he involved in the tenancy agreement of his home. His scores on all the categories were more or less the same as the rest of the service users who participated in the research. With Samantha, who has also not been able get and hold a job, they scored the highest Personal and Social Development category.

Although Darrell is one of the three people who have not been able to get and maintain employment in the mainstream, yet both from my engagement with him when seeking consent for the research and in the focus group discussion; he fitted in the characteristics that were displayed by the rest of the NIJ group in the Supported Independent Skills Assessment. In the Personal and Social Development, he excelled in areas that included conversation skills, conveying respect and understanding the difference between gossip and sharing information. With some
support from the organization to ensure that the challenging behaviour is minimized, he could possibly succeed in employment.

Darrell’s support worker’s perspective on his abilities and character traits emphasizes how on face value, there seems to be little that could prevent him from succeeding in the mainstream employment sector. When I asked her a simple question of how she would describe Darrell, she went on to give a picture of what any potential employer would consider an ideal employee. She specifically mentioned that, she knows him quite well, “Yes I would say I know him well. I would say, he is personable, sociable, and trustworthy.” Susan’s impression of Darrell concurs with the results of the quantitative data where he scored highly in the Personal and Social Development category (figure 3).

Questions stemming from both Shirley and Susan’s description of Darrell, which seem to reveal an individual with relatively good social skills and sense of responsibility, including why he has not had success in finding and keeping employment. Obviously, there is more to getting employment than good social skills. According to Susan, the issues around his challenging behaviour are probably more historical. She mentioned,

I spent a lot of time with Darrell. I must say I never had any problem with him, in fact, I have always found him to be very responsible and helpful. I would always give him responsibilities and I never had any problems with him. Of course, I would always be aware of his alerts and crisis. I would never deliberately set him up to fail.

What I got from my interview with Susan and from Darrell’s personal support information held by the IDEA Services is that, though Darrell has tendencies to revert to his challenging behaviour but, with the right supports and appropriate boundaries, he should be able to have engaged successfully with his community. She gave an overview of the kind of environment that would suit Darrell most. Probably a ware house type of job, in a male dominated situation would be suitable. His personal support information also gave an indication that he has no problem initiating and maintaining friendships. Having done a course run by the SAFE Network, a specialist clinical assessment and intervention service in New Zealand for those with
concerning and harmful sexual behaviour (safenetwork, 2018), he has a reference point for dealing with the behaviour. Hence, Susan’s assertion that given the support and boundaries, Darrell would thrive at the right job placement.

The facts from both the quantitative and qualitative data seem to point to an individual whose focus is on factors and issues that are external to him. The general notion from both Shirley and Susan is that he is given, and takes, responsibility. Being in a day service centre where he is the “most able” individual puts a weight of expectation on his shoulders. He is almost always expected to behave in a certain way. He gives instructions to his fellow service users with an expectation of a positive reaction. However, there seems to be little to indicate the ability for self-examination and personal reflection. In the focus group discussion, taking up the co-facilitation role gave him the opportunity to deflect attention from himself. An attitude of over cautiousness from the organisation’s point of view has been drilled down to all the staff members who are associated with him. Even though Susan pointed out that a lot of what hangs over Darrell’s head is historical, she was quick to point out, “Obviously, I would not get him a job near a school or something like that. I don’t really know what happened with him.” Hearing similar sentiments being regularly made about him probably contributes to the self-preservation and defensive attitude that he displays.

Opportunities for Darrell to have an in depth examination of himself could extend to involvement in other activities outside the organisation, possibly a kapa haka group where he could be able to mingle with like-minded people. Although, he takes a leadership role within the IDEA Services Limited kapa haka, being given a chance to do that elsewhere will probably take him out of his comfort zone, but give an opportunity for personal development. Participating in what he enjoys, but in a different setting, especially he is in a position he is not in a dominant role might help him answer questions about himself.

While he has taken part in a SAFE course, the question is whether this was just a ticking off the box action or whether there was any belief in the course’s ability to alter the behaviour. Perhaps amore extended therapy session could be considered and yield better results from IDEA Services Limited’s point of view.
The inclusion of Darrell in the research was vital in that it exposed the fact that there is more to just having the abilities tested by the Supported Living Assessment. Figure 3, further shows that his performance in the Employment category on the assessment was as good as any of the other members of the group. Consideration could therefore be made of how IDEA Service Ltd can better support him with the challenging behaviour. This could be through providing some courses that are tailored to his specific behaviour. It might also mean providing him with extra staff support to get to and from work as well as making the employers aware of the behaviour to accommodate him. The employers might also need to be well informed about the government subsidies that would be helpful for them to do this.

**Samantha’s Story**

Both Craig and Samantha’s scores on figure 3 reveal that they do not show any significant difference from those who are IJ. It actually shows that Samantha’s overall scores were the best. She scored highest in six out of the eight categories. The question is why she has not been able to get and keep a job. Her ability and confidence when answering the questions both in the interview and the Supported Living Assessment seemed not to translate to performance on mainstream employment. Her choice to leave IDEA Services Ltd whether it was the right decision or not revealed, her ability to advocate and speak for herself. She mentioned that, “Another reason why I left IDEA Services is that ….umm, I don’t like people treating me like ahhh…, they treated me like I am a little kid. I am an adult, I am not a kid.” This attribute may or may not work against her when it comes to employment; however, it seems to have contributed to her high score in the assessment. However, at least what is clear is that a high score does not necessarily result in doing well at employment.

Given the fact that Samantha has left IDEA Services Ltd, the data collected from other sources did not include any of her support staff. The information from her former employer, her previous association with Poly-Emp and the interview I did with her give a comprehensive picture of who she is including her capabilities.
On the surface, little that was mentioned by the different participants in relationship to Samantha, as well as her own self showed why she has not been able to get and maintain employment. Supriah, Samantha’s former employer’s statement that, “She’s very, how can I say, user friendly, she was very flamboyant. She loved her colours and she always came to work. She always walked past my office, greeted me and greeted everyone, she was very sociable”, revealed the kind of person Samantha is. Though she had to be reminded not to use her phone while working, this was a side of her that also exposed love socializing. This reinforces the results of the quantitative data, which showed that her Personal and Social Development were the best of the group (figure 3).

Everything that Supriah mentioned in describing Samantha, correlated with both what I discovered in my interview with Samantha and what the Poly-Emp job placement workers said about her. Both Alice and Cynthia from Poly-Emp, who had supported Samantha with job placements and training, seemed to also paint a hazy of her, describing as having had a lot of personal, as well as family baggage. The staff members’ thoughts were that she needed to be supported by an organization like IDEA Services Ltd, something she does not think she needs.

Samantha herself seemed to show an understanding of the concepts that should make one succeed in employment, ranging from self-advocacy to independent thinking. She understood the values that make for successful human interaction. She did not want to be treated like a child, at the same time she understood the importance of respect for self, others and other people’s property. She showed that, even though she had these qualities and understanding, there are other factors that contribute to one getting and keeping a job. These include external factors like the employer’s perception and personal characteristics like the ability to understand concept of time keeping, which is quite important to employers.

Unlike the other participants’ employers, Supriah demonstrated an attitude that was different in that, her company took a pro-active approach to employing people with disabilities. An important aspect of the company’s policy shift towards creating opportunities for people with disabilities in general, including those with ID, came
with the appointment of a new country manager. An organization’s culture is usually set by the leadership and the company’s country manager’s attitude could have contributed Supriah’s actions of attending a job fair specifically to seek someone with a disability. Her family also have a personal connection with the IHC, to whom they donate regularly.

While, Supriah’s reason for Samantha not getting her contract renewed was the fact that most of the work she did was becoming technology driven, other opportunities could have been created for her. Perhaps an unspoken concern in Samantha’s case could have her questionable honesty. An off the record question Supriah asked me at the end of the interview, got me to think this way. She wanted to find out if some of the people supported by IDEA Services Ltd had been involved in any kind of criminal activities. Whether this meant Samantha had shown an element of dishonesty was not verbalized, and left this question unanswered.

A consistent feature which revealed a difference between the people who are in employment and those are not was fact that the companies offered the people in employment the opportunities to socialize with their workmates outside the work environment. Samantha probably would have thrived in the team building and social outings with her workmates.

A theme that is interwoven through different layers and facets of the data is respect, ranging from “respect”, in terms of the person with ID being able to understand the concept and giving it to other people within their circle of connections. Samantha seemed to understand and expressed this succinctly when she described respect as a virtue that needs to be accorded to the generality of the human race, including employers. Her words were, “Yeah, always respect the boss. Respect other people too, like your co-workers.”

The discrepancy between practice and theory was present throughout the research. The interview with Samantha demonstrated this clearly. While she talked about respect for all people, though it had taken time for us to come up with a time that suited her, she not only had forgotten about meeting, but even after I phoned her, it
took another half an hour before she finally turned up. The question could be asked whether she understood that this was disrespectful of my time or not.

When I introduced the concept of respect, talking to Samantha, my expectation was for her to explain how she understood the idea. However, she went on to bring out a different facet, which is respect for other people’s property. If anyone with or without an ID, intends to succeed in a work environment, they need to grasp the fact that one needs to respect other people’s space and property. To prompt and to check her understanding of the concept, when she mentioned that bosses need to be respected, I reaffirmed it, by saying, “That’s a very good point because bosses want to be respected.”

As already pointed out Samantha feels that one should “- - - always respect the boss. Respect other people too, like your co-workers. Like don’t even steal things from them. That’s the big thing ever; don’t steal from other people when you are working.” Steal? Where did this come from? [The off the record remark made by one employer about police vetting raised a question in my mind in terms of people’s thoughts towards some of the people with ID].

Her emphasis on the phrase, don’t “even” steal makes one wonder what was going on through her mind. She went on to say, “ever”, a further amplification of whatever she thought was a connection between respect and not stealing from people. With the rest of the group of service users taking part in the research, she scored highly in the skill of respecting other people’s property on the quantitative assessment, “I understand the consequences of not paying the fare, damaging public property and other anti-social behaviour.”

As usual when Samantha turned up for our meeting she was dressed in a very pretty dress with her beautiful make up. I gave her the opportunity to choose where we should sit. She chose a quiet corner for us to sit at the local McDonald’s where we met in Otara. Knowing that I work for IDEA Services Ltd, Samantha demonstrated diplomacy when I asked her why she had left the organisation, she tried to avoid negative comments apart from the fact that she felt the she was not treated like an adult. She intimated her main motivation was the desire for independence. She
stated, “There is no problem. I just want to do my own thing, that's why I wanna leave IDEA Services. I like being there, it's like I can get help and stuff, but I wanna do my own things”.

Surprisingly, Samantha seemed to exhibit an optimistic outlook on life. She felt that her experience at her last job was positive, that she got all the support that she needed. When quizzed about her thoughts on what it entails for one to get and maintain employment, her advice could be described as quite sophisticated, “I would say take it easy, you will get there. If it's hard, ask. Like for me, there was stuff that was hard for me, but I just did it. I said to myself I can do this. It's not that hard for me. Just take your time and do it. Take it easy.” Her words fortify why she was among the service users whose score was high in the Personal and Social Skill which includes being able to “- - - hold a conversation with others and maintain comfortable eye contact.” However, having all the right answers does not necessarily mean that one knows how to put them into practice. For all her confidence and ability to articulate her ideas, Samantha has not been able to get and maintain a job.

Craig’s Story

The second male participant who has not been able to obtain and keep a job is Craig, a very sociable person, who enjoys music and dance. He flats with John, the other participant who has been able to get and keep a job. When I got to his home, Craig gave me a demonstration of his “Michael Jackson Dance” moves. After I had asked for his consent to participate in the research and informing him that I also needed to talk to his support worker Jas, Craig thought I just wanted to talk to her without talking to him. He said he did not need staff to talk for him, however, when I had explained to him that he would take part as part of a focus group, he was happy for me to talk to Jas.

In response to each of the questions of the interview, Jas gave a detailed answer, describing the apparent challenges that they face in trying to create a workable and
amicable service user/support worker relationship. The interview emphasized different aspects and the factors that have led to Craig not being able to hold a job. A number of themes were extracted from the conversation, with “respect” being quite prominent.

Jas, Craig’s support worker, mentioned it several times not only as a necessary skill for gaining and maintaining employment, but also as a skill required for general human interactions. For example, she used the term to show how societal norms dictate that certain rules be followed and this is a sign of respect. A simple thing such as opening the door for … staff member [coming on duty] is considered as respect, “Again the respecting comes here, if you know then you have your staff coming at that time, so you know, it’s your regular staff, so open the door”.

Jas added “If I was to do any paper (study), I would do it with him because, a lot a challenges I have faced with him, regarding respect, regarding cooperation and stuff.” This is another layer to the concept of respect; that Jas considered significant enough idea to warrant further investigation. She connected it with the value of working with others and she put it in connection with cooperation and politeness, noting that these were vital skills for people with ID. In talking about these skills, Jas is making a distinction between respect and friendship which is a difficult territory for staff to negotiate: “we have learnt in Supported Living, that we have to be friendly, but you don’t have to be friends with them. I am polite, I am kind, but I know that things have to be done”. With Jas, underpinning her need for politeness and respect is a coaching side to her working relationship with Craig.

Another issue that Jas was concerned with re Craig’s community engagement was an inability to concentrate and remain on task. However, Jas sees herself as supporting and preparing Craig to get work, ensuring that he has the correct tools to succeed in employment. This includes coaching him in skills like having self-confidence, communicating well and being well presented. Jas went beyond just looking at the core skills required in employment and highlighted other aspects of life which reflected a whole person focus: “he has hidden talents, he is a good dancer. I always, always say you have good moves, you keep people entertained, so that’s, great, so I always encourage, I always motivate, to focus on ability.”
Although it is clearly in the Community Support Worker’s job role, to help find employment for the people they support, the need for specialists in job placement may be present. Of the six participants in the research, two out of the three from the NIJ group, including Craig had limited links with a specialist organization such as Poly-Emp or a Supported Employment Coordinator such as has been employed by IDEA Services Ltd in the past.

Craig performed best in the Personal and Social Development skills category as did the rest of the NIJ group (figure 3). He also demonstrated some strength in the Legal Rights and Responsibilities category, not only as evidenced in the quantitative data, but also when he stood up for himself and did not want his support worker to speak for him, when I was asking for his consent to participate in the research. Craig has Downs syndrome and though his speech is a bit slurred, he showed a relatively high level of understanding and had good conversation skills. He can hold a conversation with others and maintain comfortable eye contact (see figure 3, personal and social development).

In the focus group discussion, while I tried to make sure everyone was included, there seemed to be a definite divide between those who are in employment and those who are not. Craig, who is normally very talkative and one could say the “life of the party”, was quite reserved in aspects of the discussion where he felt he could probably not make a meaningful contribution.

However, when I specifically directed my questions to him, he became quite animated as he outlined his work experience. In other words, Craig smiled, moved his hands about and raised his voice, indicating his full engagement in the conversation. It is possible that Craig could have felt that attention was being given to everyone else, hence his apparent limited participation. However, it may be a sign of his social awareness and understanding of social cues, meaning that he was giving opportunity for his colleagues to express themselves.

Craig mentioned how his sister got him a job at the “lolly factory”. The role of family in creating and maintaining sustainable employment is important here. If the family
shows how they value the person by offering them opportunities, this becomes a model to the community at large to treat him in the same manner. There are also complications that can arise from families organising employment opportunities. In Craig’s case, the employment opportunity that his sister found was likely to fail. His job in the lolly factory was to help in visual quality checking of the lollies. Craig said, “I used to take some lollies and eat, while I was working”, which he knew was not acceptable behaviour in this work environment. Though his score in the Social and Personal Development, as well as the Legal Rights and Responsibilities demonstrated his understanding of social boundaries and the ability to enter into enforceable contracts, he was not able to resist the temptation for sweet things.

However, there were two other reasons that Craig gave for losing employment. He said the job was “too easy”. In other words, there might not have been enough stimulation in the job and he was bored. As a consequence, Craig explained he was reprimanded for “talking too much”. He also felt that he could have lost his job because “they had too many people, they were employing more people.” Craig went on to say, that he left that job and went to another and another, suggesting that similar issues arose in each case supporting Jas’s argument that Craig cannot keep on task. His good social skills and likeable personality enable him to get jobs, but not to keep them.

Jas used quite a strong and one could say negative description of Craig in relationship to his work ethics. She repeatedly mentioned the notion of laziness, which was meant to have a positive connotation, however, the way she expressed it appeared to show Craig in a negative light. The question was therefore the appropriateness of the support she was giving him in specific reference to finding and keeping employment. She used the concept in a labelling and probably derogatory way, not once but consistently throughout the interview,

“That’s the thing that I have observed about him getting up, so one thing that I can say is, lazy. That’s the thing about human nature everywhere people get lazy.”

He is quite capable, that is why I highlighted the word lazy and I told him not to get offended because that’s the fact. It’s human nature you know, people do get lazy. So that’s what I say, that’s the challenge you
know. He must identify that as a challenge. I must say to the challenge, that I am above it, I am the strong person.

“It’s not about being lazy and not learning. If you don’t feel like doing anything and it’s just sitting, sitting. It’s not good you know. That’s how I work”.

“We were not talking anything bad about you, we were talking in general. We are just talking about ways that we can improve and stuff, I said it’s human nature, people do get lazy.” (Jas)

Though she generalized it and labelled it as human nature, it did nothing to support his self-worth. However, her point could be valid, that Craig was said to have been given a number of opportunities to work, but was not able to hold the jobs. The staff member’s assertion, although highlighting his ability, showed that with encouragement and attitude change he could have the potential to get and keep a job.

Within the space of a few minutes of the interview, Jas had mentioned “lazy” half a dozen times in connection with Craig. Her point of view was that it is human nature to be lazy, however, she seemed to express that his nature of being lazy was contributing to his inability to get and keep employment. The impression given is that her constant use of the word brings in to question her own interpretation of respect towards him. In the home environment, Craig, like the rest of service users knew some of the important aspects of the Daily Living Skills on the Supported Living Skills Assessment. His response was affirmative to the question linked to household chores, “I know how often household chores need to be done to keep the home reasonably clean.”

Although Jas’s description seems to paint him with a negative brush, Craig has a likeable personality part of which is his tendency to agree with suggestions offered by others. This was shown in the case of focus group’s advice that, perhaps he needs to have a change in attitude if he wants to keep a job. John whose verbal expression is limited, clearly emphasized, “You want a job? Behave in the job.” Craig’s immediate reaction was to say, “Now I am ready to try volunteering. And I am
not going to change my mind; I am really going to work on it. One job I would like to
do is in Papatoetoe.” Whether this was acknowledgement of some kind of deficit in
his behaviour or just a mere reaction to the peer pressure resulting from the focus
group discussion is the question. This also is not to assume that he would not stand
for himself when he needs to as in the example with Jas where his advocated for
himself strongly, saying how he did not need staff to speak for him.

The concept of volunteering had not been mentioned in the context of the focus
group discussion. However, it was apparent that it had been brought up with Craig in
other circumstances related to his employment status.

The picture of Craig that arises from his assessment score, Jas’s description and the
focus group discussion, is that of someone who has some capabilities which could
probably be realised through having the right training and supports. On the other
hand, there are areas where Craig needs to be given coaching to give him the tools
that could help him to take personal responsibility for his actions in order to be able
to stay in employment.

Sarah’s Story

The interview with Sarah’s employer revealed a young woman who started off as a
timid person, but quickly developed into an assertive person capable of advocating
for herself and others. Though from the analysis of figure 3, her greatest strength is
in the Health and Wellness area, she did not show any significant difference from the
others in all the areas which were assessed. It could be that the kind of questions in
the assessment did not delve deep enough into the concepts that brought out the
factors and attributes that contributed to someone obtaining and keeping their job.

It is worthwhile to note from the onset that there are some skills and personality traits
that Sarah seems to possess which emerged from the interviews and focus group
discussion. As already pointed out, her supervisor at McDonald’s described her with
positive terms such as “an assertive person, advocating for herself and others”. She
was also described as hardworking person who is time conscious, as revealed by
the fact that she is always at work on time. Throughout the focus group discussion, Sarah demonstrated that she could hold her own with the male participants. She brought into the discussion some social etiquette acquired from her workplace demonstrating some understanding of “acceptable” social behaviours. She kept stressing, “Yes, my boss does not want me to use “F” words. I tell her if anyone is using “F” words.”

Although the use of categories in assessment tools may be considered depersonalizing, they do have a role in pointing out some of the strong areas and not so strong areas which the people may possess. Sarah scored lowest in the Personal and Social Development category of the Supported Living Assessment (figure 3), which may answer the question of the attention seeking behaviour. However, this contradicts the kind of actions and behaviour demonstrated at her workplace. Her participation in the focus group recapitulated the amount of growth that has been noticed at her workplace. Although her speech is difficult to understand, this did not deter her from showing confidence in her participation in the discussion.

Sarah’s residential support worker, Aroha emphasised how there is an expectation in Supported Living for the service users to demonstrate independence. “She does everything by herself. She is in Supported Independent Living. That means she does most of her things by herself. She sets her alarm to wake up and gets ready to go to work.” One of the ways they do this is through receiving as little support as possible when it comes to preparing to go to work and using public transport without staff support. Sarah has a bus card and a mobile phone [which has the important numbers on fast dial] as part of her safety net when she goes to work by herself.

A consistent statement which Aroha mentioned to demonstrate Sarah’s independence was to say that Sarah was capable of responding to all the questions that I was asking her. If needs be, she can write her responses in the event that her speech was not clear enough for me to understand. According to her personal support information held by IDEA Services Ltd, Sarah’s self-determination not only contributes towards advocating for herself, but sometimes leads to some issues. She has been involved in some “imaginary” situations which needed police involvement. The investigations into the cases revealed what appears to be attention seeking
behaviour, particularly of a sexual nature, where there have been unsubstantiated
claims of sexual assault. The ethics application pointed the fact that some of the
information held by the organization which may contribute to the richness of the data
would be used.

Sarah’s entrance into the job market through her employment at McDonald resulted
from her being offered a similar opportunity as the rest of society. Annah intimated
that Sarah participated in an interview process that included people who did not have
a disability. “So we had a recruitment day and she came along with her support
person and she applied for a job and then we interviewed on the spot there and then
we hired. So that’s how we met Sarah.”

Having taken a “risk” in employing someone with an ID, both Annah and the Poly-
Emp job placement worker Alice, ensured that Sarah had the best supports in place
to give her the best chance of success, which include training and initially having one
on one support. The fast food company’s commitment was demonstrated by how
they were willing to train both the support worker and Sarah, until she had gained
enough confidence to perform the duties that were expected of her. Support was
eventually faded, until she was left in the hands of Fiona and her team.

What I saw of Sarah at her job at McDonald’s and the description given by the Alice,
the Poly-Emp job placement worker was worlds apart. She described her as “initially
a very immature and difficult person to deal with” (Alice, 2017).

Sarah, right at the beginning, she was in our job club for a long time
And I’m talking about over a year and there were times where I used to
think, Oh my goodness, we are never gonna get Sarah a job because
Sarah was so immature in the way that she acted. So if someone
made her cross, she’d burst into tears or she’d scream at them and
have a tantrum and walk out.

The training and persistence of the Poly-Emp staff appears to have made a
significant contribution to Sarah’s personal development and ability to make a
contribution to her community as an employee. Cynthia seemed to take pride in how
the training they offered Sarah helped to transform her. She proudly expressed how Sarah “never ever misses a day of work. Always is doing her job … So she is always doing her work and she’s a fantastic worker. So she’s one of our success stories”.

The same positive tune is carried through at her current workplace, she was described by the manager as part of the team who participates in both work-based activities and socializing with team members outside the work environment. Annah’s [Sarah’s manager] greatest affirmation of the training and induction process used by Poly-Emp, was how a support person was there with her at the start of her employment and gradually faded the support over an eight or nine month period.

An important point that needs to be shared is how Sarah has gradually been given more responsibilities and allowed to take sole charge of some simple tasks which helped in her personal development. Annah’s leadership strength also came from the fact that she has been able to build a supportive team around Sarah which continued to work effectively with Sarah when she was away on maternity leave. This seems to be a missing element in some work placements where the person with a disability’s support crumbles as soon as the one person who has direct interaction with them moves on.

The support and coaching that Sarah has received from the different facets of her support network, seems to have made a significant contribution in what she has become. This is both as an individual and member of the mainstream employment society. Her work ethic and social intelligence puts her at par with other workers within the industry, hence the fact the she is remunerated at the same rate as fellow workers without a disability.

**Gerald’s Story**

Gerald is a very soft-spoken person who appeared to have a good working relationship with his support worker, Lee. He works at a door to door consumer goods sales company. His support worker’s responses to my interview questions
built a picture of someone who takes pride in his work and does not require any encouragement to go to work. Through a collaborative approach, Lee and Gerald put boundaries that give him opportunities to push himself while staying safe. He owns a mobile phone with the important numbers set on fast dial and has a taxi card to ensure that he gets to work and back home safely.

Gerald’s personal support information revealed that he is able to read, albeit to a limited extent. His speech is reasonably clear, though interaction with him needs to be slow and in clear language. He uses his mobile phone as well as the computer. One of the reasons why Gerald spends time at the library is that he can make use of the computer to go on social media and different websites of interest. In other words, he participates in the same activities as other members of society.

Since Gerald is in Supported Living, he has no support staff in the morning when he gets ready to go to work. He sets his alarm, prepares and waits for the taxi. According to Lee, “Taxi is late, he’s not late.” The results of the Supported Living Assessment data (figure 3) are unable to identify these strengths and character traits which Gerald possesses. He had the lowest score in the Education and Training category as well as in the Health and Wellbeing category. Gerald has held the same job for more than two years, in spite of facing challenges that have included changes in management in the company, as well as a personal health scare.

In continuing to describe Gerald’s attributes, Lee painted a picture of a desirable employee, “Yeah. He’s ready and happy to do work. He likes what he’s doing and he smiles and he’s good at his work. He interacts well, is polite and friendly.” Mike, Gerald’s supervisor at his employment, reinforced Lee’s sentiments when he detailed how he is a hard working and easy-going person who always gets to work on time. ...In fact he wanted to continue working hard even after the accident, but we thought it might be better for him to have less hours, but working every day.

Gerald’s ability to be hardworking, reliable and positive is a pattern found in the other service users who have kept their jobs. They all scored highly in the skill set in the
Employment Category of the Living Skills Assessment, when they responded positively to the statement “I know to turn up to work on time, dress appropriately and call my boss if I can’t go to work”.

Whether Gerald has been able to get and keep a job is based on the possibility that he has always had an agreeable and willing personality, or that it is the vocational training that has prepared him to succeed is the question. This dichotomy between “hardworking” and “easy going” highlights some interesting features of Gerald as a person. It possibly shows that a person can work hard while at the same time possessing a calm personality. Could this balance between the two be a trainable characteristic through something like meditation or yoga?

The display of consistency and the ease, through which people get to like him, shines through most of the information provided by the participants with links to him. He was described as someone who is willing and ready to work, who is always presentable and whose “clothes are washed, is shaved and nails cut” (Lee). Gerald is someone who values relationships and maintains his composure in spite of any negativity and challenges that may surround him. Throughout his time in hospital he was cheerful and his accident seemed to not faze him despite on-going physical pain. His calmness in the face of some challenging and negative behaviour from his flatmates is also an example of his positive nature. It is not that he shuts himself off from others; he is aware of what is happening around him and takes proactive actions. An example is his call to apologize to me for missing the focus group meeting.

Throughout the interview, Gerald used very short, one-word answers. Surprisingly as soon as I had finished the interview, he became quite interested and inquisitive about my personal life and Africa. He wanted to know if I was from Africa and whether I had seen some animals in Africa. I happened to have my iPad with photos of my recent family trip to a game park in Africa and in his soft gentle voice; he asked if he could come with me next time I go to Africa. Having some common ground and something to talk about seemed to bring some excitement in Gerald. From my observation of the interaction between Gerald and his work supervisor, this could be a contributory factor to his enjoyment at work.
The door to door consumer goods sales company that Gerald works for has a large warehouse and a number of trucks. Gerald’s original role was cleaning the trucks, for the whole day, three days a week. A non-work-related car accident resulted in Gerald being hospitalized for a number of months. An important relationship was revealed from this unfortunate incident.

Everyone loves him. He gets on with everybody. He takes part in all the social events. When he was in hospital I used to visit him. My missus used to visit him too. So he gets on with everyone very well. Everyone takes him as part of the team (Mike).

It gave him contacts that go beyond just work relationships. In other words, he was given the opportunity to become part of the extended family. Though Gerald has a good family network, he values extending his social circles. While I explained the importance of boundaries, I agreed to connect with him on Facebook when he asked me. Mike and his family visiting him in hospital would, therefore, have been very meaningful to him.

To both Gerald and Lee, the main focus appeared as if the work environment is what he enjoys. According to Lee, Gerald is always “ready and happy to do work. He likes what he’s doing and he smiles and he’s good at his work. He interacts well, is polite and friendly”. When asked about his friends, Gerald spoke of his supervisor as his friend. He also liked the fact that the people are, “nice and friendly to me”. This is important to him because when I asked him about a second person, a woman with an intellectual disability who works in the same workshop, Gerald mentioned that he does not talk to her because “she is at times grumpy”.

Apart from the relationship forged in his workplace and the associated networks Gerald revealed what is important to him and how he expects people to respond to him. While in my interview with him, he understood the value of respecting others, especially those in authority, he also had an expectation of reciprocity from other
members of the society. Respect to him entailed, “people being nice and friendly to me.” This contributes to his enjoyment of going to work.

Gerald inadvertently emphasized the role that Poly-Emp played in his ability to get and maintain employment. Gerald showed me the job placement worker’s business card and how he communicates with her. In my interview with the Poly-Emp staff there had been an indication that, they no longer provided direct support to him since he became settled in his job. However, the fact that he has the ability to call on them whenever he needs to, gives him greater confidence to succeed in his employment.

Gerald was not able to attend the focus group discussion. I had informed him through a personal visit and reminded him through a call to his support worker who assured me that he would make it. Although it was a bit disappointing that Gerald had not kept his word, he made an effort to call me the following day and apologize. His excuse was that he forgot, but would be willing to attend the next focus group meeting, especially when he remembered that the meeting was held over dinner at McDonald’s. The picture of Gerald given by his employer, his support worker as well as the Poly-Emp job placement staff was of an honest and trustworthy person, so there was little to suggest that his unavailability for the focus group appointment was in any way typical. The only possible answer to his actions in this particular case could be that he is a person of routine and it takes him a while to register any changes that may take place in his routine.

An important factor that needs to be pointed out is the issue of succession planning which was mentioned in Sarah’s case. For example, a kind of succession plan was in place when Mike took over the supervisory role after having initially worked side by side with Gerald in the warehouse. This concept is important in that it ensures that the person with a disability is assured of continuous employment in spite of changes in management. His relationship is not only with one individual, but with a team and any changes that occur in the company have a negligible impact in terms of whether the person stays on the job or not.

When Gerald got out of hospital the company was willing to modify his working conditions and offer him lighter roles. Since work is important to him, Mike offered
him hours that were spread throughout the week. He now works five days a week for two hours a day, “cleaning the cupboards and sweeping the warehouse”. Gerald’s response to whether this time suits him seemed to come from believing that he was made to understand that cleaning trucks was no longer his responsibility, “it’s their responsibility … it’s their job”. However, Lee his support worker seemed to believe otherwise, “restructuring and new management changes, he used to wash trucks. The boss changed and so on”. Mike’s rationale was, however, Gerald needs somewhere to go every day, which was supported by Lee who said, “He’s quite comfortable with his job and he wouldn’t like to change place. So he’s got his routine and good friend circle there”.

An important follow up issue in terms of whether it was Gerald’s choice or not to maintain a relatively low amount of work hours, is around his unemployment benefit. IDEA Services Ltd, in conjunction with the Needs Assessment and Service Coordination services (NASC) agencies seek to maintain a balance between what the person with an ID earns and how much effect it will have on their disability benefit. Gerald’s needs assessment points to the fact that even though he is in a Support Independent Living situation, he will always need some form of staff support which means that as much as possible the organization and the NASC agency will to an extent encourage Gerald to earn just enough so as not to affect his government benefit. This of course would require further investigation to ask the question if in fact this is a barrier to total immersion into mainstream employment.

In conclusion, Gerald can be described as a polite, friendly person who is positive, hardworking and reliable. These character traits, including the fact that he is an agreeable, calm, cheerful and trustworthy person seem to have contributed to his maintain employment. His unique characteristics, coupled with the training from organizations like Poly-Emp, a supportive support worker and accommodating employers all appear to play a part in ensuring that Gerald is successful in remaining in employment.

**John’s Story**
John has a speech impediment that makes it hard for people to understand him. He received speech therapy when he was younger which helped to improve his speech. However, this additional disability which might put a further barrier to his inclusion is overcome through people being patient with him and offering him opportunities to showcase his capabilities. Liz, John’s support worker presented an image of someone who, although, “it’s difficult for him to communicate verbally”, will work hard and produce great results, if he is given accurate instructions. On the other hand, “If people don’t understand him then he is not gonna cooperate”, hence employers and facilitators will need to put in time to develop rapport with him.

A consistent trait that is displayed by all three of the IJ participants is their work ethic. Once John understood what was expected of him to get and maintain employment, he went above and beyond expectations. The only challenge that Liz faced with John was his personal presentation. This has been overcome through giving him a consistent message of the need to be presentable at work and not appear different from the rest of his workmates.

So, not only did Liz talk about John’s personality, but she also discussed how she helps him to feel included in society by working on his appearance.

He gets the same cut, tidy and I had to sit with him and talk a few times about being work ready and talking to him about the standards at work and what the boss wants, and that he’s representing the company and he needs to be sharp and ready. That’s the young terminology eh? So I try and relate to him. I’ve got young teenagers myself, so I know how they roll. So if you can get on that level with them, with the lingo, you’re halfway there.

She went on to give an example of how rapport was developed at John’s place of work,

He has got a good relationship with the boss and team at work, I think it’s his boss, his manager that oversees him. He gives those directions, not everyone telling him what to do. He has set jobs,
mainly orders, he gets order sheets in and he just fills it in.

The Supported Living Assessment data did not show a real difference between John and the rest of the participants. However, he seemed to do slightly better in the Education and Training category (figure 3). This aligns with how John conducts himself at work; with training and clear instructions he performs as well as any other person who has no disability.

An important point to note is how Liz uses a lot of repetition in order for John to grasp simple concepts. She has worked with him to produce a four-step routine which he follows every morning as he prepares to go to work.

So that in the morning, when he doesn’t have staff, we give him four steps, four easy steps for him to remember every single morning. The first thing you do when you get up in the morning John, open the curtains. Second thing you do is shower. Third, make your bed. Four, breakfast/lunch.

John has very strong family ties, meaning that he spends almost every weekend with his family. This has had its positives and negatives because when he goes to his family he gets out of sync with his routines and the support worker has to repeat the steps again.

When it comes to John’s employment situation, Poly-Emp’s role, in both getting him the job and the offering him the initial support to settle on the job, was paramount. The job placement workers’ aggressive marketing and persistence opened the way for John to get the job. On the other hand, John’s personality, ability to follow simple instructions and his work ethic, have all contributed to his longevity on the job. Both Peter, the operations manager at his place of work [heavy lifting and packaging yard industry], and Liz pointed out how John is the first person at work. He gets the earliest bus possible to get him to work earlier than the rest of his workmates. When he knows that he has an appointment, John gets anxious and always wants to get there on time.
Although Peter had no previous experience with people with ID and had initial reservations about taking on John, he was willing to take the risk and give him an opportunity.

Well, what happened was we had John’s minder from Poly-Emp, she was just canvassing the area and popped in to see us and --- we just thought it was a nice thing to do, to give John a chance, an opportunity and it’s just gone from there.

John’s performance and conduct quickly changed his mind and resulted in him advising another branch of the company to offer a job to a second person with an ID. Peter’s action in employing John and his recommendation for the second person appears to deviate from the general consensus which seems to point to the fact that people who have some connection with disability tend to have some empathy towards people with ID. This means that it is more expected that someone with a connection to disability will be more open to employing people with ID.

The value of the concept of reasonable accommodation cannot be overemphasized. Peter’s company had to make adjustments to accommodate John, which has resulted in him thriving on the job. For example, John was initially unable to understand that work is different from school and that it is normal to go to work in school holidays. The company worked around this by ensuring that his annual leave is aligned with school holidays. There was also a difficulty in training John in his work tasks. However, with the government subsidies (which Peter was quick to point out was not the motivation in offering John the job), the company was able to offer him extra support and a mentor until he was confident in his work.

Peter’s initial attitude that the word “minder” was an appropriate word to describe John’s job placement worker, showed his lack of understanding of the ID sector. However, this changed and displayed an element that may be lacking in some employers. He was willing to give people with ID a chance even though he had a negative attitude towards them. Now his thinking is that John has made the work place a better environment where all the team members have taken on John as a buddy of whom they are protective. Possibly, the fact that John is a hard worker who
has a great personality, has contributed to the ease with which he has been accepted. Peter explained it like this.

John was initially pretty slow, but you know, it’s just, learn the methodology and just get better at it, but he’s just a neat kid, and we love having him around . . . He comes to work with a smile on his face, as I said, first one here. He goes around and shakes everyone’s hand. He’s a wonderful boy. And we sort of joke around with him, good natured stuff, and he just loves being here and we love having him. Look he gives his best and if everyone had that sort of attitude, we’d be pretty happy.

To further ascertain the motivation behind employing John, I enquired from Peter whether he was aware of the various funding streams and subsidies that are available to employers who take on board people with ID. Peter’s response seemed to indicate that when the company initially employed John, they were not even aware of such incentives,

I mean, we employed him because one, it was going to give him an opportunity, two it filled a gap for us, a void. There was a requirement to have someone work there. It’s wonderful to – it’s a warm fuzzy feeling that you’re able to employ someone, because you know, these kids need a chance and so we feel really good about it. The subsidy, later on, that made it nicer, but certainly wasn’t the [motivation].

As already mentioned, focusing on the positive rather than the deficits has led to doors of opportunity being created for other people with ID, “Probably on the coat tails of the success with John, we were approached by Poly-Emp, that they had another person that they thought might be successful, who I had met … who now works down the road, and he’s doing a fantastic job … they’re very reliable”.

This is not to portray a false picture that employment of people like John will always have positive results. Peter mentioned how another service user had been offered an opportunity and it had not worked out.
We had a chap that didn’t work out, but that was more because his mother kept poking her nose in, trying to be overprotective. She probably did it for the right reasons, but that actually cost him his job. It just wasn’t working, but we tried.

John’s family are involved in his life, however, they have left the employment part to professionals such as Poly-Emp. Poly-Emp prides itself on being the organization of choice when it comes to job placements and follow up support,

Poly-Emp’s got a fantastic name within the industry, because we are very good at what we do, so we have a great success rate, but also we build relationships with all our employers, we build relationships with all of our job seekers and people that are in work.

John’s success and the relationship that has been cultivated with Peter is an example of this. Not only does the Poly-Emp staff go into the community for job creation, but they also find ways to develop and strengthen the ties with the employers, giving them the notion that, there are mutual benefits in collaboration. An example of this was the fact that Peter was invited to participate to the Poly-Emp open day, and made a presentation from an employer’s perspective, giving the wider community a tester of the success stories.

John’s personal support information held by IDEA Services Ltd reveals how he is capable of communicating in his peculiar way. Inter-agency interaction, in this case, the employer, Poly-Emp and IDEA Services Ltd means that there is consistency in how John is supported and communicated with. Peter, John’s employer demonstrated the strength of this relationship through the positive experiences his company has had with both organisations.

The overall picture that comes from John’s ability to keep and maintain employment is that as person, he is a hard worker. He can follow instructions. His speech impediment does prevent him from developing good relationships with his work
mates. This makes him an ideal employee for most employers and specifically for his current employer.

A possible strength in his character is his ability to seek and appreciate help. The view of his workmates is: “they help me, they are not bossy”. Not only did he look at the external factors’ impact on his employment, but his advice to the other participants in the focus group was, “you want a job? Behave in the job”. With his obvious speech impediment, his behaviour is more visible through his actions. Both his support worker and employer reiterated these sentiments.

He is a strong young man; he is a real work horse. He is a young man, he is strong. He likes that lifting and feeling like he is part of the team. He likes that labour kind of work. (Liz)

He comes in at 7 in the morning; it was initially 7:30. And he gets two buses to get here. But he’s one of the first to get here in the morning and he’s always smiling … But he takes two buses to get here and he beats most of the people in their cars, great commitment to work. (Peter)

At the focus group, John not only demonstrated this attitude towards work, but he showed a positive and lively personality which probably makes him a person who people can get along with easily. He used very short and in most cases one-word answers in the discussion. However, most of his words were punctuated with laughter and a huge smile. John’s response to a question about a previous work experience was that he did some voluntary work, which is probably where the other participant Craig got the idea from. The volunteering aspect seems to reveal another trait that John possesses, which is that he is willing to work with or without getting paid.

He also has a grateful attitude, which was visible in the focus group. When Sarah mentioned how she had got a job through the Poly-Emp job placement worker. He quickly chimed in, “Me too, she helped to get the job.”
Analysis of Themes

The data collected was from a number of sources ranging from the interviews with support workers, employers (current and former), workers from external support organizations, some people with ID individually, as well as a focus group of people with ID. IDEA Services Ltd’s support information of the individuals with ID was used in the findings.

Work Ethic

An important theme that was quite apparent from the literature review, the interviews with the support network, interviews with the employers, as well as the focus group discussion, was the importance of a good work ethic. This includes time consciousness, health and safety consciousness, keeping on task and interaction with other employees. From this theme arises the sub theme of respect and social interact, which are explored in the following section.

Respect and social interaction

The theme of respect was drawn out from the qualitative data because of its value in human relationships which exist in an inclusive society. Respect could be considered one of the most important concepts in social interactions, it is “a feeling of deep admiration for someone or something elicited by their abilities, qualities or achievements” (Online Dictionary, 2018). From the onset of the investigation the theme of respect stood out as a topic that needed to be looked at in depth in terms of its influence in the employment of people with ID. I looked at it from the perspective of the employers, the support network and the people with ID themselves.

A number of different layers of respect can be extracted from the data which I discuss here in relationship to how the participants perceived it. The most significant description of that came out of the data surprisingly was directed towards a service
user who is not in open employment, Darrell. The Māori concept of mana is used to describe the amount of respect he commands. The other facets of respect analysed were wide ranging and from different perspectives.

Respect was considered through examining related concepts in a continuum, ranging from notions like hard work to laziness. *Hard work versus laziness* seems to be important in terms of people’s place in the employment sector and people with or without an ID benefit from this quality.

Craig’s support worker, having used statements that seemed to imply that he lacked the motivation or fortitude to perform in accordance to the expectations of employers, offered a more guarded opinion that provides some form of encouragement. She talked about “giving it your best”, as a positive trait that would mitigate employers’ negative perception.

No, I am just talking in general. To have a good relationship with the employer, you have to give your best, not taking long breaks or a lot of breaks in between. Those are things that employers are looking for before employing. So it’s just presenting yourself well. (Jas)

The communication with the people with ID, especially in the focus group discussion, also saw them coming up with statements which expanded and gave richness to the theme of respect. When probed about possible attributes required for one to get and keep a job, John came up with the concept of behaving oneself. He was quite specific in saying, “behave in the job”. When I asked the group what could be done to help some of the service users to get and stay on the job, though John’s speech is generally difficult to understand, he spoke out firmly and quite clearly, “You want a job? Behave in the job”.

How one behaves can be classified as part of the concept of respect because within an employment environment, it would be part of code of conduct and expectations of the employer. On the Supported Living Assessment skills, this is the area where the service users who have been able to get and keep jobs scored better than the NIJ group who overall did better in the Employment category. John and his two IJ
counterparts responded positively to the statement, “I know that my behaviour and attitude at work can affect whether I keep my job or get promotions.”

This is carried on within this Employment category with specific forms of behaviour being focused on, including punctuality, dressing and communication, “I know to turn up to work on time, dress appropriately and call my boss if I can’t go to work”.

John went on to portray his knowledge of the importance of respect by reflecting on an opposite or negative characteristic as being undesirable to employers which would result in one not getting or losing a job. When asked about his thoughts on how he might help one of his colleagues, he talked about rudeness as a behaviour that would have negative consequences.

The focus group discussion included examining ways in which the group can help the NIJ participants. I asked John to explain what he means by behave and how we can help Craig get and keep a job. John simply said, “Not being rude”. Even though John understood the notion, he however did not score as well as two of the NIJ group on the behaviour question of the Personal and Social Development skill. The statement was, “I know how to convey respect, caring, honesty and trustworthiness (e.g. saying thank you, not being rude, tone of voice, valuing others’ opinions, not keeping people waiting, being inclusive, accepting responsibility for a mistake)”. Even though I asked the support staff to explain the questions to help the service users to understand, there is a possibility that some of the questions may not have been completely understood and this is one such question. However, in the focus group discussion, he showed that he has a basic understanding of acceptable conduct in a work environment.

On the opposite side of the spectrum from rudeness as an unacceptable behaviour was a consistent form of etiquette that made a difference in how the service users were embraced as part of the work community. This is the idea of politeness. It was interwoven in the conversation from the support workers’ point of view. It was also apparent in the employers’ expectations and also how the support workers treat the people with ID. Gerald’s support worker, when describing him, gave a typical picture of a desirable employee, “Yeah. He’s ready and happy to do work. He likes what
he’s doing, and he smiles and he’s good at his work. He interacts well, is polite and friendly”.

These statements were similar to what was said about Darrell, by (Shirley) at the day programme contract work,

    But I mean he is always polite and always friendly and very gracious and he is a really good teacher. He had new people come in and he is very good at explaining and explaining, the same thing over and over again, probably more patient than me. But you know he is a very kind person.

Jas, Craig’s support worker’s assertion of politeness, seemed to depict that the way the person with ID is treated would be mirrored in other settings, including the workplace. Her words were, “We have learnt in supported living, that we have to be friendly, but you don’t have to be friends with them. I am polite, I am kind, but I know that things have to be done.”

All six service users had a generally good score when it came to politeness and did well in the important human relations activities such as initiating conversation and greetings, they all said, “I know how to greet someone and introduce myself.”

**Comparison of the IJ and NIJ understanding and expression of the concept of respect**

Respect as part of the code of behaviour plays an important role in understanding the attributes that lead to the successful employment of the people with ID. A respectful attitude or characteristic that encompasses a number of traits that have been discussed seems to have an influence in whether one gets and maintains a job.

Analysing the transcripts of the interviews and focus group discussions reveals respect and its associated concepts as a notion whose significance cannot be underestimated. The employers of the three IJ service users, used variation of the
concept to show how this has had an impact on them obtaining and maintaining the jobs. Mike, Gerald’s employer at least used the term “hard worker” in relationship to Gerald. He described him as a “hard working and easy-going person” who always gets to work on time. This is in addition to the fact, as Lee mentioned “He interacts well, is polite and friendly.”

John’s employer, Peter gave rage of statements to describe John’s attitude and work ethics which may all be encompassed within the concept of respect. Peter described John as “just a neat kid.” Who is not only always punctual at work, but also has a positive attitude. Peter’s words were, “He comes in at 7 in the morning; it was initially 7:30. And he gets two buses to get here. But he’s one of the first to get here in the morning and he’s always smiling”. Going on to say, “But he takes two buses to get here and he beats most of the people in their cars, great commitment to work.” He also explained that John “comes to work with a smile on his face, as I said, first one here. He goes around and shakes everyone’s hand. He’s a wonderful boy”.

In fact, according to Peter, the kind of attitude that John displays makes him an asset to the company “look he gives his best and if everyone had that sort of attitude, we’d be pretty happy”.

Within the interview Peter went further to reveal that John’s attributes had paved a way for other members of the ID community being offered opportunities to work in the mainstream. As already mentioned, as part of Poly-Emp’s interaction with employers in the community, Peter took part in an employment expo at Poly-Emp through that he “met this other young fella, who now works down the road, and he’s doing a fantastic job” and with John, “they’re very reliable”.

Sarah’s employer, Annah at the fast food restaurant reinforced the importance of having the right attitude as something that helped to acquire and maintain her employment, “As soon as she’s shown something, she will do it that way 100% of the time, every time”. Like John, she goes over and above the employer’s expectations. In terms of punctuality, Annah mentioned that, “Always an hour early. Always! If she’s not here an hour before her shift starts, she texts me and tells me ‘don’t worry, I’m coming’. Honestly I’ve had no issues with her”.

Jas, Craig’s support worker’s description of him appears to be the opposite of everything mentioned the employers of the IJ group. As mentioned before both in the interview with Jas and in the focus group discussion, Craig’s work ethics appears to be questionable. She was quite blunt in her description, “He is quite capable, that is why I highlighted the word lazy and I told him not to get offended because that’s the fact”.

Darrell on the other hand was respectful and respected, had “mana”, but had challenging behaviour which limited his opportunities for mainstream employment. Unless some plan and support structure was put in place, he appeared to be at risk of not getting an opportunity to show his true capabilities.

**Workplace Culture**

Chadsey, Shelden, Horn de Bardeleben & Cimera (1999), (as cited in Fillary and Pernice, 2014), discuss the importance of workplace culture in enhancing inclusion and ensuring that people with ID are able to maintain employment within the community. The relationships that develop in the workplace, whether it is with the work mates or management are greatly valued. Apart from Darrell who does not work in the mainstream and Craig whose employer I was not able to interview, there was a consistent expression from the participants with ID, that their experiences in the workplace were positive. Sarah’s employer revealed that her relationship with both the supervisor and the work mates gave her the confidence to stand up for herself and others. She started the work as a timid young lady but blossomed over the period of time that she was in employment.

Sarah’s workplace demonstrated a positive environment where appropriate language from her point of view was cultivated. The fact that she had the freedom to report people who used the “F words” to the manager showed how safe she felt there. According to her manager, when Sarah found a group of teenagers smoking in the toilets of the McDonald’s where she works, she also went straight to report them, and the situation was dealt with. Her sense of justice and courage to correct “wrongs,” puts her on par with people who would be considered for leadership roles.
Inclusion both within the work setting and social environments were mentioned by employers of two of the people with ID who have been able to maintain employment. For Sarah, it was being given encouragement to participate in the social activities that helped her to break the barrier into the world of people without disability.

She comes to all our – we do crew events, where I take all my staff out for one night, she comes to all of those – they’re all friends, they spend time together. So at first it was, she was very shy, but now that she’s comfortable she’ll even tell me off. Now she’s comfortable, she’s really good. But the first couple of months were really difficult for her, but she’s been really good. (Fiona)

Gerald’s employer expressed similar sentiments in my interview him, mentioning how their relationship went beyond the workplace. When Richard was involved in an accident and spent some time in hospital, Mike and his wife visited him and forged a bond that continued even after he had got better.

The support staff’s role in preparing the person for community engagement, both through advocating for them and helping them to relate to the community are important. Liz demonstrated this through how she wanted John to look like people his age when she took him to the barber in preparation for going to work.

He gets the same cut, tidy and I had to sit with him and talk a few times about being work ready and talking to him about the standards at work and what the boss wants, and that he’s representing the company and he needs to be sharp and ready. That’s the young terminology eh? So I try and relate to him. I’ve got young teenagers myself, so I know how they roll. So if you can get on that level with them, with the lingo, you’re halfway there.

His appearance and behaviour contribute to how he was treated in the workplace. Peter said he was treated as one of the “boys”, enjoying the workplace humour and activities.
Sarah, John and Gerald, showed evidence of possessing some of the skills from the above list, as already discussed from both their employers’ and support workers’ perspective. Communication does not necessarily mean verbal; John and Sarah, who have both been able to maintain jobs had limited verbal communication. They can however, express themselves in other ways through non-verbal means and were praised by both their support workers and employers for being endowed with most of the qualities necessary to succeed in open employment.

(Grant, 2008), underpins how this notion has been emphasised by various arms of society, including policy makers in more recent years, the result being more focus on the person’s attributes that support them to experience the good life. The underlining factor here is qualities that the person has, which the employer needs, rather than their limitations.

**Bossy versus nice employers and workmates**

The people with ID, in the same way as their fellow workmates have certain expectations of the work environment. How they are treated contributes to whether they are comfortable or not at work. When asked what the employers and workmates do to make his work easier, John’s response combined a positive and negative statement in terms of his expectations. He mentioned the fact that they help him, at the same time they are not bossy. In response to my question, “So, what do they do at your workplace to make the work easier for you?”, John said, “They help me, they are not bossy” (it’s quite difficult to understand everything that Stephen says).

Gerald reiterated a similar and related concept in that he used a term that might be the opposite of “bossy” which John used. Gerald pointed out that people being “nice and friendly” to him plays a part in his enjoyment or feeling comfortable in the workplace. This could be considered an important aspect in the various factors that contribute to whether one succeeds of fails in getting and keeping employment. Taking extra care in how the people with ID are treated within a work environment may be considered a waste of resources and time however, the experiences for the both the workers with ID and their counterparts with disabilities provides richness in their lives which would otherwise have not been possible if they had not been given the opportunity to work together.
A statement like people being “nice” to me is relative in meaning, it may have a meaning like being treated with respect as already discussed earlier or being given simple incentives. Obliviously to a person like Craig, being given a “pie” by his boss was meaningful to him. An interesting discussion ensued between Craig and his support person as part of the focus group discussion. The support person’s argument was that the getting an incentive was not important and it was more just having a good relationship with the employer that mattered. Craig was happy at his last job in Penrose where he said, “My boss gave me a free pie.” However, Jas believed, “at workplace, I think it is not about getting the attention, seeking attention is not good. It’s not just about asking for food and all that.” She went on to say,

   To have a good relationship with the employer, you have to give your best, not taking long breaks or a lot of breaks in between. Those are things that employers are looking for before employing. So it’s just presenting yourself. (Jas)

While the offering of simple incentives may seem insignificant, a recent online article by (Fallon and Rice, 2015) showed that workers were likely to respond to a simple incentive like being offered lunch, in the same manner as they would respond to a financial incentive. Obviously, according to the article which was quoting a study conducted by a Genesis Associates, a U.K. based recruitment agency, money is the biggest motivating factor, however a simple thing like being offered a free lunch was also included among the motivation factors.

**Training**

The role of Poly-Emp needs to be explored. All three successful participants valued the support given by the job placement workers up to the point where the placement workers felt that the people with ID had gained sufficient confidence to independently manage the tasks and the relationships of their jobs. Sarah’s employer specifically mentioned how the placement worker was trained for job (two hours a week for eight months) along with Sarah so as to support her adequately before fading the support. It was worthwhile investment, according to Annah (Sarah’s employer).
The same can be said in the case of John, who was given ongoing job coaching and support for a shorter period of time until, both John and the employer could work together comfortably. Having had no previous experience with people with ID, Peter, John’s employer needed to gain confidence and the fact that Poly-Emp was there to walk him through his fears was helpful. This had seen Peter swing from a person without awareness to an enthusiastic advocate for employing people with ID, as evidenced by his participation as a speaker in Poly-Emp’s job expo.

The level of support for Gerald was similar to John. He felt that after Poly-Emp had completed their role in his placement, he could continue to get support from them if he needed to and kept their contact details as some form of safety net for him. He noticed with approval that Poly-Emp had also supported another work mate with ID, despite the fact that he did not necessarily get along with them.

Even though Samantha did receive training and support from Poly-Emp, it seems other factors came into play which has contributed to her not staying in employment. Her independent and outgoing personality which on the surface should make her succeed could actually have had an opposite effect. It is possible that the Poly-Emp training does not focus sufficiently on identity and relationship issues. The identity of having an ID is a potential feature that Samantha feels that she has to fight against. On the other hand, with Sarah Poly-Emp, was able, over a period of a year to help her transform from high emotional instability to a calm well relating individual.

Although Darrell and Craig might have had different possible reasons for not holding mainstream jobs, they had one thing in common, no connection with a job placement organization, such as Poly-Emp. Although IDEA Services Ltd has sporadic access to a Supported Employment Coordinator, its diverse programmes seem to mean that not enough emphasis is put in training, coaching and supporting people to succeed in mainstream employment. Collaboration with organizations who have a specific focus and specialization in job coaching and placement may increase the possibility of having more success.
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

This section discusses and analyses the findings in the previous chapters. The discussion includes an analysis of the individual case studies, taking into consideration the factors that have enabled some of the participants to get and keep jobs while others have not. The theme of work ethic with its sub themes of respect and social interaction, the workplace culture, and training as well as personality traits will also be part of the discussion. Relevant aspects of the literature review in chapter 2 will also be used to substantiate or negate the findings from the project.

The history of the support models, which include the medical model, Normalisation, SRV and the Social Model as well as education, had an important part in the literature review. This makes their place in this section very pertinent arising from the fact that, with the exclusion of the medical model, they have stood at front and centre of influencing the direction of IHC’s service provision.

The research took into consideration the fact that some of the previous studies and literature focused on the limitations that ID placed on the people, therefore reducing the likelihood of them finding and keeping jobs. It instead focused on a non-deficit approach. In the course of the research, though it was not easy to come up with a group of people with ID who have succeeded in mainstream employment, as I delved into more recent literature, media and current affairs, I found out that there is an increased awareness and visibility of success stories internationally.

5.2 People with ID succeeding in employment

The literature showed how people with ID still continue to pursue equality in all aspects of life including employment with overall a small measure of success in this area. A range of activism, including civil rights and feminist movements give some hope for more change in the ID sector. As emphasis is put more on the transformative emancipatory paradigm of research (Mertens, 2007) society may become aware of its shortcomings and opportunities for change are created.
A concerted effort is required across many sectors of society to ensure the success of employing people with ID. When looking at the success of people like Sarah at McDonalds, her work ethic, the culture of the workplace (including the employer’s attitude), as well as the training she received, all contributed to her getting and keeping the job. The manager at the particular branch showed how they went out of their way to give Sarah extra support, until she gained confidence to do the cleaning job effectively, and how they put in place a programme to give her the opportunity to progress to waitressing and eventually to handling the cash register.

The Hell Pizza model in New Zealand (IHC, 2017), Samhall model in Sweden (Skedinger and Widerstedt, 2003) the Bedford Group model in Australia (Saunders and Bedford, 2018) all demonstrate that given the opportunity and support, people with ID can succeed in employment and make a meaningful contribution to their community. Just as with the feminist and the civil rights movements, visibility of these success stories is important in giving impetus to the movement of getting people with ID into employment. The TV Programmes like, Employable Me (New Zealand TV, 2017) which was discussed in the literature review and various internet videos and articles are creating a platform for communities to realize the possibilities of employing people with ID and the benefits both to their business and the community in general.

Since the inception of IHC in 1949, it has advocated for the rights of people with ID to be given opportunities to participate in all aspects of society. Just as it stood against the push for institutionalisation, it has continued to fight for normalization and as well as the Social Role Valorization of the people with ID. The organization has strived to debunk the concept that intellectual disability is a medical impairment, and that the medical model is the basis for engaging with people with ID. The research reiterated this idea and exposed how, through having the right support structures, some people with ID have succeeded in mainstream employment.

IHC’s advocacy arm has been a voice for people with an intellectual disability and by constantly knocking on the doors of government and international organizations, has played a significant role to the changes that are currently happening. As mentioned
in the literature review, the results have included contributions to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with a Disability. While huge gains have been made, the fact that some employers still show some reluctance when it comes giving to people with ID, is testament to the importance of this research topic.

5.3 Summary of findings from the Supported Living Independent Skills assessment tool (money and social skills)

Assessment tools have pros and cons and should reveal the most important attributes which are can be calculated and compared. The Supported Living Independent Skills assessment tool did not show a significant difference between the participants who had managed to get and keep jobs and those who had not. The only participant who seemed to have a slightly lower score overall was Darrell (table 5 and figure 3). This stemmed from the fact that he was the only one who lived in a group home where many of the skills in the tool would be ones that are managed for him and that he could not independently access.

One of the participants who was not in a job, Samantha, scored higher than the rest of the group. From the interview with her and her former employer, she seemed to display similar character traits to any young person in her age group with or without a disability. As already mentioned, she loved being on the phone, enjoyed fast food and enjoyed being independent and not being told what to do. The question of why she was not in employment therefore may not necessarily have been answered fully within the scope of this study. There may be a need to look at it from other perspectives like how young people like Samantha or young people in general have a particular view of being in employment and how access to the employment benefit could be a factor in young people not persevering in some jobs (Poxon, 2017). Bath, Hawke, Skilling, Chaim and Henderson (2019), discuss the impact of socio-economic factors contributing to why young people in general may disengage from employment, including the types of jobs available, which may be boring and unchallenging to them, the fact that bosses are sceptical about employing young people who may not stay for long on the job. Not only are the bosses sceptical, but
also disinterested in employing young people or offering them low pay which is not attractive.

A significant point that can be gleaned from responses by participants with ID in the quantitative data, is that the people who have had success in jobs seem to be more proficient in practical skills, and those who have not, in more academic skills. The skills in the area of money, housing and health and wellbeing in which the IJ group excelled are invaluable within a life and employment setting. It was however surprising that the NIJ group did better in the more complex skills, such as purchasing goods on lay-by and filling in forms. The quantitative data therefore does not provide enough information to conclude with certainty that the skills that either of the groups did well in is of any consequence in their succeeding in employment or not.

The qualitative data on the other hand brought out the personal strengths of those who have succeeded including: the value of the culture of the workplace, the importance of training, as well as the importance of a strong support network. A good work ethic came up consistently in the interviews and in the focus group discussion as a strength.

5.4 Work ethic

Statements like “hardworking”, “work horse”, “honesty” and “always the first one at work” were among the words that displayed the work ethic of the IJ group. This is coupled with the concept of respect which was mentioned a number of times in the interviews and focus group. The context in which respect was discussed includes the people with IDs’ respect for the employers and work mates, and also the employers’ and community’s respect towards the people with ID.

The people’s social interaction with the employers and work mates also displayed the kind of ethic that the people possess. All three success cases showed that they interact well with their work mates and that they seemed to take some initiative in conversations or interactions at work and outside work. The characteristics which
they displayed to an extent would be what are expected from workmates irrespective of whether they have a disability or not.

It is also important to point out that verbal ability and expression does not necessarily translate into the ability to obtain and maintain employment. John and Sarah were the least capable of expressing themselves verbally and yet had the ability to apply the social norms that contribute to one’s success in most social settings (ask for help, show appreciation, show initiative, sense of humour). So this suggests that work qualities, including the ability to have appropriate interpersonal skills are vital in getting and maintaining employment.

Of the three NIJ participants, two showed questionable work qualities. Though Samantha’s former employer did not necessarily want to put her down, she was irritated about how Samantha spent a lot of time on her mobile phone. My own experience with the appointments that I made to meet her for the interviews demonstrated her lack of time consciousness and concern for me as a person. She did not turn up for our first appointment and said she forgot about it when I asked her and for the second appointment, even though I reminded her the day before the meeting and on the day on the meeting, she still turned up quite late.

Craig’s work qualities or lack thereof was shown by how he was not able to concentrate for significant amount of time while on the job. He seemed to enjoy having fun and dancing to his music more than anything else. He also could not resist the temptation to take and eat lollies which he was not supposed to do while on the job.

Darrell however, from the point of view of the external person who gave him a packing job at the day facility, had work qualities that many employers would be happy to see in an employee. Work qualities are therefore not a factor in Darrell not having a job in the mainstream. His potential challenging behaviour (inappropriate interest in young children) was the main problem hindering him from obtaining and maintaining a job.
5.5 Workplace culture

The culture of the workplaces where the people with ID have succeeded include the fact that they were accommodated through being offered some extra support. There was a deliberate effort made to include them in different facets of the workplace. In other words, the companies had created an inclusive workplace culture. There was also a form of buddy system that was apparent in all three cases, which seemed to help them with their confidence levels. In all three cases again they ensured that the people were part of the extra mural or team building activities that took place outside of the work environment.

Gerald who sustained an injury during his period of employment was not only offered support by being given an easier role, but also received a lot of support when he was hospitalized. His immediate supervisor went over and above the call of duty to make sure that he was there for Gerald. The work environment that had been created for Gerald ensured that he felt like part of the team in every way.

The culture at Sarah’s workplace was such that, Sarah had been offered the opportunity to progress to different roles at her own pace with the support of her supervisor and buddy. An important aspect that was revealed at Sarah’s workplace was the concept of passing on the baton of responsibility for Sarah when her manager went for maternity leave. Even though the person who had been responsible for employing her and mentoring her was absent, the culture of the workplace was such that different members of the team were always there for her. Her participation in the company’s extra-mural activities strengthened the bond that she felt as part of the team.

John’s sense of humour and ability to understand the good-natured humour that is part of his male dominated workplace seemed to make the work place conducive to his success in maintaining his job. Though John was physically fit and would try out most of the tasks he was given, there was an emphasis from the site supervisor of the importance of good health and safety procedures. This meant that there was a consideration of John’s ID in the extra effort made to ensure that John was safe. This
was an accommodative culture too, where John could take his annual leave during the school holidays since it was important to him that he spend time with his family.

In the case of the three participants who had not succeeded in keeping their jobs, there seemed to not be an effort in Samantha and Craig’s case to explore different avenues to support them to keep their jobs. At the time of Samantha’s employment, the company was downsizing its workforce and the first to go were the least productive employees. Though taking Samantha on board was an indication of a commitment in the employment of people with ID, it would have been difficult to be enthusiastic about upskilling Samantha, when other more able employees were being sacked.

For Craig, there seemed to be a mismatch between the kind of work he was involved in and his ability to resist the temptation for sweet things. Perhaps consideration could have been taken to put him in an environment where the temptation was minimized.

The most important consideration for Darrell would be a workplace which would not expose him to the opportunity to display his challenging behaviour. It would be incumbent upon IDEA Services to put in place a support structure to help him succeed. This would obviously be dependent upon the availability of funding for the extra support.

5.6 Training

Poly-Emp seemed to have played a pivotal role in the three participants who succeeded. The training the people received through Poly-Emp and the assertiveness of the job placement staff appears to have proved vital in ensuring that the participants were able to get and keep the jobs. It is important to note that the training did not just end with Poly-Emp, but the employers also played a significant role.
The successful models both overseas, such as (Bedford Group, 2018 and Skedinger and Widerstedt, 2003) and in New Zealand (Hell, 2018) concur with this and they emphasized the importance of a clear transition to work programme. This creates that bridge between a school environment and a work environment. In the case of Sarah, the employer was willing to train both Sarah and her support person to be proficient in the job. This made it easier for the support person the help Sarah transition into the job. The fact that she had a familiar person to support with the training would also have played a part in helping her to settle in the job. Not all employers may have the resources or capacity as did McDonald's. Wistow and Schneider (2002) argue that there are many large multinational companies which could play a role in offering the people with ID real work for real pay which are not doing so at the moment.

Poly-Emp helped John with the job and social skills to help him transition into his job. On the other hand, his support worker at home intimated how she had taken some time to train him around personal hygiene, social interaction and other interpersonal skills which seem to have helped in his keeping the job. From the employer’s perspective, giving John a buddy and pacing the work to suit him until he had gained enough confidence to do the job, were all part of the training process. The use of physical objects and visuals rather than written instructions also made the training process easier.

Gerald held onto the Poly-Emp placement worker’s contact details even though he no longer got direct support from her, showing how much value he placed on the training and support which he received from her. His supervisor acknowledged the fact that Poly-Emp’s training and backup support had proved invaluable in Gerald’s employment success.

Although Samantha had some involvement with Poly-Emp, other factors like her apparent inability to conform to the expectations were an indication that there was more to someone succeeding in employment, than just training or work skills. There also seemed not to be any desire to upskill her or give her an opportunity to try another role in the company once the filing job was computerised. A different approach to the training and placement of people like Samantha, needs to be taken.
In the case of Darrell who had the skills and social know-how, the kind of training that he needed was in managing his potentially challenging behaviour. The issue for Darrell was that IDEA could not sustain the level of resources that it felt were needed to ensure that Darrell was not a risk to others. It left open the question of what the strategy in the first place for sustainability was and whether there were training options that needed to be put in place with the help of an abuse prevention organisation such as SAFE who had already had involvement with Darrell.

The involvement of an organisation which specializes in workplace placement for people with ID might be useful for Craig. Care too would need to be taken in the type of jobs that he might be involved in. The training in his case would be around how to manage his short attention span. On the other hand, an adjustment of the work environment to allow him to perform tasks that only required small doses of attention might have been helpful. Training was shown to work in the three research participants who had success in terms of the skills required for them to perform well in the work environment. An emphasis on training that helps Craig to increase his concentration span could help him with the skills necessary to succeed in open employment. Not only does Craig require training to improve his concentration span, but also to help with his social skills. The Poly-Emp training, as well as courses like the UNITEC New Zealand Certificate in Skills for Living and Working (UNITEC, 2018) contribute to the people with ID gaining work skills, more emphasis however, needs to be put on the socializing skills required to succeed in different facets of life including employment.

5.7 Theoretical approaches

This research considered the strengths, opportunities and barriers for people with ID being involved in meaningful employment as contributing members of society. Social Role Valorisation (SRV) (Wolfensberger, et al., 1996) and the Social model (Shakespeare, 2001) approaches to ID have had significant impact on whether people with ID get and keep jobs.
Figure 4 below supports the fact that the Social model lines up with SRV which shows that society is organized to disable the person as opposed to the medical model which puts the blame on the person with a disability.

**The Medical Model**

- Disabled people are not the same as normal people
- Can't use stairs → Housebound
- Can't use Public transport
- Can't communicate because they can't walk/see/hear
- Not able to work → Too problematic for mainstream schools
- Drain to society

**The disabled person is the problem**
Social Model

In accessible buildings and housing

Only stairs, with No ramps or lift

Inaccessible public transport

Over the top Health and safety

Multiple barriers to employment

Discrimination and segregation No sign language interpreters or accessible formats available

Society is arranged to disable the person

Figure 4 - Comparison between Medical and Social Models

Adopted from Greater Manchester Coalition of disabled people website (Greater Manchester Coalition, 2011)

The New Zealand Disability Strategy (2001) affirms the notion in figure 4, that the medical model is established on a disabling foundation, while the social model focuses on the inadequacies of society in providing the best support for people with disabilities to succeed. The vision of the New Zealand Disability Strategy (2001) is the creation of a fully inclusive society where people with disabilities can say they live in; “A society that highly values our lives and continually enhances our full participation” (New Zealand Disability Strategy 2001, p.11)
This is supported by the SRV theory, which may not necessarily provide all the solutions to getting people with ID into employment, but sets a strong foundation for it. It both endeavours to create an atmosphere and an environment to give people with ID access to the resources and opportunities of “normal” people. The key to SRV is that it asks us to value (the valorisation component) the relationships that we have with people with ID over and above the benefits we have because of supportive job roles or moral imperatives. The IJ group were supported by people who liked them and were happy to relate to them outside of the narrow constraints of job supervision. Gerald’s employers visited him on a number of occasions while he was in hospital, Sarah’s employers involved him in extra-mural team building opportunities and John’s boss became a strong advocate for the employment of people with ID as (for example) an invited speaker to a job expo hosted by Poly-Emp.

Whereas the SRV model asks disability organisations to create socially-valued environments (e.g. ordinary housing rather than institutions) and to train people with ID to behave in socially valued ways, the Social model and rights-based approach (Shakespeare, 2001) delves a little deeper and says, society provides the limiting factors and should adjust in order to give people with ID similar opportunities to the rest of society. The rights based approach acknowledges the difference in both ability and production capacity between people with ID and those without, but says that the community (not just the disability organisations) should provide more accommodating environments and that more resources should be available for people with ID in order to be able to make a contribution to the social fabric. John’s employer, given his lack of experience with people with ID could have found it challenging to employ him. The work placement support worker from Poly-Emp was patient both with John and the management at John’s workplace, giving an opportunity for both to adjust and fit into the environment.

For John’s employer to encourage other branches of his company to employ other people with ID and for him to participate at Poly-Emp’s job expo, shows that society can change when given the right tools and knowledge. There is obviously a limitation in as far as the type of jobs some people with ID will be able to perform, and it is
incumbent upon society to give them “a go” at what they may be able to do or at least be trained to do.

In as much as the social model endeavours to ensure that society adjusts to accommodate people with ID into employment, there are other challenges that are beyond its scope. These include that fact that whether young people have an ID or not, their perception towards employment appears to have changed from the historical concept of going into a specific job or trade and committing to it for life. There now appears to be a tendency to hop from one job to the next. The changing nature of work may also have contributed to this; where jobs that require a number of people can now be performed by one computerized machine or where filing needed to be done in filing cabinets is all saved onto computer files (Bath, Hawke, Skilling, Chaim and Henderson, 2019). At the same time the concept of young people who are Not engaged in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) is prevalent in the OECD countries. NEET encompasses the fact that there are a number of barriers which young people face, in “entering the job market, such as poor labour market conditions, lack of job skills, or psychosocial challenges, while others are temporarily disengaged, but plan to return to work” (Bath, Hawke, Skilling, Chaim and Henderson, 2019). Samantha could be a victim of the NEET complex as well as being a causality of the changing nature of work.

The value of SRV and the social model cannot be overemphasized on their impact on how IDEA Services function. The name of the organization in itself, Intellectual Disability Empowerment in Action demonstrates the passion it has in fulfilling the dreams of the parents who founded the organisation.

5.8 Cases that have not achieved the desired outcome

On the surface the people from the two groups appeared similar and both the qualitative and quantitative data seemed to confirm this. However, there were some factors that separated them, these ranged from personal character traits, the training they received, the kind of support they got, as well as the employment environment they occupied. Darrell, Samantha and Craig though, not having had success in
employment, had some aspects which if cultivated or nurtured might have resulted in them succeeding.

Darrell’s mana, leadership and respectful personality, though desirable was negated by the challenging behaviour which limits his community participation. Within the sheltered workshop, Shirley an external work provider to IDEA, who is not privy to the information relating to Darrell’s challenging behaviour, was extremely appreciative of his leadership in her projects. She could not understand why a person of Darrell’s ability could not be given the opportunity to get a mainstream job.

A possible solution to Darrell’s dilemma revolved around managing the external context, not the job in which Darrell was happily and productively engaged. For Darrell, who understood the different social norms, apart from the challenging behaviour, his current position back in the IDEA workshop, could be described as a pleasant prison. A place where he could perform different tasks within some strict guidelines. The label which he has acquired provides major limitations, but this could be altered by understanding the dimensions of the concerns. This would include the creation of a detailed strategy and providing the funding to carry it through. This might also mean initially providing him with adequate staff support to protect him from the likelihood of falling back into the challenging behaviour.

The second participant, Samantha, who has not had success in the employment sector, displayed similar characteristics to young people without a disability. Her social interaction, work ethic, procrastination, image consciousness and being fiercely independent, were all characteristics that bring into question whether there is just some immaturity that might be expected of anyone her age. It might be valuable to consider the type of work environment that she was situated in too. There might not have been enough stimulation in terms of people her age. It might also have been that the job itself was not challenging enough for her.

Though Samantha has had some support previously from Poly-Emp, there might not have been a similar amount of support as the successful cases, when she got the job at the courier company. This could be because the time and resources that IDEA
Services put in ensuring that she was settled in her job may not have been the same as what Poly-Emp does because its sole function is around job placements.

From first impressions, Samantha appeared to be quite capable, she was articulate and asked questions for clarification if she did not understand. Consequently, she may not have been offered the most appropriate support. When she was within the umbrella of Poly-Emp, she had been offered support with job placement; however, other personal external factors led her to pull out of Poly-Emp. This meant that other job placements that she got involved in came through her connection with IDEA Services. Although IDEA Services did give her support, this would not have been as specialized as what Poly-Emp offered.

As already mentioned, Samantha has left the supported independent living service provided by IDEA Services. The government provides funding to organizations to give the best service to the people with ID, however, given that IDEA Services no longer received funding to support Samantha, there seems to be a need to ask questions about who looks out for people like her. Samantha was able to access different types of benefits from Work and Income New Zealand (WINZ) however; there is more to life than just having income support. WINZ as a government agency can possibly point people like Samantha in the direction of finding specific support. It may, however, be incumbent upon organizations with specialist knowledge to reach out and find ways of supporting people like Samantha within the confines of her independent living. The fact that Samantha was once part of IDEA Services creates an obligation for the organization to have a clear follow up strategy.

The last of the three who has not had success in employment, Craig, also had traits with which one would think he could succeed in getting and keeping a job. He has great social skills which both research and employers agree is a key element in one getting and keeping a job. The focus group discussion and feedback from Craig’s support showed the need for more concerted effort in helping Craig to get jobs that suit his personality more, jobs which would not set him up for failure, like the lolly factory job that he was involved in. His love of music and dance which was apparent in different conversations could be harnessed in obtaining a job in a more suitable environment.
A more in-depth study into adjusting environments to suit people like Craig would be necessary in order to do justice to the need for individualized placements. This would include, adjusting to his short attention span and having an environment where he could have music and dance while working.
CHAPTER 6: LIMITATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

There were several limitations encountered in the course of the research. There was the challenge of doing the research within the researcher’s work environment and during work time. Although this had been catered for in the ethics application, it proved more difficult than had been anticipated. The restructuring process in the organisation meant there were some changes in the positions of some of the participants. For example, when I initially started the research one of the main sources of information, the Supported Employment Coordinator left and a new person employed and before the end of the research, his role had also changed leaving the area with no one specifically doing the role. I therefore, had to make some adjustments to keep the research on track.

In terms of engaging with the people with ID, one limitation was that two of the participants were not able to attend the meeting. Although I was able to catch up with them in a different environment, the richness of bouncing ideas of each other was missing. The two participants with ID fortunately represented both groups, IJ and NIJ, and were articulate enough to express themselves in an understandable way. The other challenge of focus groups in this kind of research is the limited communication ability of the participants. Perhaps putting the participants into pairs would have been a more viable way of supporting engagement in the discussions.

The size of the sample does not make it possible to have large generalizations on the applicability of the research. None the less the details of the stories will inform some of the equivalent situations that might arise in the disability sector. Each individual case was unique in terms of the participant, their personal characteristics as well as the environment.

For the three who have not been successful, another aspect that needed to be taken into consideration was the possibility that the type of jobs that were available or which they were employed in were not stimulating enough for them. It is important to note too that what stimulates one person might be different to what stimulates another.
In terms of the participation on the people with ID in the focus group, perhaps use of smaller groups such as the discussion being done in pairs could have improved the flow of the conversation. This in turn might have increased the richness of the data.

**Recommendations**

For the two male participants who were not in employment, there was a sense that perhaps the limitations to them getting into employment, were more to do with external factors than their personal traits. The challenging behaviour that Darrell presented could be got around through supporting him differently. The cost to benefit value ratio in the long run could possibly be tipped in favour of benefit for Darrell, the agency and the community in general. The same might be said of Craig whose possible reason for not being able to find and keep a job could be overcome by putting more thought and creativity into the jobs and support offered to him.

The United Nations international convention and New Zealand law have provided the platform for the theory of ensuring that people with ID are supported to succeed in employment. However, there is still a gap between the theory and the practice. Regular audits and more funding that is specifically earmarked towards service provision which creates opportunities for agencies and employers to better support people with ID in employment is vital.

Employers who have been instrumental in helping the people with ID who have succeeded need to be recognized as models of good employers. This would mean giving them a platform to showcase the kind of culture that they have created which has led to the successful employment of the people with ID. It is also important to note that emphasis needs to continue to be around the social role valorisation of the people with a disability rather than tokenism to make the employers look good.

The models of employing people with ID which have been successful have something in common. There is an emphasis on the training aspect of the job. The Samhall, Bedford Group and Hell Pizza all show how training and personalized
support is important. This is also supported by the fact that the participants in the study who succeeded had received training and ongoing support from Poly-Emp until they were settled in the jobs and had formed relationships to support them when the placement worker support was faded.

IDEA Services would do well to put more emphasis on the training and placement support if there are to be more people succeeding in mainstream employment. Alternatively, more collaboration with other organizations which specialize in employment training and placement for people with ID like Poly-Emp could be beneficial. Collaboration could be two pronged, firstly engaging the training institution to train the support workers, and secondly, engaging them to train and help place the people with ID who are interested in getting and keeping jobs.

A dedicated Supported Employment Coordinator position is an important conduit for the maintenance of this relationship between IDEA Services, supported employment agencies and employers. Obviously, while other services within IDEA like activity centres and residential facilities all need additional funding to support independent living, supported employment coordination should not continue to be viewed as an add on.

More research needs to be done to find ways of engaging people like Samantha who displayed a number of traits that are found in young people in general, in terms of her attitudes towards life and employment in particular. In other words, her issues are more than just disability related, but include identity and career issues. The concept of Not engaged in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), which has been mentioned in the literature is possibly relevant to Samantha. With this in mind, and regarding IDEA Services as a social service organisation and the largest organisation providing services to people with intellectual disabilities in New Zealand, it has a social responsibility to have some form of follow up programme for people who fall through the net.

Another recommendation is that more attention needs to be put on the accommodations or adjustments that would be required in many employment sectors. For the physically disabled and visually impaired, things like rails in
bathrooms and wheelchair ramps are all part of the accommodations that have already become partly regulated by the government. However, there seems to be limited accommodations or adjustments made for people with ID. The adjustments could include visuals and easy read formats for instruction manuals. Apart from that, the adjustments could be more on how the employers and other employees create an environment where the people with ID are allowed to work at a pace or in a way that suits their ability. In other words, employers and employees adjusting to the people with ID around work patterns, skills and engagement.

A further recommendation that focuses more on the training side is that training for people with ID needs to be person specific around their particular individual needs. This might prove to be expensive in terms of the resources that need to be put in to change the environment to suit the person. However, an overall cost benefit analysis might need to be taken to show which would be cheaper, just looking after the people with ID without them being productive in any way or offering them opportunities to be productive members of society.

IDEA Services might also do well to build on and emphasize cooperation with the external agencies that have had success in work placement for people with ID.

Or in fact it might be appropriate for IDEA Services as an organization to develop a more comprehensive all-round training programme that creates opportunities for the people with ID to get a chance to succeed in employment.

Although cultural and gender issues could have been given some focus, some of the factors that led to the participants succeeding or not succeeding in employment appear to be universally applicable. Perhaps for Samantha, who is of Pacific Island ethnicity a more comprehensive study could be done where the value of cultural mentors could be examined and how they might be able to support her or others of a similar background using culturally appropriate methods. The strengthening of cultural identity at IDEA Services and PolyEmp stage could contribute to the success of the people of different ethnic backgrounds in employment.
At the stage of looking for employers, it would also be prudent to find good cultural connections in both potential employers and employees who would be working alongside the people with ID. Not only should the employers be culturally sensitive, but also be both empathic and sympathetic towards people with ID. This means that the employers should have the capacity to treat people with ID in a flexible manner. Further study would more appropriately answer the question of whether Samantha or Darrell could have done better if they had been employed in more culturally sensitive environments.

For Darrell who is of Māori, ethnicity, my research has shown that it was not so much cultural issues that have put limitations on his success in employment, but society’s view of the particular challenging behaviour he is likely to display. He is involved in kapa haka as part of his cultural enrichment. Whenever IDEA Services has any Kaupapa Māori, related activities, Darrell is always at the forefront, demonstrating the great value that he derives from his culture. However, the complexity of the issues which Darrell presents means that other options to support him need to be considered. This might include IDEA Services interacting and coordination with other organisations to counteract his situation. On the other hand, it is possible that Darrell may be a victim of veiled racism where according to Huygens (2011), quoting the Hunn report, Māori, were not achieving to the same level as their Pakeha counterparts in health education, housing and development.
CONCLUSION

The concept of employment as an expression of one's valued role within a community is at the front and centre of most societies. People with ID have always been part of society and employment creates an important pathway to inclusion in their community. However, discrimination has had a major contribution as to whether or not they gained employment. This research took a small sample of six people with an ID and used a strengths-based approach to reveal how, given the opportunity and appropriate conditions, they had the ability to succeed in mainstream employment. The focus of the research was on the factors that led to the success of half of the research participants in obtaining and maintaining employment while the other half were not been able to do so. Personality traits and environmental factors were examined.

Both the literature and my research findings point to a common element - the role of society in creating a disabling environment. The fact that the participants in my research were similar in ability as evidenced by both the quantitative and qualitative data, meant that external factors were more dominant in whether one succeeded or not in gaining employment.

In other words, the two core philosophies that underpinned the research were the Social Role Valorisation (SRV) and the Social Model of dealing with people with ID as applied to the employment sector. The aim of this would be changing society rather than changing the person. Every individual has a right to have their needs met and society has an obligation to create an enabling environment to meet those needs.

For the three participants who had employment success, it seems quite clear that the environmental factors which played an important role in their success included the amount as well as the type of training that was received. The training and support was not only based in a classroom setting, but was ongoing within the work environment, until they had settled enough and developed relationships which would be part of their support next work once the placement worker's support was faded.
Apart from training, workplace accommodations, the culture of the workplace and the type of employer made a significant impact on their success. The opposite was true for at least two of the participants who did not gain and maintain employment.

A look at the public persona that Samantha portrays on her Facebook page demonstrates a young person who likes to look “pretty” (Samantha) and also maintain a great amount of dignity. She seems to be like any other young person without a disability who perhaps is just crying out for attention. All she might need is to be given a chance and the right support.

As Peter, John’s employer said, “Give them a chance . . . they are reliable”.
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APPENDICES
Appendix 1

Consent Form: Adults with Intellectual Disabilities

This consent form will be held for six years. Data provided from the research study will be securely stored for the same period of time at Unitec.

Title: An exploration of the factors that lead to the successful employment of people with intellectual disabilities

I agree to take part in this project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I understand that my participation in this focus group is voluntary</th>
<th>I have a right not to answer any question I don’t like or to withdraw from the focus group at any stage, up until one week after I have received the transcript without having to explain why</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have had this research explained to me</td>
<td>I agree to having the focus group discussion tape recorded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have been able to ask questions and have them answered</td>
<td>I will read a written copy of what I said in the focus group before it is used in the research. I will sign this copy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand what is expected of me</td>
<td>I can stop being involved in the research up until I have signed the copy of what I said</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Signed:
Name:
Date

Draft focus group schedule
Arrival
Tea, coffee, water is offered to the people on arrival.
Participants are given the opportunity to:
- Use different coloured pens and paper to draw their idea of what it means to be employed
- Use different pictures to talk about their idea of being in employment
- Use an iPad app to communicate their idea of being employed

Welcome and Introductions 15mins
- Group introductions
- Discussion of the overview of the research
- Use any form of communication the participants are comfortable with to express their idea of being in employment and keeping jobs
- No right or right answers strength based approach, confidentiality and trust
- Ethical consideration: consent forms, recording and transcribing
- Time and outline of focus group
- Housekeeping

Prompts for group discussion 25mins
- Use the appropriate language for the people to express the type of work they do, they length of time they have been employed, the reasons why they have been able / not able to keep their job.
- Use the draft questions and allow the people to bounce the questions amongst themselves.

Coffee break 15mins

Wrap up
Participants are given a summary of the discussion. They informed that there will be another meeting to give them feedback on the discussions and for them to check and sign the transcribed copy of the focus group.

Draft Questions for person with an ID for the Focus Group Discussion
The researcher will create a relaxed atmosphere for the person with an ID and use language and tone that is appropriate.

1. What kind of work do /did you do? How did you get the job? What kind of support did you get from your family and friends? IDEA Services?
2. What does getting a job mean to you? How does having one make you feel?
3. Do /did you enjoy the work? What made enjoy / not enjoy the work? What kind of support do / did you get from your employer / your family / IDEA Services? Have there been any adjustments made to your work environment to make it easier for you to do the work?
4. Do you think that there are things that you do / did that helped / caused you to keep / lose your job? Are there things that you think some of your friends can do to get and keep jobs?
5. Is / was it easy work for you? What about the people you work / ed with? Do / did you get along with them? Why?
6. What do you think has helped you to keep your job? / What do you think was the reason for you to lose your job? Is there something that you think could be done to help people keep their jobs?
7. Do / Did you understand and are / were you able to follow the instructions when you are / were working? What do you think can help you to understand the instructions better?
8. Are there things that you have learnt before that help you in your work? Did you do any course that you think was helpful in making keep you the job? Is there some course that you think would have helped you keep your job?
9. What do you think would help to get more people with disabilities to get and stay in jobs? By the government? By IDEA Services? By your family and friends?
10. Are there any other thoughts that you have to help get more of your friends into employment?
Consent Form: Key Staff

This consent form will be held for six years. Data provided from the research study will be securely stored separately for the same period of time. All information resulting from the study will be stored in a locked filing cabinet at Unitec.

Title: An exploration of the factors that lead to the successful employment of people with intellectual disabilities

Researcher: Tendai Mufanechiya

- I have been given and have understood an explanation of the research project
- I understand that participation or non-participation will not affect my employment status
- I understand that names will not be used in any presentation/publication
- I understand that I can withdraw from participating in the research until up to the point of signing the transcript.
- I understand that I cannot withdraw my interview data once the transcript of my interview has been signed

I agree to:

- Participating in an interview
- Findings being used in research thesis
  I agree to take part in this research

Name:
Signed:

Contact details to arrange interview

Date:

Please note: The key staff is the agency’s staff supporting the person with an ID

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Consent Form: Supporter (Parent/Caregiver/Advocate) / Employer
This consent form will be held for six years. Data provided from the research study will be securely stored separately for the same period of time. All information resulting from the study will be stored in a locked filing cabinet at Unitec.

Title: An exploration of the factors that lead to the successful employment of people with intellectual disabilities

Researcher: Tendai Mufanechiya

- I have been given and have understood an explanation of the research project
- I understand that names will not be used in any presentation/publication
- I understand that I can withdraw from participating in the research until up to the point of singing the transcript.
- I understand that participation or non-participation will not affect the Adults service and support / or my future engagement with IDEA Services.
- I understand that I cannot withdraw my interview data once the transcript of my interview has been signed.

I agree to:

- Participating in an interview
- Findings being used in a research thesis

I agree to take part in this research

Name:

Signed:

Contact details to arrange interview

Date:

**Participation Information Sheet: Adults with Intellectual Disabilities**

*Title: An exploration of the factors that lead to the successful employment of people with intellectual disabilities*

Date:
My name is Tendai Mufanechiya. I am studying at Unitec and as part of my studies I am doing a research project. I am asking you to take part in a focus group for the project which is looking at the reason why some people in IDEA Services are able to get and keep jobs while others seem to face problems with this.

As part of this project I will be asking you for ideas of why you think that you have been able to find and keep a job / have not been able to stay in your job. I hope that finding out this information will help others or you to find and keep a job.

Being part of this research will take about two hours.

- Half an hour to find out about the research
- One hour for the focus group discussion
- Half an hour to discuss the transcripts of the discussion.

I would like to record what we discuss in the focus group so that I can listen to it again. This will help me to make sure I write everything you say. The recordings will be kept private. You can ask me to turn off the recorder any time in the discussion if you wish.

When I have written up what you said I will go through it with you. You can check what I have written. You can have a support person with you when I am we have this meeting. If you agree with what I have written, I will ask you to sign it. The notes will be kept private.

If you are not happy with any part of the research you can put a compliant through the IDEA Services advocacy group. You can put in your compliant to the Unitec Ethics Committee (ask your support worker for the details).

Participation Information Sheet: Supported Employment Coordinator
Title: An exploration of the factors that lead to the successful employment of people with intellectual disabilities

Date:

My name is Tendai Mufanechiya. I am studying at Unitec and as part of my studies I am doing a research project. The project aims to look at the factors that lead to the successful employment of people with intellectual disabilities. We will examine why one group of people that has been able to obtain and keep jobs while another group who appear have similar characteristics have not been able to do the same. I will be looking at whether it is personal attributes or other external factors have led to the specific group of people with intellectual disabilities getting and keeping employment while others have not been able to do the same.

What will it mean for you?

I will be asking you to set aside an hour of your time to take part in an interview. The interview will be based on:

- Your general approach or philosophy to getting people with ID into employment
- Examining six people with ID, three of whom have obtained and maintained jobs and three who have been given the opportunity, but have not been able to keep the jobs.
- Going through each person’s case and considering how they got the job, the support they received and employers’ attitudes.
- What would happen differently for those who did not keep their jobs when considering their next job prospects

What will be done with this material?

The information from the interview will be combined with other parts of the project to write up a report that creates a picture of the factors that help people with intellectual disabilities to obtain and keep jobs.

The comments you provide will be anonymous and I will not require any information that could identify you. I will record and transcribe the interview and the documentation will be digitally stored in a password-locked folder at Unitec. This does not stop you from changing your mind if you wish to withdraw yourself and your information from the project at any time up until you approve the transcript of your interview. You will also be given the opportunity to read, if you wish, to read the thesis before it is submitted for examination.
Consent
I have attached a consent form for you to sign if you I agree to participate in the project.
If you have any queries about the research, you may contact me on tmufanechiya@yahoo.com
If you have any concerns about the project you can contact my principal supervisor at Unitec, Dr Geoff Bridgman, at 09 815 4321 ext 5071 or by email at gbridgman@unitec.ac.nz
UREC REGISTRATION NUMBER: 1371752
This study has been approved by the UNITEC Research Ethics Committee from February 2016 to 30 November 2016. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Committee through the UREC Secretary (ph: 09 815-4321 ext 6162). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

Participation Information Sheet: Employer
Title: An exploration of the factors that lead to the successful employment of people with intellectual disabilities
Date:
My name is Tendai Mufanechiya. I am studying at Unitec and as part of my studies I am doing a research project. The project aims to look at the factors that lead to the successful employment of people with intellectual disabilities. We will examine why one group of people that has been able to obtain and keep jobs while another group who appear have similar characteristics have not been able to do the same. I will be looking at whether it is personal attributes or other external factors have led to the specific group of people with intellectual disabilities getting and keeping employment while others have not been able to do the same.

What will it mean for you?
I will be asking you to set aside half an hour of your time to take part in an interview. The interview will be based on:
Your connection to intellectual disability or disability generally
How you came to employ X
How he / she did on the job  - Reason for leaving (if appropriate)
What would happen differently in the event of you employing another person with ID in the future?
What will be done with this material?
The information from the interview will be combined with other parts of the project to write up a report that creates a picture of the factors that help people with intellectual disabilities to obtain and keep jobs.
The comments you provide will be anonymous and I will not require any information that could identify you. I will record and transcribe the interview and the documentation will be digitally stored in a passed word locked folder at Unitec. This does not stop you from changing your mind if you wish to withdraw yourself and your information from the project at any time up until you approve the transcript of your interview. You will also be given the opportunity to read, if you wish, to read the thesis before it is submitted for examination.

Consent
I have attached a consent form for you to sign if you I agree to participate in the project.
If you have any queries about the research, you may contact me on tmmufanechiya@yahoo.com
If you have any concerns about the project you can contact my principal supervisor at Unitec, Dr Geoff Bridgman, at 09 815 4321 ext 5071 or by email at gbridgman@unitec.ac.nz

UREC REGISTRATION NUMBER: 1371752
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Interview Questions for Employers
1) What's your connection to intellectual disability or disability generally? (family, friends, work (history of employing people with a disability), etc.)?
2) How did you come to employ X (who approached who? What were the arrangements with IDEA? Training? Level of support? Government subsidy? Short-term or permanent? The job interview? What made you give him/her the job?)
3) *How did X go in the job?* (what was the job? Hours? Induction process – mentor? Attitude of workmates? Job performance? Getting on with workmates? Challenges, solutions, support from IDEA or other agencies? Growth in X, surprises, strong points, personality/character? Hour long did the job last? Reasons for leaving (if appropriate)?)

4) *What would happen differently, if/when you next employ a person with an intellectual disability?* (what should IDEA/the government/other agencies do differently, what work would you offer, how many people with a disability would you employ? What’s a reasonable wage? What would you say to someone who was thinking of employing someone with an intellectual disability?)

**Support Employment Coordinator**

1) *What’s your general approach or philosophy to getting people with ID into employment?* (who should be employed? How work ready do people have to be? How much support and what kind can be given? Characteristics of food employers?)

2) *With the six people with ID that are part of this study what was setup for each person* (Go through each person’s case. Who approached who? What were the arrangements with IDEA? Training? Level of support? Government subsidy? Short-term or permanent? The job interview? What convinced the employer to give her or him the job in each case?)

3) *How did X go in the job?* (Go through each person’s case. what was the job? Hours? Induction process – mentor? Attitude of workmates? Job performance? Getting on with workmates? Challenges, solutions, support from IDEA or other agencies? Growth in X, surprises, strong points, personality/character? Hour long did the job last? Reasons for leaving (if appropriate)?)

4) *What would happen differently, for the ones that were not successful, in their next job placement?* (Go through the 3 people who were not successful. What should IDEA/the government/other agencies/the employer do differently? Training? Support needs? What work would be suitable? What’s a reasonable wage?)
Transcript Approval Form: Key Staff and Employers

This Transcript Approval Form will be held for five years. The data provided from the research will be securely stored separately for the same period of time. All information resulting from the study will be stored in a password locked computer five years.

Title: An exploration of the factors that lead to the successful employment of people with intellectual disabilities.

Researcher: Tendai Mufanechiya

I have been given and read a transcript of my interview

I have been given the opportunity to amend or add to the transcript

I agree with the content of the transcript

I agree with my transcript

Name: __________________________________________________________

Signed: _________________________________________________________

Date: _________________
Transcript Approval Form: Adults with intellectual disability (Name)

This form will be kept for five years. Data collected from the project will be securely stored separately for five years at Unitec.

Title: An exploration the factors lead to the successful employment of people with intellectual disabilities

Researcher: Tendai Mufanechiya

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have read the transcript of focus group discussion</td>
<td>(Image of an owl reading)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I agree with what I have read</td>
<td>(Image of a thumbs-up man)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Signed: _____________________________________________________________________________________

Name: _____________________________________________________________________________________

Date: _____________________________________________________________________________________
Appendix 2

Independent Living Skills - A checklist for young people in care

Take the challenge! Would you survive if you moved out of home?

Are you ready to take charge of your life?

Learning how to look after yourself and solve life’s little problems is part of growing up but are you ready to be independent? Or to live alone or share a house? This checklist will help you work out what you can do already and what you should probably learn more about. You might think you know enough about things like money or how to look after your health but can you do everything in the checklist? It doesn’t matter if you can’t! You have a lifetime to learn and you won’t be a failure if you can never do it all.

How do I use the checklist?

It’s easy – just work through the list either by yourself or better still with a support worker, parent or someone else who knows you well. This is because you can never be sure about what you don’t know. For example, when you talk to your carer about the cost of setting up a place to live you might find there are a lot of hidden costs you know nothing about.

For each question, decide how much you know and then discuss it with your support worker. Do they agree? Do they have any extra information? How can you learn more? In most cases you will be able to learn more from your support worker either by talking about their experiences or being given opportunities to practice skills like cooking or saving for a goal.

You should also talk to your support worker about what entitlements and services are available to you.

As you work through the questions, mark off how much you know now. If you go through the checklist again in a year you will be able to see how much your skills have improved.

Remember, you should not expect to have all of the skills now – even some people without disabilities can’t do all of them! Some skills may not be needed for years.

Don’t stress about the checklist – just let it help you get thinking about what you need to know. It’s a great conversation starter to help you and your support worker talk about what will be useful for you to learn as you take on more responsibility for your own life

Money

Knowing where your money is coming from and being able to manage it is very important, especially if you have to pay for your own food, rent and pay bills like gas, electricity, the phone and internet! This section lists skills to do with banking, credit,
budgets and taxes. Talk to your support worker about how ready you are to manage your money and how you can learn more. You might be eligible for allowances or other help with money. You can talk to your support worker or the organisation (IDEA Services) about the services and supports available and if you should apply for any of them. As you work through the questions, mark off how

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Money</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Partly</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I know how to open a bank account and check a bank statement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand the fees for managing an account using ATMs, EFTPOS and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>being overdrawn</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to use an ATM, EFTPOS, internet and phone banking.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I understand how credit cards work and the real cost of buying</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>goods on credit.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know where to go for help if I run into trouble with debt or if I</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>think I’m being ripped off by a credit provider</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand the importance of having a good credit history.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand there are immediate consequences of not paying bills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>such as electricity being cut off.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I know to contact a service provider to agree on a repayment plan</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>if I can't pay a bill in full.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I know the different ways to borrow money (eg friends, family,</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>pawn shops, bank loans, student loans) and the advantages and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disadvantages of each</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to get an IRD number, fill in a tax return and the</td>
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<tr>
<td>consequences of not filing a tax return or making false statements.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I can read a pay slip and understand the difference between</td>
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<tr>
<td>gross pay and net pay.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I can budget for regular bills and unexpected emergencies and</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>have a savings plan.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I understand how goods can be bought on lay-by without credit</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>charges and can budget for payments over the lay-by period.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know where to shop for budget food, clothing and household</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>furnishings.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I understand the difference between luxuries and necessities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I understand the advantages of having a prepaid mobile phone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rather than being on a monthly plan.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I understand the costs of owning and running a car including loan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>payments, petrol, rego, insurance and maintenance.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to find out if I’m eligible and to apply Work and Income</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>for the appropriate benefits.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>House New Zealand for Supported Living Benefits</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Housing – finding somewhere to live**
Moving into your own place is a big step and not always an easy one. Whether you’re renting on your own or sharing a house - everyone needs somewhere affordable to live! It’s good to understand the hidden costs of living in your own place and how to be a good tenant (and following the rules in your tenancy agreement!). Talk to your support worker or IDEA Services about where you will be living when you leave a residential home – they can talk your through the services and supports available and how to apply for them. There are different types of accommodation such as studio apartments, granny flats, units, townhouses and free standing houses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Partly</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I know how to call the New Zealand Social Housing or find other emergency housing assistance.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I understand the different housing options available and know which ones are within my budget.</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to look for housing (eg newspaper ads, real estate agents, noticeboards, internet, word of mouth).</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand basic terms like lease, sublet, studio, tenant, tenancy agreement and managing agent</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to choose where to live based on condition of the property, safety, and nearness to transport, family, friends, work or study.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can fill in a rental application form.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can fill in a tenancy agreement and understand the importance of properly completing the property inspection form.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand that to keep a tenancy and stay renting I need to: budget well so I can pay the rent on time keep the property clean and tidy follow any rules in the tenancy agreement about letting people stay with me manage my visitors properly so I don’t disturb neighbours e.g. by having frequent noisy parties make sure my flatmates agree to these rules too</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand what can happen if I break the tenancy agreement.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know where to get help if there is a problem with the landlord.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I understand the cost of setting up a tenancy (eg payment of bond, advance rent, utilities connection).</td>
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<tr>
<td>I can list necessary household items (eg furniture, kitchen equipment, linen).</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to find out if I am eligible and to apply for assistance from: Housing New Zealand (including social housing or assistance with private rental)</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Education and training**

Open some doors and think about studying or training - apart from helping you get by in life, your studies and training will increase your choices and opportunities for work. You should not stop learning and can get help with your studies. When you are
studying, your placement will usually be able to continue if you are part way through your NZQA Course and support is available if you want to enrol in something new. This section is about where you can get training, find a course that suits you and get help with the costs. You might be eligible for an allowance or other help with study and training either before or after you leave care. Ask your support staff or IDEA Services what is available and if you are eligible.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EDUCATION AND TRAINING</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Partly</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I know what education or training is needed for the job I want</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know where to find information about university courses, training and apprenticeships.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a realistic view of my education and training options based on my current level of achievement.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have discussed my educational or training plans with career advisors or counsellors at school, Polytech, University or Studylink.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand the requirements for the course of study or training I have chosen.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know the costs of completing the course of study or training I have chosen including fees, books, materials, travel and how to access financial support.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I regularly attend my current course and complete my assessment tasks.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to ask for help from Work and Income, my support agency or Workbridge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to find out if I'm eligible and to apply for help from Studylink while studying.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Employment**

Having a job gives you a sense of purpose, provides you with an income and opens opportunities for learning new skills and meeting people. Sometimes it can be hard for a person to find work as a lot of people are looking for jobs and there may not be enough jobs for everyone. You can improve your chances if you know where to look and what will be expected of you by the person doing the hiring. Once you have a job you need to understand how to hold onto it and have a good record so you can move on to better work. There is a lot of help available for people looking for work – including traineeships, apprenticeships and work experience opportunities. Find out from your caseworker if you are eligible.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EMPLOYMENT</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Partly</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I know how to get help from government agencies to find a job or apply for an allowance while I'm looking for work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to use newspaper ads, internet and job placement agencies to find a job</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I know how to compare an advertised job with the skills I have.  
I can put together a resume and cover letter and know how to complete a job application.  
I know how to prepare for a job interview including what to wear.  
I know that I should follow-up the interview with a phone call, letter or email.  
I understand that when I’m working I should know what I will be paid and my conditions and rights.  
I know that my behaviour and attitude at work can affect whether I keep my job or get promotions.  
I know to turn up to work on time, dress appropriately and call my boss if I can’t go to work.  
I can handle criticism and understand the difference between bullying and being corrected when I have made a mistake  
I know what to do if I have a grievance. For example, if I’m not being paid for my work or have been unfairly dismissed.  
I know to give proper notice if I want to leave a job and that I could lose money or get a bad reference if I don’t.  
I understand the importance of having a good work history and using referees that will give me a good reference.

### Health and Wellbeing

You’ve got one body – so look after it! Eating healthy food, keeping your kitchen clean, travelling safely, locking your windows and doors at night are all ways to look after yourself. Can you tell when you are getting sick or when it’s time to visit a doctor and seek medical treatment? When was the last time you visited the dentist? Do you know where to find the help you need - this could be as simple as buying over the counter medicine or might mean going to a doctor, dentist, family planning clinic or some other health service or even calling an ambulance. This section is about personal health and safety and finding the right health services. Talk to your support staff about anything you don’t understand and where you can learn more. Talk to your caseworker or foster care agency about getting a Medicare card if you don't have one.

<p>| I understand the difference between healthy and unhealthy food choices and habits and look after my diet. | No | Partly | Yes |
| I practice good personal hygiene (eg brush teeth and shower or bathe regularly, wash hands after using the bathroom, before eating and regularly when sick). |   |  |    |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I understand how poor hygiene affects relationships with others and increases the risk of getting sick or spreading germs.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I understand the health risks of using drugs, alcohol and smoking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand the risks of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and how to prevent them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know where my nearest medical centre and Family Planning clinic are and where to go for help with emotional problems and dealing with addictions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know where to get reliable information about health issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know where my nearest medical centre and Family Planning clinic are and where to go for help with emotional problems and dealing with addictions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can fill in a form that asks about my health and medical history – do you know your blood group for example? (Your caseworker or foster care agency may be able to help if you are unsure of your history)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know the birth control options, where to get contraception and options for pregnancy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know to call 111 in an emergency for police, fire brigade or ambulance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to contact the 24 hour crisis lines for counselling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know where to get help with domestic violence or sexual assault.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know where to get help if I have questions about my sexuality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can tell if I have a fever and can recognise symptoms of cold, flu and other health problems including stress, depression or anxiety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have ways to deal with stress or to calm myself down if I need to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to treat minor injuries such as cuts, burns, insect bites and splinters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can put a basic first aid kit together. I can select appropriate over the counter medications for pain, diarrhoea, cold and allergy symptoms and follow directions for using them without supervision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a Medicare card and know how to make a Medicare claim.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to check a smoke alarm and the methods for putting out different kinds of fires.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand common causes of household fires (eg smoking in bed, frayed electrical cords, overloading power-boards, using candles, overheating cooking oil).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand common causes of electrocution (eg using electrical appliance near water, using a knife to get toast out of a toaster, not turning light off when changing a light bulb).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know to keep windows and doors locked especially at night.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to properly store hazardous household materials, petrol, gas bottles.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I know how to protect my identity, personal information and financial details on the Internet and phone

**Daily Living Skills**

Do you know how to use a washing machine or catch a train to somewhere you’ve never been before? Can you defrost a fridge or cook a meal for your friends? The skills listed here are things you might be doing from day to day as an adult. Many are simple and you will only need to be shown how to do them once. Others may take a bit of practice! Driving is also a great skill to have. Talk to your support worker or IDEA Services if you want a driver’s licence as they might be able to help with the cost of lessons.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAILY LIVING SKILLS</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Partly</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I know how to care for clothes including cleaning according to instructions on labels, using a washing machine, clothes dryer, laundromat and iron.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I can plan a weekly menu of nutritious meals and develop a weekly shopping list within a budget</td>
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<tr>
<td>I know how to tell if fruit and vegetables are fresh when shopping.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I know how to read food labels for nutritional information and expiry date. I know which items need to be kept in the fridge or freezer and can recognise when food has gone off.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I know how to use kitchen utensils and appliances.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can cook a meal including following a recipe and adjusting it to feed more or less people.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I use good kitchen hygiene practices such as washing hands before preparing food and using safe ways to defrost and prepare food.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can clean a house including the toilet, bathroom, sink and stove and can keep a room tidy including making a bed and changing linen.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I know what cleaning products and equipment to use for different jobs and how to use them including how to change a vacuum cleaner bag</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I know what can cause infestations of cockroaches, bed bugs, fleas, lice, maggots, ants and mice and what products to use to get rid of them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I know how to properly dispose of garbage, including recycling.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I know how often household chores need to be done to keep the home reasonably clean.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to safely look after things around the house such as defrost a fridge, stop a toilet from running, change a light bulb or reset a circuit breaker</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I can read a bus, train, or ferry timetable, plan a trip on public transport involving several transfers and travel independently.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
I understand the consequences of not paying the fare, damaging public property and other anti social behaviour.

I know how to get a driver’s licence and where to find cars for sale.

I understand the consequences of not paying road tolls, parking fines etc and that I could lose my license.

I understand the consequences of speeding and drink driving or driving without a licence or insurance.

I know how to get the internet connected, buy stamps, redirect mail and pay bills at the post office.

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**Personal and social development**

Everyone likes to have good friends, take part in activities and hobbies that make life fun! You might like sport, music, surfing or horse riding. Knowing how to behave and how others may behave will help you be confident about fitting in while still being yourself. If you’re not sure about how to get on with others or find activities that interest you, talk to your carer or other people you feel comfortable with and trust. If something is bothering you, for example being separated from your family or feeling alone, ask your support worker about referral to a counselling service. You can get help with counselling when you need it. You might want to know more about your past or the community you came from. If you do, your support worker may be able to help you make contact with family members or a community or cultural group.

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**PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

| I know how to greet someone and introduce myself. | No | Partly | Yes |
| I can hold a conversation with others and maintain comfortable eye contact. | | | |
| I understand that there are social boundaries and these differ depending on the type of relationship (e.g. family, friend, boyfriend/girlfriend, professional). | | | |
| I know how to convey respect, caring, honesty and trustworthiness (e.g. saying thank you, not being rude, tone of voice, valuing others opinions, not keeping people waiting, being inclusive, accepting responsibility for a mistake). | | | |
| I know the difference between passive, aggressive and assertive communication. | | | |
| I can say ‘no’ to sales people if I’m not interested in what they are selling and understand there’s usually a catch to giveaways offered over the phone. | | | |
| I can return something that is faulty and ask for repairs under warranty. | | | |
| I know how to manage conflict and keep my cool and how to use questions to clarify or obtain information. | | | |
| I understand the difference between gossip and sharing information. | | | |
I can identify and avoid relationships that may be dangerous or unhealthy and can say ‘no’ to my friends.

I understand that taking part in social activities can help me feel better about myself and improve my confidence.

I know how to find out about community resources, leisure and sporting activities or cultural associations using the internet, White Pages, Yellow Pages and local community directories.

I understand that there are differences in cultures and religions and know how to find out more about my own.

I know how to get help in making contact with members of my birth family or other people I have been close to.

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**Legal rights and responsibilities**

Your rights and responsibilities change when you become an adult so it’s important to know what you can and can’t do legally. While you will be able to do many things for the first time, such as vote, the penalties will also be much harsher if you break the law. Your rights include the right to know about your time in IDEA Services, to have a Personal Plan and to know who is responsible for providing you with support. Your Personal Plan should include your goals and record who is doing what to help you achieve them. This might include agreements to help you buy furniture, pay for textbooks or see a counsellor. Ask your support worker what you might be entitled to and to explain who can help if things don’t go according to the plan.

---

**LEGAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

<p>| I know how to get help from my caseworker or foster care agency if I need certificates or other papers to prove who I am. | No | Partly | Yes |
| I know how to get the return of original documents such as photographs and school reports from my foster care agency when I leave care. | No | Partly | Yes |
| I know who to complain to if I am discriminated against. | No | Partly | Yes |
| I know that when I turn 18 I gain the legal right to: enter into enforceable contracts buy or sell property marry without parent or guardian’s consent sue or be sued make a will inherit property join armed forces without parent or guardian’s consent. | No | Partly | Yes |
| I know the: age of consent, age for an abortion without parent or guardian’s consent | No | Partly | Yes |
| I know how to register to vote; where to vote and that I can be fined for not voting. | No | Partly | Yes |
| I have a general idea of the penalties for: buying, possessing, selling drugs damaging property, stealing cars, burglary, shoplifting, physical assault, traffic violations, trespassing. | No | Partly | Yes |
| I know what my rights are if I’m arrested and who to call. | No | Partly | Yes |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I know where to get free legal services if I am a victim of crime or are charged with an offence.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I know where I can find information about legal issues or get legal advice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know who to ask after I leave residential support if I want to see records that were kept about my time in care.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I’ve finished the checklist, what next? Well done - how did you go with the questions? Were there subjects you hadn’t thought about before? Were you surprised at some of the help available to you? Talk to your support worker about anything you don’t understand or want to learn more about.

Acknowledgement: This independent living skills checklist is based on the Life Skills Inventory Independent Living Skills Assessment Tool, Department of Social & Health Services Washington State and the Casey Family Life Skills domains. It has been adapted from the Australian 2015 NSW version.