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## EMPOWERING WOMEN WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES THROUGH VOCATIONAL TRAINING

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**Abstract:** Women generally had little opportunity to voice their opinion even in matters that concerned their own lives. Women's movements have been instrumental in bringing about changes, attempting to empower and equip women to fight for equality. But this is not the case when we turn our attention to women with disabilities. The mainstream women's movements have remained oblivious to the needs of this group. Empowerment has both an individual and group dimension which includes access to information, ability to make choices, assertiveness and self-esteem. The study on empowering women through vocational training is focused on the importance of the vocational training and learning a job through forming a group and empower them to understand the economic independence skill. The study aim to find out the importance of vocational training on promoting group work and to promote the economic independent skill among the women with intellectual impairment. Nine adults with Intellectual impairment were involved in this study. The pre-test on functional abilities of vocational skills were conducted using vocational assessment form and given training on vocational activates. The activities of personal skills social skills functional academic communication, safety skills, domestic skills occupational skills and mobility skills were taught in a group to empower them. The training on preparing snacks packing and selling were also given to start a small business with the capital of Rupees Five thousand (Rs 5000). The post test was conducted after three months on the above skills. The study states that the performance on functional academic skills , personal skills and social skills were higher than the other skill (77% , 73 &71%). Occupational skills and safety skills were performed low by the group (32% &35%). The performance on Domestic. communication and mobility skills by the group is 64%&65%) evenly observed from the group.

**Keywords:** Disability, Skill training, Vocational training, Women empowerment.

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**Introduction:** Historically in most societies of the world women occupies a secondary position in relation to men. Women generally had little opportunity to voice their opinion even in matters that concerned their own lives. They were expected to abide by the decisions made first by their fathers, then their husbands and at a large state of their lives by their sons. Society has progressed but this is not to say that even today women stand equal with men. Women's movements have been instrumental in bringing about changes, attempting to empower and equip women to fight for equality. But this is not the case when we turn our attention to women with disabilities. The mainstream women's movements have remained oblivious to the needs of this group. The disability movement too has not paid much attention to the particular needs of disabled women. Hence they remain at the periphery of all rights movements. They are not seen as having a part to play in society. The empowerment of disabled women therefore becomes the need of the hour. The empowerment of any deprived section is possible when the group concerned realizes its interests are not given priority by society. Their primary task lies in forming self-help groups to fight for their rights. They also need to be aware of their responsibilities to extend mutual support to one another and to work towards building a cohesive group, focusing attention on the benefit of the larger section of the

society. Empowerment also entails equipping a group with the knowledge and skills to handle incidents of abuse. Another aspect of empowerment for disabled women lies in the acceptance of their disability or limitations. Acceptance is a vital step towards developing self-image and self-confidence. Empowerment has both an individual and group dimension which includes access to information, ability to make choices, assertiveness and self-esteem. The study on empowering women through vocational training is focused on the importance of the vocational training and learning a job through forming a group and empower them to understand the economic independence skill. Review of literature: UNDP (1998). Study reveals that the global literacy rate for adults with disabilities is as low as 3 per cent and 1 per cent for women with disabilities Aurthor O Relly (2003). Reported that the People with disabilities in general faces difficulties in entering the open labour market ,but seen from a gender perspective ,men with disabilities are almost twice as likely to have jobs than women with disabilities. When women with disabilities work , they often experience unequal hiring and promotions standards ,unequal access to training and retraining ,unequal access to credit and other productive resources unequal pay for equal work and occupational segregation and they rarely participate in economic decision making Miloon Kothari (2005)

reported that the women with disabilities faces significant barriers in accessing adequate housing and services. They are more likely to institutionalized than men with disabilities.

**Aim :** The study aim to find out the importance of vocational training on promoting group work and to promote the economic independent skill among the women with intellectual impairment.

**Methodology:** Nine adults with Intellectual impairment were involved in this study. The pre-test on functional abilities of vocational skills were conducted using vocational assessment form and

given training on vocational activates. The activities of personal skills social skills functional academic communication, safety skills, domestic skills occupational skills and mobility skills were taught in a group to empower them.

The training on preparing snacks packing and selling were also given to start a small business with the capital of Rupees Five thousand (Rs 5000).

The post test was conducted after three months on the above skills.

The data was collected and subjected to statistical analysis using SPSS software 20.0 version.

**Results: Table 1:**

Sl. No	Variables	Frequency in numbers		Percentage (%)	
		Pre test	Post test	Pre test	Post test
1.	Personal skill	74	125	43.5	73.5
2.	Social skill	58	121	34.1	71.2
3.	Functional academic skill	65	132	38.2	77.6
4.	Communication skill	61	108	35.9	63.5
5.	Safety skill	47	61	27.6	35.9
6.	Domestic skill	20	109	11.8	64.1
7.	Occupational skill	19	55	11.2	32.4
8.	Mobility skill	64	110	37.6	64.7

The table 1 depicts the descriptive statistical results of frequency distribution and the percentage score in the pre and post test among the eight skills performed by the group of adults with intellectual impairment.

**Table 2:**

PAIRED SAMPLE T-TEST BETWEEN THE PRE AND POST TEST RESULT OF EACH SKILL.		Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	personal - personal post	.460	.035	.000
Pair 2	social - social post	.484	.037	.000
Pair 3	functional - functional post	.490	.038	.000
Pair 4	communication - communication post	.449	.034	.000
Pair 5	safety - safety post	.276	.021	.000
Pair 6	domestic - domestic post	.501	.038	.000
Pair 7	occupational - occupational post	.410	.031	.000
Pair 8	mobility - mobility post	.446	.034	.000

The table 2 depicts that there is a significant difference obtained from paired sample t-test between the pre and post test in all the eight skills performed by the group of adults with intellectual impairment.

**Discussion:** The study states that the performance on functional academic skills , personal skills and social skills were higher than the other skill (77% , 73 &71%). Occupational skills and safety skills were performed low by the group (32% &35%). The performance on Domestic. communication and

mobility skills by the group is 64%&65%) evenly observed from the group.

Other activities observed from the group were, that the team work is begun with the group to prepare the snacks. Communication for distribution /marketing the snacks also improved. Wastages are minimized while preparing the snacks. They also started the

credit system. They earn Rs 200 to Rs 300 per month as remuneration from the profit of the sale. This income is spent for their personal expenditure on their own. They developed the sense of confident that they can also earn to some extent. Neatness and Dressing senses are improved by looking at others in the office.

Conclusion:

All the persons with intellectual disabilities were showing considerable improvement in functional academics, social and personal skills. The performance on domestic communication and mobility skills were moderate. The performance on occupational and safety skills were comparatively lower than other skill. All the persons were involving

in the activities of preparing snacks and distributing by sharing their works.. This shows that the women with intellectual disability expresses their skills with appropriate teaching and or training.

**Recommendation:**

After passing the stage of school age one have to think of the vocational training. Open employment is a challengeable task. Promoting small business through forming Self Help Group would enable the adults with intellectual impairment to contribute additional income to their family. The government or the nongovernment organization should create an opportunity to train the women and empower on various aspects.

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