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# DRIVERS IN AND OBSTACLES TO INNOVATION IN WORK INCLUSION FOR PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY; A NEW ORGANIZATION OF THE WORK MEASURE PERMANENTLY ADAPTED WORK IN PUBLIC

Hege GJERTSEN

The Arctic University of Norway, Department of Social education, Harstad

## ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to discuss how social innovation can contribute to solving a comprehensive challenge: work inclusion for people with intellectual disability. We explore how a new organization of the measure Permanently Adapted Work in Public (VTAO), described as an incremental innovation, can promote work inclusion. We use theories of social innovation as an analytic framework for the analysis. The paper focuses on conditions that can promote or hamper successful implementation of this innovation. It is based on data from one of the work packages, including a qualitative study, in a large, ongoing study of work inclusion for people with intellectual disability with the title “Rethinking work inclusion for people with intellectual disability”. In this specific work package, we have so far interviewed 13 employees with intellectual disability, and 27 service providers at three sheltered workshops, four local NAV offices and three regional NAV offices. The study shows that the innovation helps facilitate work inclusion for people with intellectual disability. Several conditions related to the characteristics of the innovation, as well as social and cultural factors, seems to be crucial to its success. Structural conditions, such as economic and human resources, are also important for the implementation. Nevertheless, legislations and regulations for work measures and current practice at The Norwegian Labor and Welfare Service, seems to be obstacles to promote the use of the innovation more widely. In the conclusion we stress that social innovation promotes work inclusion for people with intellectual disability.

*Keywords: Work inclusion, intellectual disability, social innovation, incremental innovation*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

This paper discusses how social innovation can contribute to solving complex challenges or wicked problems such as work inclusion for people with intellectual disability. The innovation we have studied is a new organization of the measure Permanently Adopted Work in Public (VTAO). The paper is based on data from one of the work packages in an ongoing study of work inclusion of people with intellectual disability with the title “Rethinking work inclusion for people with intellectual disability”. We focus on conditions that can promote or hamper successful implementation of the innovation. In the introduction, we elaborate the purpose of the paper, background information, how we understand disability, the situation of people

with intellectual disability on the labor market, relevant labor market measures, and finally social innovation as a theoretical perspective for understanding work inclusion.

### 1.1 A social-relational understanding of disability and work exclusion

According to the medical model, and individual understanding of disabilities, “intellectual disability” is a common term for various conditions and diagnoses associated with cognitive disabilities (Tøssebro 2010). It involves impaired cognitive skills, and also varying degrees of challenges in motor skills, language, social competence and ability to perform everyday activities. It is common to divide the diagnosis in easy, moderate, severe and profound intellectual disability based on how extensive the challenges are. In our study,

we focus primarily on experiences and challenges faced by people with easy or moderate intellectual disability. However, the present paper argues for a social-relational model of disability, which emphasizes that disability is a result of the gap between demands made by the society and the individual's preconditions (Tøssebro 2010). The UN's Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), ratified by Norway in 2013, is based on a social-relational understanding of disability (UN 2008). According to this understanding, lack of work inclusion is mainly a result of excessive demands from the ordinary working life.

## **1.2 Work inclusion for people with intellectual disability**

People with intellectual disability are mainly excluded from ordinary work in Norway, despite political goals and initiatives. This group is a highly segregated group in the labor market and is probably the most vulnerable group in terms of risk of work exclusion. In 2013, only 25 percent of people of working age with a known intellectual disability in Norway were employed (NOU 2016:17). Almost all those employed have jobs with adapted measures, and 90 percent work in sheltered workshops and 10 percent in ordinary workplaces (ibid.). The employment rate for people with intellectual disability is very low and has probably decreased instead of increased in recent years (Tøssebro 2012).

Access to employment is important for quality of life for people with disabilities (Reinertsen 2016, Gjertsen et. al. 2014, Olsen 2009). The UN's CRPD establishes that people with disabilities have equal rights to be included in work (UN 2008). According to the green paper "On equal terms" (NOU 2016:17) more people with intellectual disability should be given the opportunity to have ordinary jobs, and it also underlines this group's right to assessment of work capacity. Today, many people with intellectual disability in Norway are granted disability benefits when they turn 18 without serious assessment of their capacity to work. More emphasis is given to diagnosis than to individual resources and motivation. Once disability benefits are granted, people with intellectual disability are not treated as potential employees, irrespective of their desire to join the regular workforce (Proba 2016). Other reasons for exclusion from ordinary workplaces

include low expectations for the competencies and capacities of people with intellectual disabilities having to compete with other marginalized groups over work inclusion measures, lack of political will to prioritize this group, negative attitudes and lack of competence among employers and NAV (Reinertsen 2016). Moreover, metaphorically speaking, the gap between individual preconditions and demands from working life are widening.

## **1.3 Labour marked measures**

Over the last few years, there has been an effort to improve the quality of work inclusion services for people with disabilities (Stjernø and Øverbye, 2012). Labor market measures aim to support employment for people with disabilities. People with intellectual disability who receive disability benefits can work in the permanent adopted measure VTA in a sheltered workshop. About 20% of people with intellectual disability between 20 – 69 years' work in VTA (Engeland and Langballe, 2017; Wendelborg et.al. 2017). They are regular employees under the Work Environment Act and have the same rights and obligations as employees in the regular labor force, except when it comes to wages. Since they receive disability benefit, people with intellectual disability only receive so-called bonus salaries. Workers in VTA can leave for up to six months to work at a regular workplace to facilitate a transition from sheltered to ordinary work activities, but this rarely happens for people with intellectual disability. The Regulation for Work-Related Measures (2009) specifies that VTA shall contribute to the development of a person's resources and qualifications through production of goods and services. The types of activities offered through VTA vary, and include regular work activities, leisure activities, training and qualification (Gjertsen et. al 2014). Although VTA is to be evaluated periodically to assess possibilities for transfer to other work-related measures, education or ordinary work, this rarely happens for people with intellectual disability. Furthermore, VTA is increasingly offered to people with different types of challenges, including substance abuse, social maladjustment and mental health issues (Spjelkavik and Frøyland, 2012). The number of places in VTA for people with intellectual disability has decreased over the last few years (Tøssebro and Söderström, 2011). Some of

those working in VTA work at ordinary workplaces one or several days per week. VTA is assigned by NAV and is organized by sheltered workshops.

Since January 2016, VTA could be organized directly at ordinary workplaces (VTAO). VTAO is both assigned and organized by NAV. Nevertheless, this work measure is rarely used for people with intellectual disability. According to Reinertsen 3,2% of adults with intellectual disability work in VTAO. According to Engeland and Langballe (2017) it is only 2,5%. VTAO as a measure is in line with the supported employment-thinking and the concept of “place then train”. It is central with fast work practice at an ordinary workplace. This approach has not been widely used when it comes to people with intellectual disability. Still, Frøyland and Spjelkavik (ed. 2014) argue that supported employment (SE) is suitable for people with intellectual disability as well. Employers are motivated to tailor jobs to people with intellectual disability and offer them permanent positions in return for access to state-sponsored supervision and financial support. This paper focuses on a new organization of VTAO, where a sheltered workshop has taken over the responsibility from NAV.

#### **1.4 Wicked problems require social innovation**

In this paper we argue that work inclusion for people with intellectual disability can be seen as a wicked problem – a social challenge that is difficult, but important, to solve. According to Sørensen and Torfing (2012), wicked problems are characterized by being hard to define and difficult to solve, and they stress that “formulation and implementation of new and creative solutions are needed.” (p. 3). Work inclusion for this group is also a challenge that has several owners, and that requires different actors to collaborate, and collaborate in new ways. In other words, the complex challenges associated with work inclusion for this group require social innovation. Social innovation can be understood as the process and outcome of taking new knowledge in use, combining existing knowledge in new ways or applying existing knowledge to new contexts (Wegener 2015). This is primarily about creating positive social change and improving social relations and collaborations to address a social demand

(European Commission 2013). The political and research agenda emphasizes innovation in the public sector (Willumsen and Ødegård ed. 2014). The Norwegian research council (NRC 2018) underline the need for more knowledge about conditions that promote or hamper success in innovation in the public sector.

Research-based knowledge on how to succeed with work inclusion for people with intellectual disability is scarce. Several sheltered workshops, regular workplaces and social enterprises have developed good practices, but these are not sufficiently documented, analyzed or disseminated. Knowledge about how people with intellectual disability can make transitions between various work settings is also poorly developed. There is a need for identifying good work inclusion practices. This paper can be seen as providing one small step on that pathway.

## **2 SOCIAL INNOVATION AS A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The aim of this paper is, as mentioned, to discuss drivers in and obstacles to the success of a new organization of a work measure, where the goal is to promote work inclusion for people with intellectual disability. We will now present a theoretical framework of social innovation for the discussion.

The concept of innovation was, until the last few decades associated with the private sector. Today, there is a stronger focus on innovation in the public sector and on social innovation. The growing number of wicked problems in the public sector requires new and creative solutions (Sørensen and Torfing 2012; Willumsen and Ødegård ed. 2015). Innovation has been identified as something that can solve challenges related to welfare services. Innovation in the public sector aims to improve welfare services by trying to increase the effectiveness and quality of services and find better solutions. The aim is to benefit society by responding to certain societal challenges, or to achieve more with the resources available. In other words, both economic and social purposes are present (Wegener 2015). Innovation in the public sphere is concerned with services as well as goods. Moreover, innovative strategies are developed not only in different public sectors, but also in collaboration between these sectors, or in collaboration with the private and

voluntary sectors, as well as with welfare service users.

When it comes to work inclusion for people with intellectual disability, we initially described this as a wicked problem with several owners in the public sector, but also in the private and voluntary sectors. In the paper we therefore mainly use the expression “social innovation” since our focus is on a social challenge demanding collaboration not only within the public sector, but between public sectors as well as collaboration with actors in private and voluntary sectors. Important actors include among others, the Norwegian Labor and Welfare Service (NAV), sheltered workshops, municipalities, the voluntary sector, the ordinary labor market (private and public) and service recipients. The perspective of social innovation makes particularly clear the need for collaboration within and between different sectors and several levels and areas (Kobro ed.2018; Willumsen et.al. 2015). The purpose of social innovation is to solve concrete challenges that cannot be solved by single actors on their own (Sørensen and Torfing, 2011). The theory of social innovation enables us to focus on the process of how doing things in new ways contribute to positive changes and solutions.

There is no common definition of “social innovation”, nor are the criteria consistent. Still, all definitions of innovation include developing and realizing new ideas. Innovation can mean a break with old practices and common understandings, although it does not have to be something radically new but may instead be new in a particular context (Kobro ed. 2018). In Norway, KS’s definition of innovation in public as something new, useful and utilized, and “a new or better solution so good that it will be used”, is often referred to (ibid.). In this paper we use the definition of Kobro (ed. 2018:17): “Social innovation is new solutions (products, services, and methods of organization) that meet social needs (more efficiently than other alternatives), and that create new social collaborative relationships at the same time.” This definition stresses the fact that social innovation has social impact aims, creates social value, and is social in its method of implementation; it is innovation that creates social value in both aim and method. Further, Kobro (ed. 2018) emphasizes that to count as an innovation, new ideas must lead to a solution to

an identified problem and must find a form and a practice that works for some people. This is in line with KS’s point that an innovation must be new, useful and utilized. According to Kobro (ed. 2018), new and useful solutions left unused do not count as innovations, a claim that is also in line with Sørensen and Torfing (2012:4), who say that “innovation is a dynamic process through which problems and challengers are defined, new and creative ideas are developed, and new solutions are selected and implemented.” They stress that innovation means change, but not all changes are innovations; only changes breaking with common practice and understandings are innovations. And, importantly, it does not matter whether the innovation is a result of something completely new, or of copying: If the solution is new in a given context, and is being implemented in this context, it is an innovation.

Further, *the innovation process* consists of several phases: identifying a problem, finding different solutions, choosing a solution, implementing the idea and spreading it (Sørensen and Torfing 2011). The phase of developing an idea includes defining a challenge, coming up with ideas and establishing the aim. In the selection phase, we choose one idea. The implementation phase is the most important one, insofar as this is the phase in which an innovative idea becomes an innovation: the idea is now being made concrete, to be realized in practice. To mean something, an innovation must therefore be constituted in and by a practice (Fuglsang 2010). In other words, the innovation occurs by the implementation. This is in line with Kobro’s (ed. 2018) definition of “social innovation”. According to Sørensen and Torfing (2011) the idea must, in addition, be spread, and thereby made known in the organization or to other services. Not everyone agrees with this requirement; while some stress the importance of innovation being completely implemented and disseminated, others do not. Another issue is the fact that an innovation process is rarely linear and predictable. Unforeseen conditions can make the process take unknown directions. Further, the degree of novelty of the innovation is relevant (Engen and Holen, 2014). The concepts of *radical* and *incremental* innovation can be seen as representing opposite ends of a novelty spectrum (de Brentani 2001). A *radical innovation* is characterized as a total and rapid

change; an *incremental innovation* is characterized as a change that implies small adaptations to the status quo, and is often described as a step-by-step process: We use something already existing and use it in a new context or in a new field, or make it available to new users. We can also talk about *bricolage innovation*, which is small changes in the everyday practice of services. Wegener (2015) defines this as “everyday innovation”.

Nor is it irrelevant how the innovation has been initiated and by whom (Høiland and Willumsen 2015). We can talk about different drivers of or sources for innovations. Some of the most often recognized are “top-down”, user, collaborative, and practice-related innovations. Innovation in the public sector is often characterized as a *top-down innovation*. In the public sector, central levels of government often plan the innovation, in order to accomplish political aims, though with the intention to complete it at the front-line of service organizations where service providers meet users. One example is the NAV-reform. *Practice-related innovations* or innovations initiated and driven by co-workers, are characterized by so-called everyday innovations (Wegener 2015) which are carried out by the services to the users (Fuglsang 2010). This kind of innovation is often seen as “bottom-up” innovation (Høiland and Willumsen 2015). With regard to *user-driven innovations* those receiving services are involved in initiating and/or implementing the innovations. *Collaborative innovation* is characterized by people with different resources, experiences and knowledge working together to solve a wicked problem (Kobro ed. 2018) and is characterized by how relevant and affected actors can accommodate the development and implementation of new and bold ideas in ways that reinvigorate welfare services. The management and end users can participate in the collaboration, and in that case collaborative innovation can be seen as a synthesis of the other types of innovations. Collaboration and co-creation are central parameters when talking about social innovation.

In order to understand the opportunities for and limitations of implementing an innovation, it is important to identify drivers and barriers. In the literature, we can find several, often discussed barriers to and factors for the success of innovations. Inspired by Van Meter and Van Horn (1977), and for analytical purposes, we

distinguish between three different conditions that can influence the success of the innovation: characteristics of the innovation itself, cultural and social conditions, and structural conditions. The discussion of barriers and drivers for the success of the innovation later in this paper, is based on these distinctions. *Characteristics of the innovation* include what characterizes the innovation and in what way and to what degree different sides of the innovation influence the implementation. This includes how radical the innovation is, how it is initiated etc. *Cultural and social conditions* draw attention to the fact that social innovation always takes place in a social and cultural context. The innovation will be interpreted and adjusted by those implementing it. Cultural conditions are a matter of which values and attitudes the innovation is ascribed by those involved. Social conditions include how the relations between the different actors in the innovation process influence the implementation process. *Structural conditions* include the resources that are available in the implementation of the innovation. Financial and human resources are often crucial for implementing an innovation. Structural conditions also encompass regulations etc. that affect the opportunities for social innovation.

### 3 METHOD

This paper is based on data from one of the work packages in an ongoing large research project about work inclusion for people with intellectual disability. The research project consists of four interrelated work packages containing different operationalized research questions and methods.

The work package on which this paper is based focuses on how sheltered workshops, by rethinking work inclusion and collaboration with different actors, can succeed to achieve work inclusion. We want to develop new knowledge about criteria for and barriers to success with respect to work inclusion.

The work package consists of qualitative interviews with service providers at three sheltered workshops and NAV, and persons with intellectual disability working in VTA and VTAO.

#### 3.1 Inclusion criteria and sample

Target groups for the interviews are participants in VTA and VTAO schemes, leaders and

service providers at various levels in sheltered workshops, NAV, and employers at ordinary workplaces who have experience with employees with intellectual disability. In total, we have interviewed 40 informants (27 service providers and 13 employees in VTA and VTAO) this far in the project. This paper is based on some of these interviews. We have translated their quotes to English.

### **3.2 Recruitment, data collection and analysis**

The recruitment process was strategic. We contacted the selected sheltered workshops, presented the project and asked if we could interview leaders, ordinary employees and participants in VTA. At the same time, we contacted NAV and asked if we could interview a person with responsibility for the work measures VTA and VTAO, as well as people with intellectual disability participating in VTAO.

Most of the interviews were conducted at sheltered workshops and at NAV offices. The interviews lasted approximately one hour. We stressed the importance of letting the informants have enough time to think before they answered. We used a semi-structured interview approach, with thematic interview guides that were constantly revised as we got deeper insights into the field as the project progressed (Oliver et al 2012). The topics of work inclusion practice, success criteria and barriers were examined. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. The data were systematized, coded and re-coded throughout. Data from the interviews were analysed by the use of thematic analysis.

### **3.3 Strengths and limitations**

As underlined, this paper is based on one of the work packages in a large study of work inclusion among people with intellectual disability. Some strengths and limitations of this work package's methodology can be recognized. Since people with intellectual disability rarely work in the VTAO-measure, it was challenging recruiting employees in VTAO receiving support from NAV. We have therefore not been able to compare the support. Further, interviewing people with reduced cognitive skills is methodologically challenging. They can have difficulty understanding concepts and may have difficulty expressing themselves orally. However, the validity of the study is

strengthened by the way it was conducted. We stressed spending time during the interviews, used operationalized and easy-to-understand questions, and explained questions or words that the informants did not understand. At the same time, it is a strength that people with intellectual disability participated as informants and shared their experiences working in VTAO. It is also a strength that we included different actors as informants - employees, as well as service providers at sheltered workshops and NAV.

### **3.4 Ethical aspects**

People with intellectual disability comprise a group that require special ethical considerations when participating in research because of their reduced cognitive capacity. They have previously been seen as forming a vulnerable group and have therefore been excluded from participating in research concerning themselves (Söderström and Tøssebro 2011). Today, several researchers claim that it is important to let the voices of so-called weak groups be heard. We have taken all necessary precautions to ensure the integrity and dignity of the participants in the study. The ethical criteria for research have been taken into account throughout the whole process. Voluntary participation, confidentiality and the anonymity of the data are fundamental. The study is approved by the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD). We have handled the data in line with the principles laid down by the National Committee for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities (NESH). All participants were informed orally and by written information letters about their right to withdraw from the study without stating a reason, and they were assured that confidentiality would be maintained. We also obtained written informed consent from all participants with intellectual disability. The other informants gave oral consent.

## **4 RESULTS:**

### **THE INNOVATION - A NEW WAY OF ORGANIZING THE MEASURE PERMANENTLY ADOPTED WORK IN PUBLIC (VTAO)**

The overall results from the interviews showed several innovative work inclusion practices

where sheltered workshops are a key player. In this paper we wanted to discuss one example of innovative practice. We have therefore chosen to highlight results about one social innovation attempt that aims at work inclusion for people with intellectual disability by organizing the Permanent Adopted Work Measure in Public (VTAO) in a new way. We analyze it as an incremental innovation and do not discuss whether it actually counts as an innovation or not relative to different criteria. We will first elaborate what characterizes this innovation.

VTAO is originally a state-financed measure organized by NAV. Employers from ordinary workplaces receive 5711 NKR monthly from NAV to hire a person with an intellectual disability and facilitate and provide support for this person. The VTAO-employees receive disability benefits, and the employers are not obliged to pay this person a salary – they are encouraged to pay a small extra salary but how this is practiced varies. By comparison, those working in VTA at a sheltered workshop receive a bonus salary of minimum of 20 NKR for each work hour. The payout from NAV to the employers is meant to cover expenditure associated with extra support at the workplace. VTAO is today rarely used for people with intellectual disability.

In this case, instead of administrating the VTAO measure themselves, NAV collaborated with the municipality to establish a 50% position located at a sheltered workshop. This sheltered workshop has comprehensive experience with administrating the VTA measure. In practice, this means that one person, working in the sheltered workshop, has the responsibility for supporting both employers and people with intellectual disability working in the VTAO measure.

The new organization of VTAO was initiated by the local NAV. NAV received 10 VTAO positions but expressed a need for help. NAV contacted a sheltered workshop and asked whether they could help them organize the measure. At the same time, they asked the municipality if they could finance a position at the sheltered workshop as a condition for realizing the measure for people with intellectual disability. Today, the sheltered workshop does not have contact with the municipality about the measure, except when receiving the money. Neither with NAV.

The innovative element of the new organization of the VTAO measure is that the municipality is funding a part-time position at a sheltered workshop. Instead of NAV, it is now the service provider at the sheltered workshop who provides support for VTAO employees and employers. So far, our findings show that the innovation has been successful. Almost all of the 10 people employed in the original VTAO positions have an intellectual disability, and they are still in employment. One of the informants said: *“Yes, we can see that VTAO has been a success. That is very good, after many years, at least 4 years. It has worked and that is the feedback from the employers too. It is the extensive support and the security of having us there when needed.”*

The sheltered workshop has now received three extra VTAO positions and is now trying to hire. If we look at the definition of “social innovation” by Kobro (ed. 2018), we notice that the new organization of VTAO is a *new solution* that directly *meets a social need*, insofar as the group in question is being excluded from ordinary work. Moreover, the new organization has created a *new social collaboration*, where a sheltered workshop and the municipality are included in the work measure. This is also in line with KS’s focus at new, useful and utilized, as criteria for innovation.

The innovation process can be considered a *collaborative innovation*, since several actors have collaborated to create a new way of organizing the work measure. Three actors are central to the innovation: NAV, the municipality and a sheltered workshop. The employers and VTAO employees have not been involved in implementing the innovation but are those directly affected by the new organization. We have summarized some of the results from the interviews in table 1.

*Table 1. Results from the interviews: factors relevant for the implementation the innovation*

| <b>Characteristics of the innovation - a new organization of VTAO</b> | <b>Structural conditions</b>   |
|---|--|
| NAV, a municipality and a sheltered workshop have to collaborate      | Laws and regulations influence how the work measure can be organized |
| Initiated by NAV  | Human resources:   |

|   |  |
|---|--|
|   | The sheltered workshop has the human resources needed  |
| Minor changes in the organization are needed (implementing the innovation at the sheltered workshop)                                      | Economic resources:<br>The municipality is funding a position at the sheltered workshop                  |
| Extra financial resources are needed  | Current practice at NAV: people with i.d. are not a priority   |
| <b>Social conditions</b>  | <b>Cultural conditions</b>   |
| One key player (NAV) in the organization of VTAO has been replaced (with a sheltered workshop)  | The sheltered workshop has much experience with work inclusion and people with i.d.                      |
| A new actor (a municipality) is now involved:<br>Financing a position at the sheltered workshop   | Common understanding at the sheltered workshop:<br>- work inclusion is important<br>- support is crucial |
| The collaboration between NAV, the sheltered workshop and the municipality works well, but NAV and the municipality are not much involved | The collaborators have common interests: increased work inclusion for people with i.d.                   |

VTAO organized by a sheltered workshop is obviously not a radical innovation, due to the fact that the sheltered workshop has organized the VTA measure for decades. Participants in VTA have also work practice at ordinary workplaces. Still, VTAO has so far been facilitated directly by NAV in line with the Regulation for Work-Related Measure (2009). We can therefore conclude that the measure is new in its context. We define this as an *incremental innovation* involving small but important, adaptations. We can talk about new collaboration and a new context.

The innovation is characterized by a break from previous way of organizing and administrating the measure. The main difference is that some actors collaborate in new ways. Sheltered workshops have not been involved in organizing this measure. In this case, as mentioned, a service provider from the sheltered workshop provides the support for the

VTAO scheme. The content of the work measure is formally the same. Nevertheless, in practice, as we will discuss, there have been some changes, which have affected the extent of the support.

## **5 DISCUSSION: WHAT CAN PROMOTE OR HINDER INNOVATION IN WORK INCLUSION?**

We will now look more closely at how different conditions can promote or hamper success when it comes to work inclusion for people with intellectual disability. There will probably be other factors involved, but our intention is to highlight some relevant ones.

We have presented one example of social innovation when it comes to work inclusion, a new way of organizing the work measure VTAO as a collaboration between a sheltered workshop, NAV and the municipality – that we have described as an incremental and collaborative innovation. The aim of the new organization of the measure is to facilitate work inclusion for people with intellectual disability in a better way.

### **5.1 Characteristics of the innovation**

The characteristics of the innovation contribute to the success of the implementation of the innovation. First, this is an incremental innovation where the content of the support given to the VTAO employees and employers is quite similar to the support the sheltered workshop already provides for those working in VTA and having work practice in an ordinary workplace. The sheltered workshop has not experienced the extent of the new organization of the work measure as being comprehensive, insofar as the municipality provides extra financial resources. As one informant stressed: *“It is important that we keep the earmarked position.”*

Second, two aspects of the new organization contribute in particular to facilitating work inclusion. Previously, those working within the VTAO scheme had to obtain the job themselves. Now, the VTAO jobs are announced positions, and the service provider at the sheltered workshop help establish employment. Previously, VTAO has not been a success for people with intellectual disability, partly due to the fact that this group has not been

a priority. One main reason for that is probably both the fact that NAV has limited resources, but also due to some attitudes towards work inclusion among this group. Now, this group has been explicitly prioritized in the VTAO-measure.

Another characteristic of the innovation that can be seen as a success factor, is the way it was initiated. NAV took the initiative to collaborate with the municipality and a local sheltered workshop. The aim was to collaborate to facilitate work inclusion especially for people with intellectual disability. A new organization of VTAO by sheltered workshops can implicitly be seen as a criticism of the existing organization of VTAO, but since NAV initiated the innovation this has not been problematic. The innovation is anchored from below in collaboration with involved actors. Still, this is a local NAV office, and the innovation is implemented in a local context, without necessarily being recognized at a national, government level.

## 5.2 Cultural and social conditions

*Cultural conditions* are related to the meanings and values those implementing the innovation put into the innovation, and how they consider and interpret it. In other words, those implementing the innovation are *key actors* (Van Horn and Van Meter 1977). The innovation in question mostly affected the sheltered workshop, since the responsibility for the VTAO measure is now located there. The innovation takes place in a large sheltered workshop, with ample experience when it comes to working with people with intellectual disability. The workshop has received money to hire a person to provide the necessary support. There is also a common understanding that work inclusion is important and that support during the inclusion process is crucial. When we asked the manager at the sheltered workshop about criteria for success for VTAO, she emphasized that: “*you have to believe in this (work inclusion in public) yourself and offer close support to both the worker and the employer in the beginning.*”

Social innovation takes place in a field where different actors have to collaborate. These actors may have different and sometimes conflicting interests and agendas. Their focus may be on financial concerns or reducing expenses as well as on the quality of the

services, which may create obstacles when implementing an innovation. In our case, we can assume that NAV, the sheltered workshop and the municipality all want to increase work inclusion among people with intellectual disability. The values and attitudes in the context are therefore presumably similar, and the interests not in conflict.

*Social conditions* concern the relation between those involved in the implementation. In this case, one of the key actors in organizing the work measure has been replaced. Instead of NAV, it is now a service provider at a sheltered workshop who conduct the support. According to our informants, the result of this change is better support. Furthermore, the municipality is a new actor, but plays a withdrawn but nevertheless very important role by financing the position. The other actors – the employees with intellectual disability and the employers – are the same as before. So far, the collaboration has proceeded without problems.

## 5.3 Structural conditions

*Economic and human resources* play a crucial role when it comes to innovations for work inclusion for people with intellectual disability. In this case, the municipality is funding a position at the sheltered workshop, something that has been important for the success of the innovation. Still, whether the new organization of VTAO is a permanent arrangement will depend on continuous good-will from the municipality. This makes the implementation of the innovation vulnerable, depending on municipal budgets. As is well known, legislative and regulation changes are a matter of political decisions and will.

Another criterion for success that our findings highlight, is the importance of one person assuming specific responsibility for the support. The sheltered workshop has the human resources needed. The competencies and experiences this sheltered workshop have are important. Financial support and having an earmarked position have turned out to be crucial for success.

Innovation processes in the public sector are demanding, since *laws and regulations* influence the possibility for success. This is also the case when it comes to work measures. Laws and regulations influence how the measures are administrated and organized, something that affects the opportunities for innovation and new

collaborations. According to the supplementary rules to the Regulations for Work-Related Measures (2009), NAV is responsible for the organisation of the VTAO-measure. The employers have to collaborate with NAV and deliver a written report on the VTAO employees' development in the workplace, and what kinds of adjustments have been made to increase the participant's level of coping.

One major challenge remains when we discuss successful initiatives in the public sector and in collaborations between the public sector and the private and voluntary sectors: How can we systematize and spread the experiences? As pointed out by the Norwegian Research council; a lot of innovative processes in the public sector have taken place without being systematically evaluated with regard to success (NRC 2018).

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

Our findings contribute to the understanding of social innovation related to work inclusion in several ways. First, our study points to some conditions that are important for the success of the described incremental innovation. These are mainly related to the characteristics of the innovation and cultural and social conditions present in the particular context. We have also discussed structural conditions that are important for success, but which can at the same time can be seen as obstacles.

As our findings show, incremental innovations such as new organization of the VTAO measure can increase the opportunities for people with intellectual disability to participate in ordinary work, but only to a certain extent. Even though the innovation, in this context, is a success, our findings raise some crucial questions about the possibility for innovation related to work inclusion for people with intellectual disability. The existing regulations and lack of political will to prioritize this group when it comes to work inclusion make it difficult to organize work inclusion in new ways. This indicates a need for more radical innovations if we are to succeed with work inclusion for people with intellectual disability to a larger extent, such as for instance a reform where this group is being explicitly prioritized by NAV, and making assessments of work capacity mandatory also for people with intellectual disability granted disability benefits, as stressed in the NOU 2016:17. Finally, and returning to our example

of a successful innovation; It is important to learn from successful incremental innovations for the purpose of spreading the experiences.

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# ELICITING POTENTIAL INNOVATION BENEFITS - A CASE STUDY OF EMPLOYMENT FOR PERSONS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

Sofie WASS<sup>1</sup> and Hans Olav OMLAND<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Agder, Centre for eHealth

<sup>2</sup>University of Agder, Department of Information Systems

## ABSTRACT

It is difficult to realize the expected benefits of information system implementations. While previous studies have mostly focused on e-government settings and summative assessments of monetary values in private businesses, less is known about other settings. We contribute to the field by exploring values, in a wider sense, in the pre-design phase of an innovation project that involves public as well as private actors. More specifically, the case focuses on the transition from secondary school to work for persons with intellectual disabilities. To address the expected benefits, we apply a framework that describes different types of value. The results of our study show that the framework can serve as a guide to structure and gain a more pluralistic understanding of the expected benefits in an innovation project that includes not only public but also private actors. The study also shows that the expected benefits seem to be multidimensional and interconnected. Thus, it seems important to not only identify the expected benefit but also how they are related among each other and on different levels, for instance individual, organizational and societal levels.

*Keywords: value, benefits, information systems, intellectual disabilities*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Innovation as a field is well-established both in literature and practice (Nambisan et al., 2014), and several initiatives on information systems are carried out to solve today's challenges. The implementation of information systems and the redesign of work processes open for new ways of working and potential benefits for the involved actors (Kohli and Grover, 2008). Still, initiatives fail to meet their goals and previous research shows that it is not enough to perform a summative evaluation of an implementation. It is, on the contrary, important to identify the potential benefits early in the process to be able to realize the expected benefits (Persson & Goldkuhl, 2010; Ward and Elvin, 1999). This appears to be especially important when the process involves actors with different competences and interests (Askedal et al., 2017). One example is public-private initiatives which tend to involve more complex value systems as the actors may have different perspectives regarding the project, its usefulness, and its context (Rutgers, 2008).

Therefore, it is important to understand the context where the expected benefits are to be managed to make a realistic and useful benefit management plan (Ward and Daniel, 2012).

While previous studies have mostly focused on e-government settings (Skiftenes Flak et al., 2015) and ex-post measurements of monetary values in private businesses (Yassae and Mettler, 2015), we want to contribute by exploring values, in a wider sense, in the pre-design phase of a complex setting that involves public as well as private partners. We do this by focusing on a situation where the implementation of digital services could ease the transition from secondary school to employment for persons with intellectual disabilities (ID). The research project "InnArbeid" intends to design a new service model and a number of digital services, focusing on communication support, job matching, and work activity support. Actors involved in the project include representatives from municipality level, regional level, work training centers, developing companies, a

business federation and an advocacy organization.

With this background, we aim to answer the following research question: *How can expected benefits be understood and articulated in a complex innovation setting?* The paper starts with an overview of benefits management and different types of values. We then present the research methods and the case, before presenting the results and possible contributions.

## 2 BENEFITS MANAGEMENT AND VALUE

In the following sections we give a brief introduction to benefits management and different types of value in information systems research.

### 2.1 Benefits management

Benefits management seeks to realize potential benefits of information system implementations in organizations (Ward et al., 1996). Information system implementations normally respond to some needs in the actual organization which need to be articulated and managed in order to be realized (Ward and Elvin, 1999; Skiftenes Flak et al., 2015). One central part of benefits management is assessment of value. Still, the value concept is often described as fuzzy and ambiguous in benefits management. However, Nielsen and Persson (2017) clarify the concept by describing it based on its' purpose, manifestation, and view.

The purpose of a value assessment can either be to conduct a formative or a summative assessment of the value. While previous research has mostly focused on the summative aspects of value, a formative approach is recommended as it provides a more dynamic understanding of the situation and possibilities to continually influence the development. The manifestation of a value assessment can be described as either just focusing on the potential value of the actual artifact or also including the social aspects of value. According to the authors, social aspects may incorporate for instance individual and organizational beliefs and expectations of information systems use. The view of a value assessment can be described as ranging from monetary to pluralistic (Nielsen and Persson, 2017). The monetary view is influenced by studies that

focus on private businesses while especially e-government studies have stressed the need for pluralistic values (Kohli and Grover, 2008). Nielsen and Persson's (2017) understanding of value is summarized in figure 1.

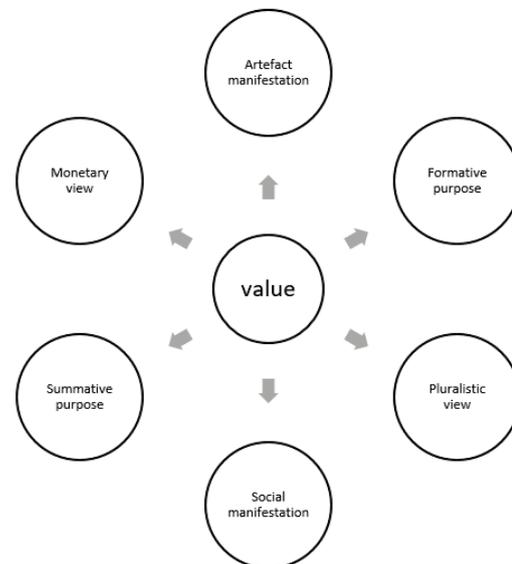


Figure 1. Understanding of value (based on Nielsen and Persson, 2017).

### 2.2 Different types of value

In a review of information system research that focuses on value, Yassaee and Mettler (2015) present a taxonomy of value. Their taxonomy does not only include a monetary view of value but also non-monetary types such as social, utilitarian and hedonic values. This view of value is in line with the pluralistic view as suggested by Nielsen and Persson (2017) and expands the value concept in a way that seems useful for understanding the expected benefits in a complex innovation setting.

The most traditional type of value is business value which can be described as the organizational performance and productivity impact of information system implementations (Kohli and Grover, 2008; Yassaee and Mettler, 2015). Schryen (2013, p. 141) defines business value as: "... the impact of investments in particular IS assets on the multidimensional performance and capabilities of economic entities at various levels, complemented by the ultimate meaning of performance in the economic environment."

Another type of value is 'relational value' which is described as the benefits that an

information system supports when relations transcend the organizational context. While it is often framed as inter-firm relationships with-in, for instance a supply chain (Kohli and Grover, 2008), it is relevant for our case to also include other types of relationships. For instance, relationships between different public service providers, between private and public service providers, a rather complex web of relationships. An example of this type of value can be a collaboration between different actors which leads to an improved service process.

The authors also identify utilitarian and hedonic values, representing self-fulfilling values and instrumental improvements for the individual user. The last value type, social value, can be described as pluralistic. Social value transcends the closest collaboration partners and extends to collaboration with other actors (Yassaee and Mettler, 2015). This type of value is less explicitly described by the authors but facilitates interaction with other actors.

### 3 METHODS

The research project InnArbeid follows an Action design research (ADR) approach (Sein et al., 2011). ADR is described as, “*a research method for generating prescriptive design knowledge through building and evaluating ensemble IT artefacts in an organizational setting*” (Sein et al., 2011 p. 40). The ADR method consists of four stages (1) problem formulation, (2) building, intervention and evaluation, (3) reflection and learning and (4) formalization of learning. The ADR method is suitable when one wants to continually involve the user and clarify user needs in different parts and phases of an information system project.

During the time of the study, the project was in the beginning of the first stage - the problem formulation. The focus of the project was therefore to identify the needs of the involved actors.

#### 3.1 Data collection and Data analysis

To answer our research question: “*How can expected benefits be understood and articulated in a complex innovation setting?*” we conducted a single case study as it gave us the opportunity to understand a situation in a specific context (Yin, 2011). A qualitative approach was considered appropriate due to the possibility of gaining a deeper understanding of a real-life situation (Myers, 1997; Silverman, 2015). To collect data, we invited thirteen

participants in the project to a workshop and asked them to reflect on the expected benefits of the future innovations. Table 1 provides an overview of the participants that took part in the activity.

*Table 1. Overview of the respondents.*

| Organization                  | Number of participants |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| Employer of person with ID    | 3                      |
| Next-of-kin of person with ID | 1                      |
| Design and developing company | 2                      |
| Habilitation services         | 2                      |
| Coordinator of person with ID | 1                      |
| Secondary school              | 4                      |

The participants were provided with a paper sheet each and asked to individually reflect on the expected benefits connected to the InnArbeid project in a wider context.

To analyze the data, we entered all the collected data in a single document and analyzed the data according to the five types of value presented in Section 2.2. The different types of values served as codes whereby the statements from the material were categorized. Two statements were excluded from the analysis since they did not describe expected benefits or values. The first author did a first analysis which was later discussed with the second author to reach an agreement on the results of the analysis.

### 4 CASE DESCRIPTION

The situation under study can be understood as a complex setting where many actors seek to improve the life for persons with ID. The actors collaborate across organizational boundaries and use competences and resources of different types while designing innovative solutions to assist the transition. Given the complex setting, the involved actors may have different perspectives, value systems and understandings of the different benefits and also different opinions regarding which benefit to prioritize.

We will, therefore, briefly introduce the context of the project to exemplify possible challenges. During the transition from secondary school to employment, the person with ID is offered an individual plan that describes his/her life, activities, and learning development. A coordinator is also appointed to coordinate the

activities connected to the individual plan. However, the coordinator has no financial power and cannot allot additional resources to carry out the planned activities. The person with ID receives financial support from two different government funding bodies during the transition from secondary school to employment. The local municipality is responsible for financial support until the person turns 18 years old of age. Afterwards, the person needs to get an income or apply for financial support from the national labour and welfare administration.

## 5 RESULTS

The different types of values presented in Section 2.2 is used to structure the presentation of the results of the data analysis, using the them as sub-headings: business value, relational value, utilitarian value, hedonic value and social value. Table 2 presents an overview of the results and examples of statements for each type of value.

Table 2. Overview of the results.

|   |
|---|
| Business value  |
| <p>“To get more people into ordinary working life.”</p> <p>“Wish to further develop the solution to new user groups.”</p>   |
| Relational value  |
| <p>“To be able to cooperate in good time before graduation (by the latest the final year in school).”</p> <p>“Coordination between actors, information sharing.”</p> <p>“A matching system where the person adds his/her resources and interests which can be connected to public, local organizations. They can add their work tasks that need to be carried out...”</p> |
| Utilitarian value   |
| <p>“...simple to find a real resource for aid/support when problems arise in the employment”</p> <p>“A greater overview of useful information...”</p> <p>“My wish is an app with traffic lights. Green means that this far everything has been great today [for the person with ID]. If not, push notifications will come.”</p>   |
| Hedonic value   |
| <p>“Wish to contribute to the possibility for young</p>   |

|  |
|--|
| <p>people to be able to use their good capacity in a new situation and a new work situation.”</p> <p>“More empowerment.”</p>   |
| Social value   |
| <p>“Inform about the different research results to a larger professional network.”</p> <p>“...to meet new barriers that can be solved together with users and other companies that we are not yet known with.”</p> |

In the following paragraphs we elaborate on the results presented in Table 2.

### 5.1 Business value

Even if the project mainly includes partners from the public context, some statements were categorized as ‘business value’. This included an increased number of work placements, persons with ID that work in ordinary workplaces and students that graduate in expected time. One of the private actors saw the benefit of further developing and improving their digital solution.

### 5.2 Relational value

Relational values included increased information sharing and coordination between different actors. Examples included a continual cooperation which starts long time before the person with ID graduates from secondary school. One important goal of such cooperation was to get a shared vision and mission of all actors involved. This cooperation and information sharing were suggested to be enabled by a common system for educational plans. Another value that was coded as ‘relational’ and mentioned by several respondents was the opportunity to connect persons with ID and potential employers. More specifically, the expected benefit was to get support to match the competence of persons with ID with the specific requirements and needs of employers.

### 5.3 Utilitarian value

Utilitarian values included access to useful information, less administration and improved overview of the transition. The respondents wished that the project would give them a better predictability of the transition from high school to employment for persons with ID. Other direct benefits included the possibility to get assistance in finding work placements,

increased time to follow-up and solving problems related work activities, a communication support tool for both school and work and increased initiatives on competence development.

#### 5.4 Hedonic value

Examples of hedonic and social values were scarce in the data. Illustrations of hedonic values included increased empowerment and work inclusion for persons with ID by enabling them to take responsibility and to use their full capacity in working life.

#### 5.5 Social value

Examples of social values included the expected possibility to collaborate with new and interesting actors that the project partners were not yet known about. In addition, one respondent mentioned the wish to integrate the developed artifacts with existing solutions and the possibility to diffuse the research results to their professional network.

### 6 DISCUSSION

The analysis showed that the expected benefits can be assigned to all types of value but center mainly around relational values and utilitarian values. Acknowledging the importance of including both social and pluralistic measurements in a value assessment (Nielsen and Persson, 2017), we argue that the five different types of value can serve as a guide for understanding and articulating expected values in a pre-design phase. Studies in e-government settings report on pluralistic values such as professionalism, efficiency, service and engagement. These values focus mainly on providing a lean and correct administration and serving the public good (Rose et al., 2015). While for instance lean administration is relevant for some of the actors in our project, the analysis shows that business, relational, utilitarian, social and hedonic values (Yassae and Mettler, 2015) seem more appropriate in an innovation project that includes not only public but also private actors.

However, the results of our analysis show that the expected benefits are *multidimensional* and involve both individual, organizational and societal dimensions. The utilitarian values are described in terms of benefits that can be assigned to the individual while business, relational and social values seem to benefit the

organization. The hedonic values mentioned in the study can to some degree benefit not only the individual but also the society at large. While this reflects a pluralistic view of value (Nielsen and Persson, 2017) it also reflects the complexity of the setting.

Furthermore, the expected benefits are *interconnected* in the sense that benefits that were identified as utilitarian values, can be connected to benefits that were identified as relational values. One example of this interconnectedness is the phenomenon of 'work placements for persons with ID'. As shown in figure 2, possible synergies can be found between utilitarian, relational, business and hedonic values. The figure shows that the expected benefit 'overview of job activities' (a utilitarian value that is on an individual level) has synergies with the more organizational values 'matching system between employers and persons with ID' (relational value) and 'increased number of persons with ID in ordinary work' (business value). In addition, possible synergies could emerge with the expected benefit 'inclusion in working life' (hedonic value) which would benefit the society at large.

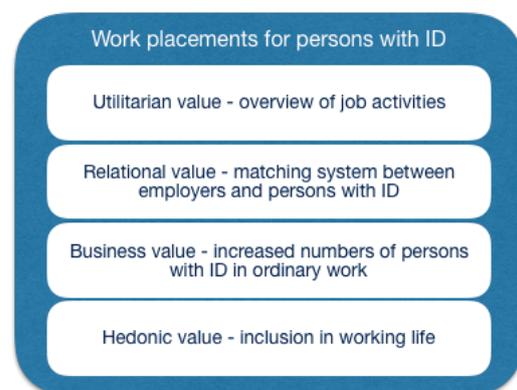


Figure 2. Example of interconnected values.

The findings represent a case with many actors and a complex context. The management of the expected benefits must therefore be addressed in a manner so that it accounts for multidimensionality and the different levels. Possible synergies across dimensions should also be considered during the benefits realization management process.

## 7 CONCLUSIONS

It is difficult to realize the expected benefits of information system implementations (Persson & Goldkuhl, 2010; Ward and Elvin, 1999). It is therefore suggested that value assessments should be formative and account for pluralistic and social values (Nielsen and Persson, 2017). Trying to understand and articulate the expected benefits in a complex innovation project, we suggest that the framework of different types of value (Yassae and Mettler, 2015) can serve as a guide to structure and gain a more pluralistic understanding of the expected benefits.

However, our main contribution relates to the discussion on *multidimensionality* and *interconnectedness*. The study by Askedal et al., (2017) shows that it is challenging for a single organization to agree on benefits realization and suggests that it is even more challenging in a consortium of organizations where the actors may have different objectives and perspectives. The findings in our case support this suggestion and show that a complex innovation setting presents a wide range of expected benefits that need to be managed during the benefits realization process. Thus, it seems important to not only identify the expected benefit but also how they are related to each other and, further, how they relate across different levels, for instance individual, organizational and societal levels.

The study has some limitations that needs to be addressed. It was conducted at an early stage of the ADR process. Additional data gathering at a later stage through other kinds of data collection techniques should therefore be conducted to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the expected benefits. As the project uses ADR to design and develop innovations, data will be collected throughout the project. Nevertheless, the study gives a formative and pluralistic understanding (Nielsen and Persson, 2017) of benefits realization in a complex innovation setting.

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# THE IMPORTANCE OF WORK FOR PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

## A presentation of a unique inclusive research about the meaning of work

Minne BAKKER<sup>1</sup>

Sofie SERGEANT<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>MSc., PhD-researcher at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and Education Coordinator at Disability Studies in the Netherlands.

<sup>2</sup>PhD. Postdoc researcher at the Disability Studies in the Netherlands, lecturer Vrije Universiteit, chair of the VUmc in Amsterdam

*Keywords: Work participation, intellectual disability, inclusive research, creative research methods*

### ABSTRACT

With the ageing and the upcoming dejuvenation of the working population there is a widely spread adage 'Everybody should work' (Winsemius et al., 2010). Research has shown that work is important for all individuals, as it generates income and financial independence, social status, daily rhythm and 'meaning in life' (Verhoef, 2015). Having a paid job contributes to participation in the plural (modern) world (Van Gent et al., 2008). This means that work is a domain of participation as well as a participation goal in itself.

Over 30 percent of the Dutch working population (aged 16-65 years) reports a (selfdeclared) chronic health condition, including physical and mental health conditions (Detaille et al., 2010), of which 14 percent were registered with work-related disabilities directly impacting their ability to find or maintain a job (CBS, 2015). People with a work-related disability, who are (partly) able to work, often have difficulties finding and maintaining a job. Figures from CBS (2017) show that people with a disability with work capacity have less often a permanent contract or paid work at all, compared to people without work restrictions. People with a disability are more often unemployed and are more often discriminated on the labor market (Ravaud et al., 1992). People with intellectual disabilities (ID) belong to one of the groups of people who experience great difficulty finding and maintaining a job, partly due to stigmatization and prejudices of employers (Hernandez et al., 2000). In the Netherlands, approximately 1 % of the population has an intellectual disability (numbers depend on the definition) (Wottiez, 2014; Rass, Verbeek-Oudijk & Eggink, 2013), impacting their ability to work.

Getting hired has advantages for the person with a work-related disability (Leufstadius et al., 2009). Research shows that people with a disability perceived earning a salary, being part of a group of workmates, developing a feeling of normality, contributing to society, acceptance, structure, feeling competent, strengthening identity, better health and increased self-esteem, as advantages of having a job (Leufstadius et al., 2009). Not only people with disabilities profit from working. Also their colleagues profit from the presence of people with disabilities in their team. Research shows that a number of positive impacts can be identified: positive impact on workforce morale, good level of productivity, better accommodation and practices benefitting all employees (International Labour Office, 2014). Although several studies have looked into the meaning of work, the perspective of people with intellectual disabilities is hardly exposed. Most studies have focused on people with mental, physical or learning disabilities, leaving a gap regarding the experiences of people with ID.

In our study we have addressed the perceptions of people with an intellectual disability regarding the meaning of work (either paid or unpaid). We used the method of the Drawing Lab to gain insight into their perspective on the meaning of work. In the Drawing Lab people are interviewed without raising questions. They follow their own drawing as a guideline in the interview. Besides giving insights into the results of the Drawing Lab (Sergeant & Verreyt 2016; Peels & Sergeant, 2018), we discuss from a conceptual framework what is needed to increase work participation of people with disabilities.

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Contact: [sofie.sergeant@disabilitystudies.nl](mailto:sofie.sergeant@disabilitystudies.nl)

# CREATING ACCESSIBILITY: THE ACCOMMODATION OF EMPLOYEES WITH DISABILITIES AS WORKPLACE INNOVATION

**Thomas OWREN**

Research Fellow at the Mohn Centre for Innovation and Regional Development, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences. PhD student at the PhD programme at the School of Business and Law, University of Agder.

*Key words: capability approach, intellectual disability, persons with disabilities, organizational learning, workplace accessibility, workplace innovation*

## ABSTRACT

The marginalisation of people with disabilities in the labour market is a longstanding and global trend. To counteract this is high on the international agenda, for instance as part of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Traditionally, disability has been seen as a personal feature. Contemporary understandings, such as that of the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), see disability as a result of interaction between persons with physical, mental, sensory or intellectual impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers (UN 2006). Thus, to move forward on this, it becomes important to enhance the accessibility of workplaces. But at present, the field of organisational and management research on work and disability presents as rather immature. There are meagre amounts of research on disability and the role of employers and managers (Cavanagh, Bartram, Meacham, Bigby, Oakman and Fossey 2017, p. 6; Dwertmann 2016, p. 1477). There is also a lack of differentiation between different subsets of the extremely diverse category people with disabilities (Beatty et al 2019). Lastly, there is a tendency to grand generalizations from researchers based on what I understand as a sample bias towards persons with disabilities that are in or close to employment, neglecting groups which farther from or altogether excluded from employment, e.g. persons with intellectual disability or serious mental illness.

My research question is: What forms of workplace innovation may create accessibility for employees with disabilities require of

organisations and managers? Harnessing theoretical perspectives both from Disability Studies, the Capability Approach (Sen 1980, Robeyns 2017) and Workplace Innovation (Pot, Totterdill and Dhondt 2016), I am doing a qualitative critical case study (Flyvberg 2011) with an ambition of developing theory. After doing field work and qualitative and interviews (2016–2017) and getting to know eight employees with intellectual disability and their jobs, managers and organisational contexts, publishing a book chapter (Owren and Helmersen 2018) and an essay on reflexivity in research with persons with intellectual disability (Owren 2019), I am currently (2018–2020) working on two theoretical models: The first (Owren and Dyrkolbotn, work in progress) builds on an analysis of existing research on work and disability to specify four levels of organisational accessibility for persons with disabilities, 0. Exclusion, 1. Rudimentary access, 2. Providing work accommodations and 3. Committing to reorganise, and three corresponding processes: a) from exclusion to access, b) from access to social responsibility, c) from social responsibility to social justice. The second (Owren and Austrheim, work in progress) builds on a synthesis of existing research knowledge about accommodations related to nine diagnoses and causes of cognitive impairment, at present fragmented across a number of literatures. Both contributions point out that beyond the most rudimentary, creating workplace accessibility may require processes of organisational learning, dialogue, negotiation and reconsidering often taken-for-granted assumptions on part of 'non-disabled'

employers, managers and colleagues. I aim to frame this as a contribution to Workplace Innovation, which is underdeveloped when it comes to disability.

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Contact: [Thomas.Owren@hvl.no](mailto:Thomas.Owren@hvl.no)

# INCLUSIVE CITIZENSHIP OF PEOPLE WITH MILD INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

Jaap OLTOF

PhD Candidate Political Sociology at the University of Amsterdam, lecturer in sociology and researcher at the Rehabilitation research group at the department of Social Work at the Hanze University of Applied Sciences in Groningen.

*Keywords: inclusive citizenship, intellectual disability, participation, stigma, relationships*

## ABSTRACT

Advisory bodies for Dutch government policy witnessed a growing demand for (long-term) care in the last decade, especially by people with mild intellectual disabilities (MID). This sudden rise is often explained by a so-called 'increasing complexity' of societal structures causing exclusion. But what does this really signify? The question arises; how is inclusion/exclusion experienced by people with MID? Where do fits or misfits occur?

We start off with the premise that everyday life activities offer important indicators for studying citizenship. Hence, we studied the lived experiences of people with MID regarding inclusive citizenship, mainly in the public domain of society. Doing groceries, getting around by public transportation, getting in contact with others or performing sports and hobbies at local initiatives are some examples. Through this scope we explored how disabilities are repressed, conquered, preserved or constructed by societal/social barriers.

Through ethnographic fieldwork 33 persons with MID were followed in a variety of daily activities (in the Netherlands). The study was set up with a co-researcher with MID and in collaboration with People's First group 'LFB Wolvega'. Topics of observations and interviews were related to prevailing definitions of inclusion on three levels: participation, belonging and relationships. Participation was studied through observation and interviewing. Photovoice was applied for reflection on feelings of belonging, the same way drawing and eco-mapping provided insights in relationships and networks. In addition, network members and social professionals were interviewed.

Some main results are:

Participation:

- Although people create diverse and creative ways in participating, a variety of barriers for participation were found confirming the notion that mild intellectual disability is shaped through marginality and experiences of exclusion. Opportunities for participation were frequently found to be daily renegotiated and confirmed.

Belonging:

- Stigma performs an important role in feelings of (not) belonging. Many respondents were not comfortable with the label MID and tried to avoid the use of it because of perceived stigma. Nevertheless, some respondents creatively took advantage of the label.

Relationships:

- Weak ties (neighbors, shop personal etc.) can offer significant meaning to people's daily life.
- Also social professionals regularly have an important role in successful participation as they fulfill multiple roles and deliver diverse forms of support.
- Strong ties (family and friends) on the other hand are sometimes unsteady. Situations of abuse, extortion and patronizing behaviour were encountered.

The ways in which people (with MID) daily give shape to citizenship are dynamic, messy and rather unpredictable. Possibilities for participation, feelings of belonging and relationships are often rapidly altering, mutually intersecting and tied to the experience

of stigma. Therefore, inclusive citizenship is not an outcome which one can easily aim for but should be understood as series of parallel processes of fits and misfits which are frequently renegotiated and confirmed. In order to be more effective in stimulating inclusive citizenship for people with MID, both policies

aiming for inclusion and activation should take in account the dynamic character of these processes. To grasp the messiness of daily life experiences of inclusive citizenship, future research should employ a micro-sociological, relational approach to intellectual disability with attention to intersectionality and diversity.

*Contact: j.olthof@pl.hanze.nl*

# ENCHANTING TECHNOLOGIES: EXPLORING THE ROLE OF MATERIALITY AND ENCHANTMENT IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

**Professor Wendy KEAY-BRIGHT**

Director, Centre for Applied Research in Inclusive Arts and Design (CARIAD)

Cardiff School of Art and Design, Metropolitan University

*Keywords: digital, learning, material, disability, workshops, enchantment*

## ABSTRACT

With the introduction of a new “Successful Futures” curriculum in the UK, learners between the ages of 3 to 16 will be expected to evidence their ability to use digital media to develop their life skills, personal confidence, work skills, career planning, health and well-being (Donaldson, 2015).

Teaching staff, responsible for the implementation of this multi-faceted programme for learners with profound disabilities, have reported that, while the ambition of the curriculum suggests a more holistic approach to digital learning, technologies aimed at this audience are not fit for purpose. With regard to career planning, personal confidence, health and well-being, technologies designed for classroom use require costly financial and training investment and lack the flexibility to accommodate the diversity of learner abilities. For the more profoundly disabled children the perceived benefits of technology are misaligned to individual needs and capabilities, particularly when combined with a developmental approach that favours the achievement of developmental milestones rather than discovery-led, task free, interaction (Simmons, 2019).

In recent years interaction design for children with disabilities has been of growing interest to researchers, particularly in human factors (see work by Frauenberger et al, 2016; Read and Bekker, 2011, Campigotto et al 2013; \*\*\* 2012 – 2017). As technologies become more ubiquitous, mobile and embedded the potential to investigate the role of embodiment and bodily processes on learning has generated a body of experimental methods, software and hardware devices that seek to better understand how children learn through their intersubjective (Csordas, 2008; Fuchs, 2015, Zlatev, 2008) and contingent (Cress et al, 2013) relationships with

objects, environments and other people (Osgood-Campbell, 2015, Kirsh, 2013; Gieser, 2008).

The project we describe in this paper, Enchanting Technologies, aims to contribute to this discourse by exploring how tinkering and experimenting with paper, digital and electronic components could function as a means to discover magical opportunities for developing personal confidence and well-being for learners with disabilities (Gell, 1992). In this context, the materials play a significant role in finding a common language for combining the real-world experience of teaching staff with the interests of interaction designers and artists, challenging us to make visceral real-world connections through the enchantment of things and the agency we invest in them (Boradkar, 2017).

Through a series of workshops, we have collaborated with special education teaching staff to use materials as magical “*instruments of the imagination, able to enchant by movement, speed instantaneous communication and above all by bestowing upon us what cannot be fully grasped yet*” (Marenko, 2017, p30). Over three workshops we have generated a series of concepts that have the potential to leverage the intersubjective abilities of learners with profound disabilities through contingent and casual interaction with [sensory] objects. During each workshop we gradually increased the fidelity of objects from paper to digital and electronic, with the most recent introducing simple modular programming. Teachers reported that access to the technical infrastructure improved their confidence in using digital and electronic components more directly with learners. This, in turn, it was suggested, could create career opportunities, that would otherwise have been missed.

Further work needs to be undertaken to establish the impact of this approach on learners. However, by using materials to scaffold the creativity of teachers, we were able to generate a range of narratives that placed enchantment at the heart of learner experience. With regard to the Successful Futures curriculum, this project has potential to reduce the barriers of inflexibility and cost, and to make the digital future more promising, meaningful and fun for learners with PMLD.

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Contact: [wkbright@cardiffmet.ac.uk](mailto:wkbright@cardiffmet.ac.uk)