



## Teaching skills related to self-employment to adults with developmental disabilities: An analog analysis



Wesley H. Dotson<sup>a,\*</sup>, David M. Richman<sup>a</sup>, Layla Abby<sup>a</sup>, Samuel Thompson<sup>a</sup>, Anthony Plotner<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Texas Tech University, United States

<sup>b</sup> University of South Carolina, United States

### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article history:

Received 8 February 2013

Received in revised form 14 April 2013

Accepted 16 April 2013

Available online 21 May 2013

#### Keywords:

Self-employment

Developmental disabilities

Teaching interaction procedure

### ABSTRACT

Employment opportunities for people with developmental disabilities (DD) have improved in the last several decades. There is increasing focus on helping people with DD sample more diverse employment options, including running their own businesses. The present study (1) evaluated the effects of a well-established behavioral teaching procedure on the acquisition of a sample of three broad classes of skills related to self-employment (worker, supervisor, and clerical work) in young adults with DD within an analog recycling business, and (2) investigated the extension of that treatment to the natural environment while working in isolation or in peer pairs. Results suggest that the teaching procedure was effective in teaching three broad classes of skills related to many self-employment possibilities, the skills generalized to the natural environment, and peer pairs supported each other to complete tasks with a high degree of accuracy required to run a recycling business. This study represents an initial demonstration that adults with DD can learn skills required to run their own business.

© 2013 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

### 1. Introduction

Many people partially define themselves through their job or career, and employment has also been associated with higher levels of quality of life (Eggleton, Robertson, Ryan, & Kober, 1999; Kober & Eggleton, 2005). Employment can provide financial independence and security, and a social network of associates and friends (Evans & Repper, 2001). However, people with developmental disabilities (DD) face limited opportunities to identify their vocational interests, and are often excluded from the competitive workforce entirely (Grigal, Hart, & Migliore, 2011; Migliore, Butterworth, & Hart, 2009). Many individuals with DD are placed in segregated settings (i.e., sheltered workshops) earning sub-minimum wage doing simple, repetitive and nonfunctional tasks such as sorting and assembling (Brooks-Lane, Hutcheson, & Revell, 2005). However, societal value shifts aimed at promoting more inclusive and varied employment opportunities over the last 30 years have resulted in policy changes and legislation that address issues of disability and competitive employment (Agran, Blanchard, & Wehmeyer, 2000; Benz, Lindstrom, & Yovanoff, 2000; Eggleton et al., 1999; Flannery, Slovic, Benz, & Levine, 2007; Hagner & Davies, 2002; Hendricks & Wehman, 2009; Karger & Rose, 2010; Taylor et al., 2012; Wehman, Inge, Revell, & Brooke, 2007; Wehmeyer & Bolding, 2008; Wehmeyer & Schwartz, 1998).

\* Corresponding author at: Texas Tech University, 3008 18th Street, Room 163, Lubbock, TX 79409, United States. Tel.: +1 806 834 0783.  
E-mail address: wesley.dotson@ttu.edu (W.H. Dotson).

### 1.1. Legislation impacting employment of people with DD

In 1973, the *Rehabilitation Act* prohibited organizations that received federal funds from discriminating against well-qualified applicants for employment because of their disability (P.L. 93-112). In 1990, the *Americans with Disabilities Act* (P.L. 101-336) mandated civil rights protection for individuals with disabilities and guaranteed equal opportunity to competitive employment, transportation, and telecommunication (Karger & Rose, 2010). The re-authorization of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA) in 1990 (P.L. 101-476) mandated formal school-to-work transition planning by the public education system in the United States. Programs such as supported employment emerged during the 1980s as a result of the legislative changes.

### 1.2. From supported to competitive or self-employment

Supported employment was designed to help individuals with DD obtain and maintain employment in the community. Supported employment was defined for the first time in the *Developmental Disabilities Act of 1984* (P.L. 98-527) as:

- (i) paid employment for persons with developmental disabilities for whom competitive employment at or above minimum wage is unlikely and who need ongoing support to perform in a work setting, (ii) is conducted in a variety of settings in which persons without disabilities are employed, and (iii) is supported by any activity needed to sustain paid work including supervision, training, and transportation (p. 2665).

Supported employment has experienced a rapid growth of providers, services, and funding that has created employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities beyond the sheltered workshop (Hagner & Davies, 2002; Hillier et al., 2007; Howlin, Alcock, & Burkin, 2005; Mawhood & Howlin, 1999). Several supported employment models (e.g., enclaves, mobile work crews, small business, and individual placement) are used to provide community-based jobs for people with DD (Wehman et al., 2012), and it is becoming more common for people with DD to be competitively employed (i.e., working the same job and earning the same wage as an employee without a disability) (Carter, Austin, & Trainor, 2012; Chiang, Cheung, Hickson, Xiang, & Tsai, 2012; Grigal et al., 2011; Holwerda, van der Klink, Groothoff, & Brouwer, 2012; Levy & Perry, 2011; Migliore, Timmons, Butterworth, & Lugas, 2012).

A common factor of all supported employment models is that the person with DD works for someone else, in a job typically selected for them by a caregiver, teacher, or job coach. The idea of self-employment as a means of allowing people with DD to work for themselves in a preferred occupation has recently emerged and has received considerable attention (Flannery et al., 2007; Revell, Smith, & Inge, 2009; Wehmeyer & Bolding, 2008; Wehmeyer et al., 2009). Advantages of self-employment include increased flexibility, autonomy, and choices for vocation. Previous research suggests that there is a positive correlation between levels of control over work and leisure activities and both (1) quality of life (Wehmeyer & Schwartz, 1998), and (2) increasing personal independence (Martorell, Gutierrez-Recacha, Pereda, & Ayuso-Mateos, 2008). Starting a business may also provide vocational opportunities in communities where job opportunities may be scarce for people with DD. For example, Hagner and Davies (2002) interviewed eight self-employed individuals with DD and discovered that five out of eight started their own business because of the lack of employment opportunities, and the biggest advantage in self-employment was the flexibility and autonomy of setting their own work hours. However, the results were based on interviews and retrospective self-report data. Running a business is a complicated endeavor, however, and many questions remain to be answered, such as the specific skills and supports that people with DD will need to learn to run their own business and which procedures are most effective in teaching those skills.

### 1.3. Limitations in the self-employment literature

There is a long history in the behavior analytic literature of effective teaching of job skills to people with DD (Matson, Hattier, & Belva, 2012; Matson, Turygin, et al., 2012; Palmen, Didden, & Lang, 2012; Taylor et al., 2012). For example, in one study experimenters taught six adult women with mild to moderate mental retardation job application and interview skills using an instruction package that included direct instruction, modeling, role playing, and feedback (Hall, Sheldon-Wildgen, & Sherman, 1980). Other researchers taught time management in vocational settings to three adult males with DD using instruction, instructional feedback (i.e., verbal praise), and picture cues (Sowers, Rusch, Connis, & Cummings, 1980). More recently, behavioral techniques have been used to teach job skills ranging from assembly tasks (Lee & Singer-Dudek, 2012) to performing in an inflatable mascot costume (Allen, Burke, Howard, Wallace, & Bowen, 2012; Allen, Wallace, Greene, Bowen, & Burke, 2010). Video-modeling (Allen, Wallace, Renes, Bowen, & Burke, 2010; Van Laarhoven, Winiarski, Blood, & Chan, 2012) and behavioral skills training (Lee & Singer-Dudek, 2012; Palmen & Didden, 2012; Palmen et al., 2012) in particular are two procedures that have demonstrated successful results in teaching vocational skills to individuals with autism and other developmental disabilities.

While previous research on self-employment provides a conceptual model of how to establish and evaluate self-employment outcomes in people with DD, very little direct-observation research has been done and there is a need for increased attention to the development of experimental questions related to instructional strategies and supports to increase self-employment for people with DD. For example, several recent review articles on evidence-based practices in

متن کامل مقاله

دریافت فوری ←

**ISI**Articles

مرجع مقالات تخصصی ایران

- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه تمام متن مقالات انگلیسی
- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه ترجمه شده مقالات
- ✓ پذیرش سفارش ترجمه تخصصی
- ✓ امکان جستجو در آرشیو جامعی از صدها موضوع و هزاران مقاله
- ✓ امکان دانلود رایگان ۲ صفحه اول هر مقاله
- ✓ امکان پرداخت اینترنتی با کلیه کارت های عضو شتاب
- ✓ دانلود فوری مقاله پس از پرداخت آنلاین
- ✓ پشتیبانی کامل خرید با بهره مندی از سیستم هوشمند رهگیری سفارشات