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Multi-stakeholder Perspectives on Barriers to Finding a Job for Individuals with an
Intellectual Disability: Applying Actor-Observer Theory

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Abstract

This research examined the perceived barriers to finding a job for individuals with an intellectual disability from the perspectives of three key stakeholders on an “actor-observer” (A-O) continuum: potential *employees with an intellectual disability (actors)*, potential *employers (observers)* and *employment specialists* (in-between), who specialise in finding jobs for individuals with an intellectual disability. These participants made *attributions* for successful and unsuccessful job applications, exploring the possibility that *dispositional attributions* (e.g. lack of skills) by *observers* will be the predominant barrier to workplace inclusion.

Using Flanagan’s critical incident technique, successful employment and unsuccessful unemployment stories were collected from *employees with an intellectual disability* (n=30), *employers* (n=13) and *employment specialists* (n=22). When *employees with an intellectual disability* were unsuccessful in finding a job, these *employees (actors)* attributed *situational* factors such as negative attributions by the *employer*. Whilst *employers (observers)* tended more to blame *dispositional* factors, such as a lack of skills from *employees with intellectual disabilities* as the reason they did not hire. *Employment specialists* made both *dispositional and situational* but predominantly *situational attributions*. For successful employment, all three groups attributed support from the *employment specialists*, *employers* being flexible in the hiring process and *employees with an intellectual disability* being capable to do the job as the most important factors. As well as supporting A-O theory, these findings highlight the need for *employees* to be trained in job skills prior to *job hunting* and especially for *employers* to be trained in perspective taking, in order to remove the need for specialist support agencies.

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Finally I would like to dedicate this thesis to my Gran who taught me to tackle life with compassion and determination. This one's for you, Gran.

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Chapter 1

Critical Literature Review and Research Questions

Internationally, people with intellectual disabilities are least likely to gain employment over other forms of disability (Kocman, Fisher & Weber, 2018; Woodley, Metzger & Dylan 2012). Why do people with an intellectual disability continue to be under-represented in meaningful jobs despite the fact that they make good *employees*? (Markel & Barclay, 2009). Is it due to *employer* bias or lack of *employee* confidence in the system, or to a combination of both? This study explores which of these, if any, matters, from the different and possibly interlocking perspectives of *employees with an intellectual disability*, *employers* and *employment specialists* in between. In doing so it contributes toward the theory of *attributions* for social and economic inclusion, as set out in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal Eight, “Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all” (United Nations, 2012).

Context for the Research

Since the colonisation of New Zealand in the 1800s, considerable progress has been made in the fight for the rights of people with disabilities, with New Zealand receiving the International FD Roosevelt Disability Award in 2007. However, this has not been without adversity as the disability community has faced numerous discriminatory political agendas including the 19th century eugenics movement, often referred to as ‘racial fitness’, and social Darwinism in the 20th century that advocated for the removal of weak and infected genetics. Mechanisms were put into place to prevent ‘the multiplication of these degenerates’ with literature (The Fertility of the Unfit, 1903), policies (The Imbecile Passengers’ Act, 1882; The Immigration Restriction Act, 1899; Mental Defectives Act, 1911; Educational Act, 1914)

and the health care system (the medical model of disability) supporting the creation of institutions, surveillance and sterilization of ‘defective’ New Zealanders.

After World War II, the mentality around disability (both physical and intellectual) began to change. The return of many soldiers with physical disabilities and mental illnesses, such as post traumatic stress disorder, exposed the public to a myriad of disabilities that now affected their loved ones. The New Zealand public began to take notice and put pressure on the government to supply better services for all people with disabilities. Support organisations were created (IHC, 1949), policies were implemented to protect and improve the lives of people with disabilities (Disabled Persons Community Welfare Act, 1975; Building Code 4121; Education Act, 1989; Human Rights Act, 1993; Special Education 2000, 1996; UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons, 2007) and access to mainstream employment for people with disabilities became a reality (Disabled Persons Employment Promotion Act, 1960; Disability Strategy, 2001; ‘To Have an Ordinary Life’, 2003).

Unemployment in a New Zealand Context

The disabled community, amidst political and social gains, continue to experience discrimination, named here as ‘ableism’, in multiple areas. In 2013, 24% of the New Zealand population were identified as disabled, a total of 1.1 million people. The unemployment rate for people with a disability (11.4%) is more than double the rate for people without a disability (4.5%) (Statistics NZ, 2017). This statistic was estimated by Statistics New Zealand to be an opportunity cost of around \$NZ11.7 billion. Such statistics not only have a significant impact on the financial state of New Zealand, but on the psychological wellbeing of the disability community that spans well beyond 1.1 million people.

Within a New Zealand setting, the Disability Survey (Statistics NZ, 2012) continually reports economic inclusion as one of the biggest goals for the disability community. Research

on *employees with an intellectual disability* has predominately focused on the benefits of successful employment. Researchers (Chadsey & Beyer, 2001; Jahoda *et al.*, 2007; Li, 2004; Lysaght & Cobigo, 2014; Vornholt, Uitdewilligen, & Nijhuis, 2013) have proposed that employment is a Quality of Life indicator among the intellectually disabled community due to the pivotal role employment plays as a tangible representation of independence, financial autonomy, well being, social inclusion and the opportunity to create new relationships.

New Zealand has made significant progress in the inclusion for individuals with disabilities. However, there is still a lot to be done to ensure there is decent work and economic growth for people with disabilities. Although the disability community consists of varying types and severities, little research examines the factors affecting unemployment rates for people with intellectual disabilities. The current study has chosen to focus on the barriers affecting people with intellectual disabilities, as although they only comprise 2% of the disability population in New Zealand; they report an unemployment statistic over 40% (Statistics NZ, 2017).

Previous research (Lysaght & Cobigo, 2014; Vornholt, Uitdewilligen, & Nijhuis, 2013) has predominately focused on the experience of individuals once they have gained employment. However, given the New Zealand disability unemployment statistic is over 40% for individuals with an intellectual disability (Statistics NZ, 2017) it suggests that getting through the hiring process is significantly more difficult

Employment for individuals with an intellectual disability is an important goal to achieve as a society, as not only does it have economic incentives, many studies have shown the benefits of employment, such as improved mental and physical health (Eggleton, Robertson, Ryan & Kober, 1999; Schur, 2002). These health benefits are not exclusive to the individual with a disability, but have been shown to improve family members' quality of life and mental health reports too (Farrell & Krahn, 2014; Poston, Turnbull, Park, Mannan,

Marquis & Wang, 2003). Therefore, the question of how to include individuals with an intellectual disability into the workforce is of significant relevance. This study will examine inclusion from the perspectives of *employees with an intellectual disability*, *employers* and *employment specialists*.

The proposed model

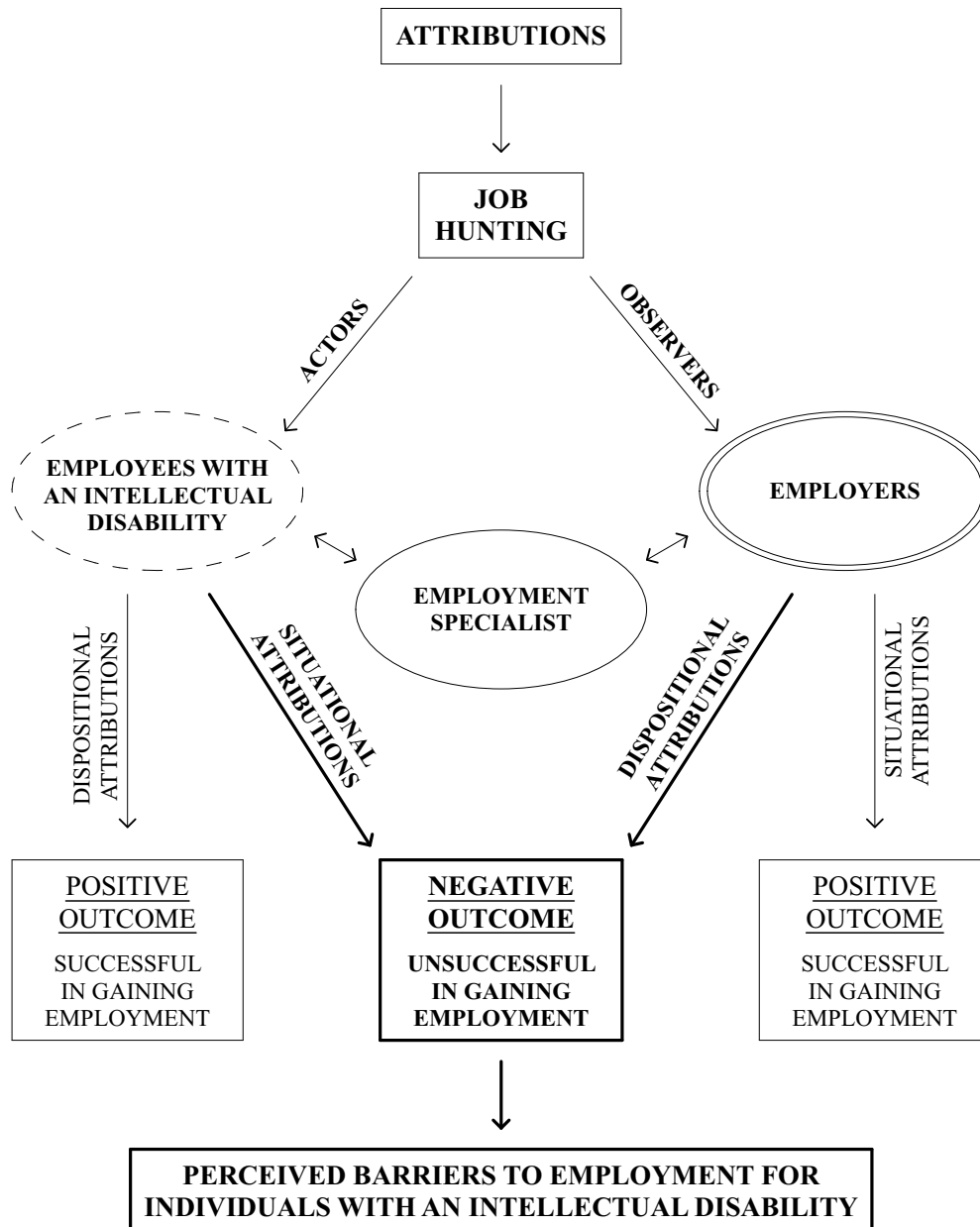


Figure 1. Job Hunting from an Attributional perspective

Attributions

In Figure 1, *attributions* are reasons that people give for one another's actions (Jones and Nisbett, 1971). Heider (1958) described *attributions* as a desire for individuals to assign a cause for an event in their environment to better understand it. The perceived cause then affects an individual's behaviour and their emotional response to the situation depending on whether the outcome is *positive or negative* (Weiner 1985, 1986). Heider (1958) believed that people are amateur psychologists who construct cause and effect relationships to make sense of the social world, including successes and failures, for example, the ability to get a job, regardless of whether they are accurate or correct. *Attributions*, as per Figure 1, influence the way people interact with each other and therefore the different attitudes people have, can actively influence the *attributions* people make about the cause of events or behaviours (Weiner 1958). When people observe behaviours such as the act of *job hunting* (Figure 1), and outcomes such as securing versus not securing a job, they often assign *attributions* that explain the outcome of the event or incident depending on the perspective from which they are directly experiencing or indirectly observing the behaviour. As per Figure 1, different *attributions* may be placed on an *employee with an intellectual disability* depending on the perspective from which *job hunting* was experienced or observed from.

For example, an *employer* may attribute a poor performance review of an *employee* to *dispositional* factors such as a lack of skills and bad work ethic. However, in an identical situation if the *employer* was aware of external events affecting the *employee*, such as having difficulties at home, they may be more likely to attribute *situational* factors, such as stress and lack of sleep, as the reason the poor performance occurred. Therefore, different perspectives can create different *attributions* towards the cause of a behavior, and in turn, influence the response to that behaviour, ranging from good to poor management, exclusion to inclusion and recognition.

As proposed in Figure 1, *attributions* placed on the *positive* or *negative outcome* of *job hunting* will differ depending on the perspective of the stakeholder. In attribution theory, and in Figure 1, an individual who performs the behaviour or action that is being examined is referred to as an *actor*. Within the current study, *employees with an intellectual disability* are the *actors* who are *job hunting*. The *observer* is the individual who is observing the behaviour of the *actor*. In this case, as per Figure 1, the *employers* are observing the *employees with an intellectual disability* as they *job hunt* (seek employment). The variance in *attributions* between the *actor* and *observer* as shown in Figure 1, are referred to as actor-observer differences in the literature (Jones and Nisbett, 1971; Nisbett, Caputo, Legant & Marecek, 1973). Actor-observer differences were formulated (Jones and Nisbett, 1971) to explain the tendency to attribute one's own actions to *situational* causes, and attribute other people's behaviour to *dispositional* causes.

A study by Nisbett *et al.* (1973) demonstrated that college students as *observers* were more likely to assume that the *actor's* behaviour would consistently predict future behaviours. However, this *attribution* did not apply to their own behaviours. *Observers* used *dispositional* qualities of their best friends, such as their best friend's needs, interests or traits, to justify their best friend's choice in partner and university major. However, they more often used *situational attributions*, for example, phrases that were in terms of the properties of the partner, or the university major to describe their own personal choices.

The essence of actor-observer differences is that people tend to make different *attributions* for people's behaviour depending on whether they are the *actor* or the *observer* in the situation (Figure 1). "There is a pervasive tendency for *actors* to attribute their actions to *situational* requirements, whereas *observers* tend to attribute the same actions to stable personal dispositions" (Jones and Nisbett, 1972, p. 80).

Key Stakeholders as outlined in Figure 1

Actors

In Figure 1, from an *employee with an intellectual disability's* perspective, *attributions* can be used to understand barriers that affect motivation or self-confidence levels. As demonstrated in *Figure 1*, *actor-observer* differences would place *employees with an intellectual disability* as the *actor* in the scenario. *Actors* have been found to assign *situational attributions* to behaviour in *negative outcomes* (Martinko *et. al.*, 2006) and therefore as per Figure 1, *employees with an intellectual disability* may attribute *situational* factors that are out of their control (such as any biased attitudes of the *employer*) as a barrier to employment rather than their own *disposition*, such as skills, personality and appearance.

A common misconception of individuals with an intellectual disability is that the individuals themselves are unaware of negative public perceptions and *attributions*. Qualitative research (Jahoda, Cattermole, & Markoya, 1988; Jahoda & Markova, 2004; Rapley, Kiernan, & Antaki, 1998) has shown that people with intellectual disabilities are aware of the negative stigmas towards disability. These negative *attributions* (such as lack of ability and independence) towards individuals with an intellectual disability often have social consequences for the individuals, such as a decrease in self-esteem and confidence to achieve their goals (Jahoda & Markova, 2004; Rapley, Kiernan, & Antaki, 1998).

Ali, Strydom, Hassiotis, Williams, and King (2008) conducted a study with the participation of 229 individuals with an intellectual disability in England, to examine self-reported stigma in a work environment. They found that 60% of their sample of employed workers described discriminatory behaviour such as “they talk down to me”, and two-thirds of the study actively avoided people with whom they perceived to be an unpleasant interaction. A key finding was older adults and individuals with mild-to-moderate intellectual disability were at a higher risk of experiencing stigma, which is an important implication in

the current study as individuals with mild-to-moderate intellectual disabilities are most likely to seek employment (Statistics NZ, 2017). These findings, as a whole, indicate that individuals with an intellectual disability are actively participating in their environment, and are making *attributions* towards behaviour occurring in the workplace. They demonstrate that *employees with an intellectual disability* are able and willing to participate in research, and therefore it is important to capture their perspective on the barriers to employment. In particular, it would be important to capture their *attributions* towards times they were *successful and unsuccessful in gaining employment* (Figure 1).

Research has been conducted in educational settings and with non-disabled populations in the workforce. Woodcock and Vialle (2011) surveyed 444 Australian pre-service primary school teachers to assess their attitudes towards students with and without a disability using Likert-scale questions and vignettes. It was found that teachers held negative *attributions* towards students with learning disabilities, perceiving the students to lack the ability or skill (*dispositional attribution*) in comparison to the non-disabled students, rather than their poor performance being a product of *situational* factors. These findings suggest, from *Figure 1*, that *observers (employers)* may use *dispositional attributions* when assessing behaviour and will potentially demonstrate an *observer* bias in their *attributions* for performance and potential to perform work in an employment setting similar to the teachers in Woodcock and Vialle (2011).

The identification of different perspectives is an important first step in understanding the diverse *attributions* impacting hiring decisions. Bryan and Pearl (1979) conducted a review of studies and found that individuals with intellectual disabilities are more likely to attribute their failures to external locus-of-control factors (such as luck or other people) compared to members of the population who do not identify with having a disability.

Therefore, as per Figure 1, it can be expected the current study will find *actor-observer* differences, where *employees with an intellectual disability (actors)* will be expected to attribute *situational* factors as a barrier to getting a job.

In a work environment, Gioia and Sims, Jr. (1985) in Pennsylvania, conducted four performance appraisals under different conditions to assess 24 experienced managers and subordinates/*employees*. They found that the *employees*, as suggested in Figure 1, tended to attribute *situational* factors to their poor performance compared to the managers who attributed *dispositional* factors to the *employees'* performance, regardless of performance level.

In addition to this study, Campbell and Swift (2006) found the relationship between the *employer* and the *employee* dictates the level to which *actor-observer* asymmetries exist when the *employee's* performance was negative. Consistent with *actor-observer* differences, *employees* were more likely to attribute *situational factors* to a negative outcome. However, the *attributions* made by the *employer* for a negative performance depended on whether the *employee* was part of the in-group or the out-group in the workplace (Campbell & Swift, 2006). When the *employer* considered the *employee* to be part of the in-group, both the in-group and the *employers*, they were more likely to engage in self-serving bias, attributing the negative performance to *situational* factors and positive performance to *dispositional* factors. When the *employer* considered the *employee* to be part of the out-group, the out-group *employees* attributed *situational factors* to the negative outcome while the *employers* attributed *dispositional* factors to the negative outcome.

These findings have direct implications for the current study and as previously demonstrated, *employees with intellectual disabilities* are considered to be a part of the out-group in employment settings. This therefore strengthens the likelihood that conflicting

attributions as proposed in Figure 1 between the *employer* and the *employees with an intellectual disability* will be found in the current research project.

The current study offers to fill the gap in the literature to see if *situational* and *dispositional attributions* are used to describe *job hunting* outcomes in employment for *Employees with an intellectual disability*, a first of its kind on a New Zealand population.

Observers

As shown in Figure 1 and based on the works of Jones and Nisbett (1971) it is expected to find that *employers*, as *observers*, will attribute *dispositional factors* as the reason *employees with an intellectual disability* were unsuccessful in employment. Research on *employers' attitudes* towards disability is inconsistent. A literature review conducted by Keys and Balcazar (2000) found the inconsistency was due to the definition of attitude within the studies. Assessing the role *attributions* play in an employment setting is important, because the *attributions employers* make towards *employees with an intellectual disability*, and their ability to work, may lead to stigma (Goffman, 1963), a discrediting attribute that occurs when there is a power imbalance through the use of stereotyping, labelling and discrimination (Link & Phelan, 2001). This is relevant as in order to work towards decent work for all (United Nations, 2015) it is imperative that the barriers to employment for *employees with an intellectual disability* are understood so measures can be taken (such as training programmes and policy) to overcome them.

In Figure 1, *employers* may use *dispositional attributions* such as lack of skills or other attributes controlled by the *actors (employees with an intellectual disability)* to explain why they did not give the individual the job. These perspectives in turn affect the relationship they have with the *employees with an intellectual disability*, given it is proposed they hold a different perspective (Figure 1).

Employers play a central role to ensure individuals with an intellectual disability have opportunities for meaningful employment as they make the hiring decisions (Barnes and Mercer, 2005; Vornholt *et. al.*, 2013). However, research suggests in both quantitative questionnaires (Gilbride, 2003; Mansour, 2009; Unger, 2002) and in-depth qualitative focus groups with hiring managers (Chan *et. al.*, 2010; Gilbride, 2003; Hernandez *et. al.*, 2000) that *employers'* attitudes, particularly for people with an intellectual disability, are driven by existing misconceptions rather than personal experience (Dovidio *et. al.*, 2011). When an *observer (employer)* has less understanding of an *actor's (employee with an intellectual disability)* needs and motivations, they are more likely to attribute *dispositional factors* to the *actor's* behaviour (Figure 1) (Weiner 1985). For example, within an employment setting, research conducted by Bricout and Bentley (2000) mail surveyed 302 *employers* and found that they prefer to hire people with physical disabilities over intellectual due to the uncertain and invisible nature of intellectual disabilities. Given that intellectual disabilities are consistently placed at the bottom of the disability preference hierarchy (Kocman, Fisher & Weber, 2018; Tringo, 1970) it appears that *employers*, as *observers*, may not understand the capabilities of individuals with an intellectual disability, and therefore use *dispositional attributions* to assess the *actor (employee with an intellectual disability)*.

Globally, *employers* express positive attitudes towards disability believing they deserve to be given a fair chance in an employment setting (Keys & Balcazar, 2000). However, when attitudes such as intention to hire individuals with an intellectual disability were assessed, *employers'* predominately expressed negative attitudes such as perceiving *employees with an intellectual disability* as lacking the skills and ability required for the job (*dispositional attribution*) (Cooper, 1991; Keys & Balcazar, 2000; Shied, 1999; MSD, 2012). Studies (Kaye, Jans, & Jones, 2011; Hernandez *et. al.*, 2000; Lysaght *et. al.*, 2009; Markel & Barclay, 2009) have found that *employers* believe hiring an individual with an intellectual

disability would be an added cost to the company due to additional training requirements and support services. This is relevant to the current study as it demonstrates that *dispositional attributions*, as proposed in Figure 1, are common *attributions* made by *employers (observers)* when assessing whether or not to hire the *employee with an intellectual disability (actor)*.

Burke *et al.* (2013) conducted a review of 34 research findings from 1987-2010 and found that individual managerial attitudes towards *employees* with a disability negatively impacted hiring decisions, provision of accommodations, and work performance appraisals. This review signifies that *employers* in competitive employment use *dispositional attributions* to make hiring decisions (Figure 1), as they do not feel the employee with a disability would be able to meet the demands of the workforce.

Observers tend to blame the individual's personality and traits (*dispositional attributions*) for their choices and actions. This is because as *observers* they are unable to see the situation from the perspective of the *actor* who has more knowledge on past motivations that have affected their behaviour (Jones & Nisbett, 1971; Wolfson & Salancik, 1977). Therefore, when an *observer* has less context on a situation or another person, a social distance is created which reduces the likelihood that *observers* and *actors* will have a shared perspective on the cause of the *actors'* behaviour (Figure 1) (Gioia & Sims, Jr., 1985; Wolfson & Salancik, 1977). Previous experience with the intellectual disabled community has been found to increase (Gilbride, Stensrud, Vandergoot, & Golden, 2003; McManus, Feyes, & Saucier) the willingness for an *employer* to engage inclusive employment practices.

Within a New Zealand setting, research for The Ministry of Social Development (Woodley *et al.*, 2012) interviewed or surveyed 106 *employers* and found 97% of the surveyed population agreed that people with an intellectual disability “deserve a fair go”, with 74% of respondents believing they were an “untapped resource”. However, a criticism

of the study is that it may have been biased towards social desirability as the research also described that when actual hiring trends were examined through surveys, *employers* (in Figure 1) felt that discrimination was a barrier to employment. *Employers* were found to believe that barriers within their organisation were “genuine, insurmountable, or more difficult to address than in other workplaces” and for these reasons would not envision their company hiring an individual with an intellectual disability (Woodley *et al.*, 2012). This highlights a gap in the literature as the majority of research on *employers* is not often done on real life incidents, rather studies tend to examine hypothetical situations that are prone to desirability bias. The current study will contribute significantly to the literature on *employers’ attributions towards employees with an intellectual disability* in a New Zealand setting (Figure 1) through the examination of real-life incidents that have already occurred.

Positive outcome

Originally Jones and Nisbett (1971) hypothesised that *actor-observer* differences would apply broadly to all types of behaviour regardless of whether it was intentional, unintentional, positive or negative. However, it appears that the valence of the outcome (positive or negative) effects whether *actor-observer* differences will be found (Malle, 2006). In other words, as per Figure 1, Researchers (Gioia & Sims, Jr, 1965; Jones & Nisbett, 1971; Kirk, 2016; Martinko *et al.*, 2006) have found that when the outcome is negative, for example, when the *employee with an intellectual disability (actor)* is *unsuccessful in gaining employment*, the *actor* attributes *situational* factors (e.g. other people and luck) to the outcome, while the *observer* attributes *dispositional* factors (e.g. the ability or skill level of the employee)(Figure 1) (Gioia & Sims, Jr, 1965; Kirk, 2016; Martinko *et al.*, 2006). However, when the outcome is positive, for example the *employee with an intellectual disability* is *successful in gaining employment* (Figure 1), Researchers (Ames, Ames, & Garrison, 1977; Bradley, 1978; Small & Peterson, 1981; Taylor & Koivumaki, 1976) report

that *actors* make *dispositional* (e.g. their own skill and ability) rather than *situational attributions* (e.g. other people or luck) as the cause of the outcome, whilst *observers* make *situational attributions* rather than *dispositional* (Figure 1), thus creating a reverse effect that has been called self-serving bias in *attribution* (Ames, Ames, & Garrison, 1977; Bradley, 1978). This indicates as per Figure 1, that *actor-observer* differences may only be found for *negative outcomes*.

The self-serving bias differs from the *actor-observer* difference, as shown in Figure 1 *actors* attribute their successes to personal characteristics (*dispositional*) rather than *situational* factors as they do when the outcome is negative. When the outcome is positive, *observers* do not show this tendency or show the reverse, attributing *situational* factors to the successful outcome rather than *dispositional*. Wortman, Costanzo and Witt (1973) conducted a study with 40 American senior high school boys. The participants undertook a social perceptiveness test in which half of the participants were led to do poorly and the other half to do well. The participants were then asked to make causal *attributions* to both themselves and others. The findings were consistent with self-serving bias and participants attributed poor performance to *situational* factors such as test difficulty and luck. However, when they were successful, they still rated the test as difficult, but attributed *dispositional factors* such as skills and ability to their successful performance. These findings produced strong effects for self-attribution however, had minimal impact on the *attribution* about the success of the other participants.

Malle (2006) conducted a meta-analysis of 173 published studies between 1971 and 2004 and found that the *actor-observer* differences were a main effect of perspective, and that positive events generally did not hold statistically significant *actor-observer* differences. Therefore, as per Figure 1 and based on the review of Malle (2006), it could be expected that

evidence of self-serving bias be found in the positive incidents such as the *employees with an intellectual disability* attributing their skills to the reason, they are successful in employment.

Negative outcome

The current study is exploring the barriers to employment for *employees with an intellectual disability*. Therefore, the *negative outcome (unsuccessful in gaining employment)* is the focus of the study (as per Figure 1) and the *positive outcome (successful in gaining employment)* will act as a comparison point to compare and contrast the similarities and differences of *attributions* when employment was unsuccessful vs. successful (Figure 1).

Therefore, as proposed in Figure 1, *actor-observer* differences will be found for *negative outcomes* when an *employee with an intellectual disability* is *unsuccessful in gaining employment*, and hence *actor-observer* differences create a barrier to employment.

Researchers have shown that the differences in *attributions* appear to arise due to the *actor* having more consistent and distinct data about themselves compared to an *observer* (Taylor & Koivumaki, 1976). For example, Hennessy, Jakubowski and Benedetti (2005) conducted a study measuring *actor-observer* differences on the *attribution* of other drivers. Using the driving vengeance questionnaire participants were asked to rate an offending driver's actions that was displayed to them in a simulated driving programme. The study randomly assigned drivers to the "inside" (*actor*) or "outside" (*observer*) group allowing participants to see the offending driver from multiple perspectives. It was found that when the participant was the *actor*, or offending driver, they attributed more blame to the other drivers in the situation (*situational* attribution). The *observer* group however, made quick evaluations on minimal information and attributed *dispositional factors* such as skill of the driver to the offending driver's actions. However, when the researchers manipulated perspective, and gave participants more information such as multiple perspectives of the incident, the *observers* were more likely to attribute *situational* factors to the offending drivers' actions. Therefore,

demonstrating that different perspectives on the same situation or event can influence the *attributions* that are made on behavioural outcomes. More specifically, *observers* can only guess why the behaviour occurred because they have little knowledge of the person and their motivations and hence are more likely to blame the individual and their personality for the outcome (Gioia & Sims, Jr, 1965; Kirk, 2016). However, changing the perspective from which the situation is experienced has been proven to change *attributions* (Hennessy et.al, 2005), hence the importance of the current study in identifying what perspectives each stakeholder adopts when assessing successful and unsuccessful *job hunting* for *employees with an intellectual disability* (Figure 1).

As outlined in Figure 1, there is a dichotomy between the *employees with an intellectual disability (actors)* and the *employers' (observers') attributions* when employment is unsuccessful. The *employees with an intellectual disability* are predicted to attribute *situational factors* whilst the *employers* are predicted to attribute *dispositional factors* to the employment outcome. This creates an inability for the *employees with an intellectual disability* and the *employers* to see the perceived cause of behaviour from each other's perspective. These *attributions* may explain the difference in perspective between the stakeholders, the *employees with an intellectual disability and employers*, which result in the manifestation of barriers to employment.

Therefore, based on the current literature and as per Figure 1, the current study will explore the following research question to see if *actor-observer* differences are acting as a barrier to employment.

Research Question 1: Will *employees with an intellectual disability* attribute *situational factors* while *employers* attribute *dispositional factors* as a main barrier to finding a job for individuals with an intellectual disability?

Employment Specialists

Employment specialists play a crucial role in bridging the path to employment for individuals with an intellectual disability. Cheng et al. (2018) performed a systematic review of the literature on support services for people with an intellectual disability published from 2001-2015. Cheng et al. (2018) identified and analysed 22 studies, concluding that employment agencies were the most popular and most successful support service to *employers* in reducing barriers to mainstream employment. However, a key finding of the review was that often employment-related support is at an individual level rather than incorporating the workplace environment, highlighting the need to examine barriers to employment from both an individual and an organisational level in future studies. In other words, from Figure 1, there is a gap in our understanding concerning how *employment specialists* understand economic exclusion through *situational* factors, including perhaps biased attributions by *employers* making hiring decisions.

Given that *employment specialists* are a vital part of the employment process for many individuals with an intellectual disability, as well as providing support for the *employers*, it is essential to understand their opinions as they are uniquely placed to help distinguish whose *attributions (actor or observer)* are most accurate. They also demonstrate the power of perspective shifting to change any biases.

Actor-observer differences become particularly relevant to the current study when the results of Storms' Reversal (1973) are examined. Storms' Reversal showed for the first (but not last) time, that by understanding different stakeholder perspectives it is possible to shift *observers' attributions* from *dispositional* to *situational*, thereby creating the ability to shift pre-existing biases and remove psychological barriers. Storms' study examined 120 American undergraduate students in groups of four. The group of four saw two participants (*actors*) engage in an unstructured conversation that was to focus on "getting acquainted",

while another two participants (*observers*) watched. The conversations were videotaped and replayed to some of the subjects before all participants completed an attributions' questionnaire assessing how the *actors* participated in the conversation. As expected, the *actors* made *situational attributions* such as the topic of the conversation, or the fact they were in an experiment, while the *observers* made *dispositional attributions*, such as personality traits and character as affecting their behaviour in the conversation. These trends were found regardless of whether they watched the video replay or not. A third group then watched a video that had been taken from different perspective and it was found that when the viewing orientation was shifted, for example, the *observers* were now watching from an *actor's* perspective and vice versa, the *attribution* asymmetries reversed. In other words, the initial *actor* in the scenario attributed more *dispositional factors* as a cause of behaviour rather than *situational* when their perspective was changed to the *observer's* viewpoint.

This is crucial to the current study as it offers a potential solution to the problem if actor-observer differences are acting as a barrier to employment (Figure 1). Storms' (1973) Reversal provides evidence that perspective can be shifted between *actors and observers* changing the *attributions* that are made and removing actor-observer differences. Of significant relevance to the current study is the role of the *employment specialists* (Figure 1) who share a perspective with both the *employee with an intellectual disability (actor)* and the *employer (observer)*. Hence, they may prove crucial in creating a shared perspective as per Storms Reversal (1973), reducing the *actor-observer* differences and removing the barrier to employment for the *employees with an intellectual disability*.

Much like Storms' Reversal (1973), *employment specialists* have the most contexts on the other stakeholders' perspectives and play a crucial role in overcoming the stakeholder differences to achieve successful employment opportunities for *employees with an intellectual disability* (Figure 1). This unique viewpoint allows the *employment specialists* to

hereby estimate who is the most accurate in their *attributions* (Figure 1). This makes the perspective of the *employment specialist* an invaluable resource in identifying and overcoming the barriers to employment.

Another notable study conducted by Kirk (2016) demonstrated the ability to influence an *observer's attributions* through manipulation of the perspective they saw the negative outcome occur. Kirk (2016) used a questionnaire adapted from Hagner's (2000) workplace cultural survey to assess workplace cultures and inclusion. The study used a reversal technique (as per Storms' Reversal, 1973) to assess whether actor–observer differences shifted when the roles were reversed. Kirk (2016) assessed actor–observer differences of 93 employees in Auckland, New Zealand. It was found that actor-observer differences were consistent with previous literature in that the *actors* (individuals with a disability) attributed *situational* factors as more important for inclusion in the workforce compared to the *observers* (non-disabled employees). However, when roles were reversed and participants with a disability became the *observers*, they predominately attributed *dispositional* items to the *negative outcome* compared to non-disabled employees who were now in the position of the *actor*. The reversal of roles and actor–observer differences are significant to the current study as it shows that stakeholders are capable of viewing behavioural outcomes from a different perspective. This study supports Figure 1, however lacks the additional information that could be garnered from the perspective of the *employment specialists*. It also does not take into account disability type, which has been shown to influence *attributions* towards ability. Intellectual disabilities are often at the bottom of the disability preference hierarchy due to their invisible nature (Bricout & Bentley, 2000).

Kelley (1973) distinguishes two cases in which *attributions* by the *observer* are formed. In a single observation case *observers* (such as the *employers* in the employment process) are more likely to use casual schemes or heuristics to infer judgment on the *actor*. In

multiple observation cases, where the *observer* (such as the *employment specialists*) gets to know the *actor* over multiple encounters or meetings, the covariation principle is applied. The covariation principle (Kelley, 1973) is where *observers* gain an ability to see the role *situational* factors may play in the outcome, rather than assuming *dispositional* factors drive *negative outcomes* for the *actors*. In multiple observation cases, for example, the *employment specialists* working with the *employee with an intellectual disability* over several weeks, are able to form a closer relationship. This is compared to a single observation by the *employers* who may only meet the *employee with an intellectual disability* once (at the interview), and therefore, as per Kelley (1973), are more likely to use heuristics or infer judgment on the *actor*. Therefore, the *employment specialists* are more likely to have additional information about the needs and motivations of the *employee with an intellectual disability* and consequently, are less likely to succumb to actor-observer differences, and more likely to see *situational* factors impacting behavioural outcomes. However, a closer relationship could result in the *employment specialists* being more likely to take the perspective of the *actors* due to this connection and therefore a vested interest in seeing them succeed.

Research by Taylor and Koivumaki (1976) conducted three studies with a total of 85 married couples to examine how actor–observer differences change when the *observer* knows the *actor's* situation to a greater extent, for example, being in a married relationship. Participants were given a questionnaire containing three socially desirable behaviours (e.g. paying a compliment to someone, talking cheerfully, and having fun) and three undesirable behaviours (e.g. having a heated argument, being rude, and forgetting to do something) paired with four stimulus persons (e.g. an acquaintance, a friend, a spouse and self). They were then asked to rate the extent to which the behaviour was caused by *situational* or *dispositional* factors. When the behaviour was positive, *dispositional factors* were attributed to the behaviour of the spouse and self. However, when the behaviour was negative,

situational factors were perceived to be driving the behaviour. The reverse of these results was found when the friend and acquaintance were rated. This finding was most strongly seen to be operating when the participants were closely connected with the person they were rating. Therefore, this suggests that not all *observers* will attribute *negative outcomes* to *dispositional attributes* of the *actor*, rather cognitive and motivational factors can affect how the *observer* attributes a *negative outcome* to an *actor*. However, it could also suggest that people who know each other are reluctant to blame them for behaviours.

This is relevant to the current study as although *employment specialists* are *observers* to the situation, they may attribute *situational* factors to unsuccessful employment given their closer relationship with the *employees with an intellectual disability* compared to their relationship with the *employers*. Although this indicates a potential bias between the stakeholders, it is still relevant to the current study as it demonstrates that perspectives can change through understanding and connection. Hence, it is still relevant in identifying and removing barriers to employment for *employees with an intellectual disability*.

As demonstrated in *Figure 1*, when *employers* talk from direct experience, they are expected to attribute *dispositional factors* to the *Employees with an intellectual disability*, as the reason employment was unsuccessful. *Employment specialists* may not share the same *attributions* given they have more information about the motivations, needs and thoughts of the *employee with an intellectual disability* and therefore are more likely to consider *situational* factors over *observer* assumptions. For example, research has suggested that providing targeted training sessions on disability types and working with employment agencies or job coaches who have specialist knowledge on intellectual disabilities leads to organisations being more open to inclusive employment (Ellenkamp *et. al.*, 2016; Burges, Ouellette-Kuntz, & Lysaght, 2007; Post *et. al.*, 2010). The relationship *employment specialists* have with both the *employee with an intellectual disability (actor)* and the

employer (observer) (Figure 1) creates an opportunity to understand and overcome actor-observer differences between the *employers* and the *employees with an intellectual disability*, which may be the key in overcoming psychological barriers to employment.

Given the previous literature on actor-observer differences relevant to *employment specialists* the following research question was formulated:

<u>Research Question 2:</u>
Will <i>employment specialists</i> help discern the most accurate reasons for employment exclusion/inclusion for <i>employees with an intellectual disability</i> as per Figure 1?

Chapter 2

Method

Participants

Actors

In total 40, *employees with an intellectual disability* were approached, of which of 30 ($n=30$) agreed to participate in the study, giving an overall response rate of 75%. Using the Recreate NZ database, a not for profit organisation that specialises in social and adventure activities for youth with intellectual disabilities, individuals with an intellectual disability (as demonstrated in Figure 1) were approached via email or telephone. Additional participants were invited through snowball sampling after referrals from other participants

All participants were living in Auckland, New Zealand, were competent in English; and met the criteria for intellectual disability as per the Compulsory Care and Rehabilitation Act (2003). There were no restrictions regarding socio-economic status, however all participants were required to have either held a job or applied for a job regardless of whether or not the application process was successful. The job did not have to have been paid employment. Instead, it had to be deemed meaningful to the individual. Members of the intellectual disabled community that have no interest in seeking employment were not relevant in the scope of this research project.

Observers

A total of 43 *employers'* (in Figure 1) representatives were approached via email or telephone, consisting of eight small, 12 medium and 23 large New Zealand based companies that have previously hired or currently hire an individual with an intellectual disability. Using personal connections, colleagues and other community liaisons, a list of *employers* (as demonstrated in Figure 1) was created.

In each case, the company's hiring manager, whether it was a Human Resources Manager or the owner of the business, was contacted by email or telephone call and invited to participate in the study. All company representatives were required to be competent in English. Many companies were reluctant to talk, especially large companies, as they were concerned about public relations, or had little interest or time to share their perspective. Several *employers* did not respond despite multiple attempts. From the 43 companies contacted 13 ($n=13$) company representatives agreed to take part in the study giving an overall response rate of 27.9%.

Employment Specialists

A total of 35 *employment specialists* were approached via email or telephone and invited to participate, with 22 ($n=22$) agreeing to participate in the study, giving an overall response rate of 62.8%. A Google search was conducted using terms such as “intellectual disability *employment specialist* Auckland” to find organisations that specialise in recruitment for individuals with an intellectual disability. *Employment specialists* (in Figure 1) are individuals that work for organisations who assist individuals with an intellectual disability to get employment. All individuals comprising the *employment specialists* group were required to hold a role that helps individuals with an intellectual disability seek employment, for example, a principal recruitment agent that meets with the families and the potential *employees*.

Measures

The critical incident technique consists of “a set of procedures for collecting direct observations of human behaviour in such a way as to facilitate their potential usefulness in solving practical problems and developing broad psychological principles (Flanagan, 1954, p. 327)”. The critical incident technique encourages participants to engage in semi-structured storytelling to share specific happenings of a singular experience, called the incident

(Norman *et. al.*, 1992). The incidents are called critical because they are generally crucial situations that determine what behaviours will lead to successful or unsuccessful outcomes (Koch, Strobel, Kici & Westhoff, 2009). In Figure 1, the critical incident is *job hunting* and the negative versus *positive outcomes* are *unsuccessful in gaining employment* and *successful in gaining employment*.

By content analysing successful (positive incident) and unsuccessful (negative incident) attempts at gaining employment, the researcher can identify *dispositional* and *situational attributions* made by *actors* and *observers* (Figure 1) (see Appendix A for a list of the interview questions).

Printed information letters (Appendix B) and consent forms (Appendix C) were used to record consent and interviews were typed on a MacBook Air using a word document with the questions separated in a table. The interviewer was a proficient touch typist and typed responses from all three groups in Figure 1 directly during their respective interviews. No demography questions were asked to maintain the highest level of confidentiality.

Procedure

Ethics approval was granted by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee (Northern, Application NOR 18/35, Appendix D). Recruitment began after ethics was granted.

Given some incidents may have brought up sensitive information or evoked discomfort for the participants, it was important to attempt to minimise any distress during the interviewing process. The researcher was mindful of participant's reactions to questions, and all participants were reminded that their participation was voluntary, and they were not obliged to answer any questions they did not want to and were able to withdraw from the research at any time. Participants, especially the *employee* group, were invited to have a

support person attend the interview to ensure they were being represented correctly and that no discomfort was experienced for the duration of the interview.

Understanding the role of culture in research is crucial to ensure the Treaty of Waitangi principles of partnership, participation and protection (Hudson, Milne, Reynolds, Russell & Smith. 2010) are incorporated into the study. A consultation was undertaken with Kaumatua to ensure that the method was safe for Māori or anyone from a different cultural outlook that may participate in the research. Given the research was not collecting demographic or identifying data, protection of all participants was maintained, irrespective of their cultural heritage. All questions were reviewed, and Kaumatua deemed the method culturally safe.

All participants that met the criteria were emailed the information sheet (Appendix 2) that detailed the purpose, procedures, risks and benefits of the study, as well as giving assurances around the confidentiality of the project. The information sheet provided contact details of the researcher and project supervisor, as well as the Massey University Ethics Board should any questions or concerns arise. The information was written in layperson's terminology, free of deception. For the *employees with an intellectual disability*, key sentences were repeated to the participant and they were asked to clarify what the sentence meant. If they were unable to, the researcher reinterpreted it until it was clear they understood. Since the *employees with an intellectual disability* were recruited through the Recreate NZ database, the information sheet clearly stated that any affiliation to Recreate NZ in this context was irrelevant and would not affect the level of care they received from the provider. *Employers, employees with an intellectual disability and employment specialists* that were interested in participating in the study were invited to make direct contact with the researcher through email or telephone. Once potential participants made contact through

email or telephone, and were deemed to have met the criteria for their group, a suitable time and location was arranged to conduct the interview.

Given the low number of respondents for the *employers* ($n=13$) and *employment specialists* groups ($n=22$), participants were sent a reminder and invited to participate in the study again every two weeks after the initial contact.

Informed consent documents (Appendix 2) were signed and have been kept on file as necessary for any published work that may result from this research. It was made very clear that participation was voluntary, and participants could withdraw from the research at any time. Participants' responses were continually recited to them after each question to ensure the interviewer was recording correctly, and that they were satisfied with the content of their answer.

Any identifying elements in the raw data have been removed. The researcher-participant relationship remained professional to ensure there was no role confusion transferred from participants to the researcher. Given the nature of the study asking personal and emotional questions in an intimate setting, participants may divulge information that may be of concern. It was therefore crucial that participants' welfare remained a priority over the research at all time.

Interviews

Data collection began on the 27th of August 2018, once ethics had been approved. Data collection was conducted by the researcher via face-to-face interviews using a set of questions determined by the critical incident technique (see Appendix A). Each interview was transcribed by typing up the respondents' answers at the time of the interview. No voice or video recordings were taken due to the highly recognisable voice and appearance many individuals with an intellectual disability have. All interviews were typed and transcribed on the day of the interview as per Flanagan (1954). This ensured a verbatim transcription

process, and that no data was lost at a later stage. Each interview was conducted and transcribed by the same researcher to ensure the reliability of the data being collected. At the time of the interview, participants were able to check the transcript to ensure tone and accuracy was being maintained in their critical incidents. At the end of the face-to-face interviews, participants were thanked for their time and for sharing their experiences.

Data Analysis

Both the supervisor and an independent researcher, who were familiar with the techniques being used, supervised the research project. This meant the analysis and interpretation of the research was subject to review and therefore minimised potential researcher bias when creating themes. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data in the positive and negative critical incidents. The independent researcher then checked the themes that were created and kappa coefficients were calculated to assess the reliability of the themes. From an interpretivist perspective, the researcher recognises that knowledge is co-constructed by both the participant and the researcher. The participants were regarded as experts of their own experiences, and therefore the questions were structured to increase the researcher's understanding of the experience rather than assume a shared understanding (McGraw, Zvonkovic & Walker, 2000; Willig, 2013). As described by Flanagan (1954), it is essential that the researcher stay impartial when conducting the research; therefore, self-examination is important to ensure the researcher understands how their perspective and interest in this research can influence the collection and interpretation of the data (DePoy & Gitlin, 2005).

Chapter 3

Results

Thematic Analyses

Thematic Analysis was used to analyse the data. Two Raters (as described in the method section) performed a Content Analysis of the critical incidents collected from the three stakeholder groups, and conducted separately for positive versus negative critical incidents. Inter-rater reliability of the themes was calculated using Cohen's Kappa Coefficient. Table 1 presents a summary of the results of the content analysis.

Table 1
Main themes identified in the positive and negative critical incidents for Employees with an intellectual disability (positive n=30) (negative n=20) and Employers (n=13)

	Actors	Observers
Positive Incidents	Support from the Employment Specialists - <i>Efficient</i> 29	Ability to fit in with co-workers- <i>Fitting in</i> 11
	Flexibility in the hiring process 26	Support from the Employment Specialists - <i>Efficient</i> 10
	Capabilities - Skills 23	Capabilities - Skills 10
	Gaining Independence 18	Flexibility in the hiring process 9
		Appearance 8
Negative Incidents	Negative attributions made by the Employer 15	Capabilities- <i>Lack of Skills</i> 10
	Lack of understanding towards intellectual disabilities 13	Barriers of the system 9
		Ability to fit in with co-workers - <i>Not fitting in</i> 7

Note. Kappa Coefficients were calculated from 11 total theme (see Appendix E). Kappa Coefficients = Actors Positive Incidents = 0.92. Actors Negative Incidents = 0.88. Observers Postitive Incident = 0.82, Observers Negative Incident = 0.77.

Key		<i>Dispositional attributions</i>
		<i>Situational attributions</i>

Positive Critical Incidents

Employees with an intellectual disability and the *employers* attribute a mix of *dispositional* and *situational* factors with neither stakeholder showing an discernible pattern or preference to either *dispositional* or *situational* attributions when the *employee with an intellectual disability* was successful in getting a job. Although the ranking of the themes differs slightly between the *actors* and *observers* there is a clear overlap of three themes (support from the *employment specialists*, capabilities – skills and flexibility in the hiring process) that were attributed to *employees with an intellectual disability successfully gaining employment*.

The results as per Table 1 were colour-coded to highlight *dispositional* versus *situational attributions*. For the purpose of clarity, themes that were attributed to successful employment by 50% or more of the sample are the focus of Table 1. This is because the additional themes were minor in comparison and detracted from the themes that were attributed by the majority of the participants.

In Table 1, the most popular theme overall (40 mentions) was Support from the *Employment specialists - Efficient* meant mentoring, assistance or training provided by the employment specialists. Exemplars were, “support is ultimately key, the whole idea of being left to fend for myself doesn’t work” (*employee with an intellectual disability*) and (from an *employer*) “would never have thought to employ someone with a disability if they hadn’t of approached me”. From Table 1, both Actors and Observers mentioned this theme relatively frequently.

Flexibility in the employment process was the second shared theme between the *employees with an intellectual disability* and the *employers*. The theme flexibility in the hiring process, mentioned 35 times, was captured in positive incidents that attributed a change or adaption in the initial employment process as the reason employment was

successful, such as the use of informal interviews and work placements, rather than undertaking the usual job application process. From the perspective of the *employees with an intellectual disability*, they often attributed that their *success in gaining employment* was because “it was more of an informal chat” (*employee with an intellectual disability*) rather than a stressful job interview. The *employers* attributed flexibility in the hiring process as leading to successful employment as “if we made her follow the same processes as everyone else there is no way we would have hired” (*Employer*). Another *Employer* described how they gave a young man “a job trial... which we don’t always do so early in the process” and that it was so successful they “now try and get all applicants to come in for an interview and work trial”.

The final shared theme, mentioned 33 times, between the *employee with an intellectual disability* and the *employer*, as in Table 1, was the *attribution* that *employees with an intellectual disability* had the required skills to do the job. An exemplary quote from the *employees with an intellectual disability* was the *attribution* that having the “right skills and I do the job right” (*Employee with an intellectual disability*) determined if they would successfully get a job. *Employers* attributed that having “the skills and (being) skillful before she came to us” was important as this allowed *employers* to assess if the *employee* could do the job.

As in Table 1, the ability to fit in with co-workers and cause no disruption to the work environment was attributed by the *employers* 11 times as a factor influencing successful employment for *employees with an intellectual disability*. An example from the *employers*, “we could see her getting along with staff and customers and those are big ticks” (*Employer*).

The theme appearance was also only found to be an *attribution* made by *employers* (mentioned 8 times) and refers to the physical appearance of the *employee with an intellectual disability*. If an *employee with an intellectual disability* “presented, dressed well

and spoke well” the *Employers* “knew that customers would receive her well” and therefore they were more likely to offer the individual a job.

Although it was not an *attribution* as to why they were successful in gaining a job, 18 *employees with an intellectual disability* attributed that success in employment created the opportunity to gain independence in their lives. *Employees with an intellectual disability* “don’t like relying on my parents all the time”. Many *employees* described that having a job taught them it was “important to go outside instead of staying at home”, as they were “actually doing something with your life than hanging around at home doing nothing” (Employee 20).

As in Table 1, there was a number of overlapping *situational* and *dispositional* themes that both the *employees with an intellectual disability* and the *employers* attributed to the ability for an *employee with an intellectual disability to successfully gain employment*. In summary, there was no discernible pattern that the *employees with an intellectual disability* or the *employers* attributed predominately *situational* or *dispositional attributions* when the outcome was positive.

Negative Critical Incidents

Employees with an intellectual disability (actors) attributed the *situational* factor, negative *attributions* by the employer, 15 times, making it the largest theme attributed to be affecting the hiring decision. Negative *attributions* by the *employer* were coded for when the *employees* attributed that the *employer’s* perception of an individual with an intellectual disability was less than a ‘normal’ standard compared to other people without disabilities and this resulted in unsuccessful employment. *Employees with an intellectual disability* were aware that having an intellectual disability often left *employers* unsure if they would be a good employee as if they “hire someone with a disability you don’t get the best person for the job” (*Employee with an intellectual disability*). One *employee’s* caregiver said one of the

reasons her son didn't get the job was because "head office simply sees the words down syndrome and crosses that person off" due to the *attribution* that hiring an individual with an intellectual disability will be more effort than it is worth.

Employers did not attribute negative *attributions* made by the *employer* as a barrier to employment (Table 1). However, within the negative critical incidents it is of interest to note that many *employers* were actively describing negative *attributions* towards intellectual disabilities as they "can't just hire anyone for any position because they must be the best and people with disabilities just aren't" (Employer 6). Employer 11, summarised that when it comes to hiring a person with an intellectual disability,

"all of them had positives but they often didn't end positively. I think that is the case with intellectual disabilities that it often can become a train wreck. It's almost to be expected. I think when you sign someone up in the that space you are almost expecting the wheels to fall off...No one chooses to be the way they are mentally, I guess if they could they wouldn't be like that."

The second theme that *employees with an intellectual disability* attributed 13 times to unsuccessful employment was a lack of understanding towards intellectual disabilities. An *employer* specifically not understanding the nature of intellectual disabilities was attributed as a reason *employers* chose not to hire them. An exemplary quote from an *employee with an intellectual disability* is, "I thought they would accommodate my Aspergers but they expected me to be perfect on the first try".

In Table 1, *employers*, predominately attributed *dispositional* factors such as a lack of skills and an inability to fit in with co-workers, as the reason employment was unsuccessful. However, *Employers* also attributed the *situational* factor, barriers of the system, as negatively influencing the employment outcome for *employees with an intellectual disability*.

As in Table 1, the *employers* attributed a lack of skills (capabilities) as the biggest factor (10 mentions) negatively affecting hiring decisions. *Employers* attributed that the *employee with an intellectual disability* did not possess the right skills or capabilities for the job they were applying and therefore were not offered the job. An example of an *attribution* made by an *employer* was that “his skills were just not suited to the job” (*Employer*).

The second theme, as in Table 1, was the *situational attribution*, barriers of the system where *employers* attributed eight times that barriers such as extra costs and health and safety risks resulting in unsuccessful employment because they were unavoidable and to accommodate the individual with an intellectual disability “would end up costing the business money” (*Employer*).

The third theme, as in Table 1, was the *dispositional attribution* that *employees with an intellectual disability* were unsuccessful in employment because they were not going to fit in with their co-workers. Seven *employers* thought the *employee* “wouldn’t be a great fit with the other employees” or would “freaked out all the other employees” they chose not to hire the individual. Interestingly, within this theme, several *employers* told stories of bullying and how it would result in unsuccessful employment after the job trial. It was described “that it was not feasible” to address the bullying rather they attributed an inability to fit in with co-workers as a reason not to offer the individuals with an intellectual disability a job.

In Table 1, when *employees with an intellectual disability* were *unsuccessful in gaining employment* there was a difference in *situational* and *dispositional attributions* between the *actors* and the *observers*. Unlike the positive critical incidents, there was no overlap in the themes that were attributed to negative employment outcomes. *Employees with an intellectual disability (actors)* attributed *situational* factors as determining the negative outcome, while *employers*, predominately attributed *dispositional* factors as resulting in the negative outcome.

Employment Specialist

Table 2

Main themes identified in the positive and negative critical incidents for Employment Specialists (n=22)

	Actors	Observers	Employment Specialists
Positive Incidents	Support from the Employment Specialists - <i>Efficient</i> 29	Ability to fit in with co-workers - <i>Fitting in</i> 11	Support from the Employment Specialists - <i>Efficient</i> 18
	Flexibility in the hiring process 26	Support from the Employment Specialists - <i>Efficient</i> 10	Recognising Potential of the employee with an intellectual disability 14
	Capabilities - Skills 23	Capabilities - Skills 10	Flexibility in the hiring process 14
	Gaining Independence 18	Flexibility in the hiring process 9	Capabilities - Skills 11
		Appearance 8	
Negative Incidents	Negative attributions made by the Employer 15	Capabilities - <i>Lack of Skills</i> 10	Negative Attributions 18
	Lack of understanding towards intellectual disabilities 13	Barriers of the system 9	Lack of Understanding towards intellectual disabilities 17
		Ability to fit in with co-worker <i>Not fitting in</i> 6	Lack of Preparation by the Employment Specialists 16
			Support from the Employment Specialists - <i>Inefficient</i> 11

Note. Kappa Coefficients were calculated from 11 total theme (see Appendix E). Kappa Coefficients = Employment Specialist Positive Incidents = 0.88. Employment Specialist Negative Incidents = 0.89

Key		<i>Dispositional attributions</i>
		<i>Situational attributions</i>

Employment Specialists attributed their support 18 times, as the biggest factor for a successful employment outcome as “networking with the company was key” (Specialist 4) as well as having a prior connection to the *employer*.

In Table 2, *employment specialists* attributed the ability for the *employer* to recognise the potential of the *employee with an intellectual disability*, 14 times. An example of this was an *employment specialist* attributing that if *employers* were “very open to having a

conversation about hiring someone with an intellectual disability” (Specialist 12) the *employee with an intellectual disability* was often *successful in gaining employment*.

The third theme *employment specialists* attributed 14 times to successful employment, as in Table 2 and similar to the *employee with an intellectual disability* and the *employers*, was the ability to be flexible within the hiring process. The use of informal interviews or work placements were attributed as important for success as it “was more important to show you what she can do rather than do an interview” (*Employment Specialist*) but when “the interview was very informal...it worked well” (*Employment Specialist*).

The final theme attributed by 11 of the *employment specialists* to successful employment outcomes (Table 2) was the *employee with an intellectual disability* having the skills for the job or “working within his skill range”.

When the *employee with an intellectual disability* was *unsuccessful in gaining employment*, 18 *employment specialists* attributed negative attributions by the *Employer* to the negative outcome. *Employment specialists* often reported that the biggest barrier was “people judging people” and “their preconceived ideas” led them to “judge a book by its cover” (*Employment Specialist*). One *Employment Specialist* said *Employers* “almost have an unwarranted fear or assumptions that are being made that things won't work but how do they know, they haven't even tried it”.

The *Employment Specialists* also attributed a lack of understanding towards intellectual disability 17 times when *employees with an intellectual disability* were *unsuccessful in gaining employment*. An example from the data,

“the employers to have an understanding of what disability means, not every person with autism is like Sheldon you know? They just don't know what it is, or that disability is not just Down syndrome.”

The third theme *employment specialists* attributed to unsuccessful employment (mentioned 16 times) as in Table 2 was inefficient support provided by their own services. A lack of preparation by the *employment specialists* was coded when *employment specialists* described times they felt they had let their clients down by not preparing either the *Employee with an intellectual disability* or the *Employer* enough for the employment process to be successful. Exemplary quotes from the data “maybe we would have spent a bit more time with the individual” (*Employment Specialist*) or “do more groundwork with the Employer” as they “underestimated how hard it would be” (*Employment Specialist*).

In Table 2, when *employees with an intellectual disability* were *successful in gaining employment* the *employment specialists*, similar to the *employees with an intellectual disability* and the *employers* in Table 1, attributed both *dispositional and situational* factors, leading to the positive outcome. However, when the *employee with an intellectual disability* was *unsuccessful in gaining employment*, *employment specialists*, similar to the *Employees with an intellectual disability* and unlike the *employers*, attributed *situational* factors to the negative outcome.

Chapter 4

Discussion

As outlined in Figure 1, the purpose of this study was to examine if differences in *attributions* by key stakeholders created barriers to employment for *employees with an intellectual disability*. *Attributions* were examined from the perspectives of multiple stakeholders who are all part of the same “transition community” (*employees with an intellectual disability, employers and employment specialists*). When *employees with an intellectual disability* were successful in gaining employment, *employees with an intellectual disability, employers and employment specialists* attributed *situational* (support, flexibility and recognising the potential) and *dispositional* (capabilities, appearance and the ability to fit in with other co-workers) factors to the positive outcome. As expected, there was no evidence consistent with actor-observer differences or self-serving bias when *employees with an intellectual disability* were successful in gaining employment.

However, when *employees with an intellectual disability* were unsuccessful in gaining employment there is evidence (Table 1) of actor-observer differences as the *actors* (*employees with an intellectual disability*) attributed *situational* factors to the *negative outcome* while the *observers* (*employers*) predominately attributed *dispositional* factors, apart from ‘barriers of the system’. When the outcome was negative and the *employee with an intellectual disability* was unsuccessful in gaining employment, the *employment specialists* principally attributed *situational* factors to the negative outcome. The employment *specialist’s* perspective on the barriers to getting a job more closely aligned with the *actors* rather than the *observers* (Figure 1).

Positive Outcome

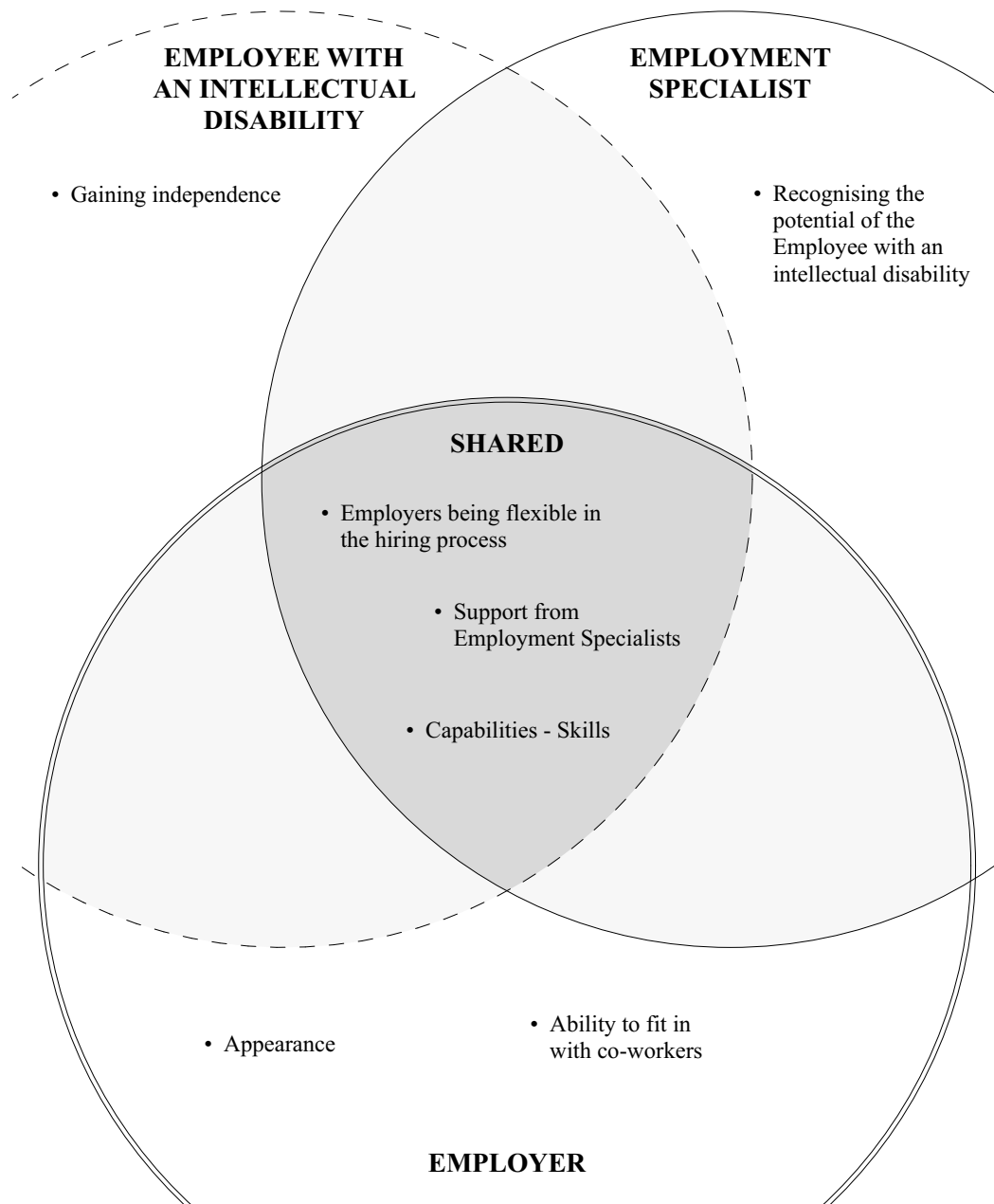


Figure 2. Venn Diagram outlining themes mentioned by over 50% of the stakeholder groups within the *positive* critical incidents when employment was successful

Figure 2 demonstrates that when *employees with an intellectual disability* were *successful in gaining employment* (positive incident), the *employees with an intellectual disability*, *employers* and the *employment specialists* demonstrated a shared perspective. All three stakeholders as per Figure 2 attributed support from the *employment specialists* (*situational attribution*), capability to do the job - skills (*dispositional attribution*), and flexibility in the employment process (*situational attribution*) (Table 1), as the reasons employment was successful. As per Figure 2, there is no evidence of actor-observer differences between the *employee with an intellectual disability* or the *employers*. This is consistent with a meta-analysis conducted by Malle (2006) who found moderate effects of actor-observer differences in negative events. However, there was a limited reverse asymmetry for positive events, and they were not significant enough to conclude that actor-observer asymmetry existed within positive events.

When the outcome of behaviour is positive for the *actor* (Figure 1) for example, the *employee with an intellectual disability* is *successful in gaining employment*, it could be expected that self-serving bias would be evident. Self-serving bias is the tendency for *actors* to accept responsibility for positive outcomes, for example, to attribute *dispositional characteristics* such as their skills or ability when they are *successful in gaining employment* (Figure 1). However, when the outcome is negative, *actors* fail to accept personal responsibility. Rather they attribute *situational* factors such as other people or an environment that was out of their control, as causing the outcome (Nurmi, 2001).

As per Table 1 and Figure 2, *employees with an intellectual disability* did attribute their skills (*dispositional attribution*) when they were successful in gaining a job. However, they attributed *situational* factors such as support from the *employment specialists* and flexibility in the hiring process (Figure 2) more often when employment was successful (Table 1). Therefore, there is no clear evidence that *employees with an intellectual disability*

displayed clear self-serving bias. An explanation for this finding may lie in the literature on cross-cultural differences in self-serving bias. The structure of the disability community often forms a collective identity or a 'culture of disability' which more closely resembles a collectivist perspective (Lipson & Rogers, 2000). Collectivist cultures typically value the achievements, needs or desires of a group, above the need for individual success (the reverse example being an individualist culture) (Cohen et. al., 1986).

A study conducted by Nurmi (2001) investigated cultural differences in self-serving bias between American ($n=44$) and Finnish ($n=46$) undergraduate students. Students were assessed using the attributional style questionnaire and it was found that American students exhibited self-serving bias to a greater extent than Finnish students. However, the Finnish students still demonstrated small levels of self-serving bias. These findings have also been replicated across Dutch (Cohen et. al., 1986), Japanese (Chandler et al., 1981) and Asian-Indian (Fry & Ghosh, 1980) samples. Self-serving bias is associated with a need to protect self-esteem and ego; therefore a potential explanation is that individualistic cultures such as Americans who value the protection of self-esteem are more likely to engage in self-serving bias (Nurmi, 2001).

Kashima and Triandis (1986) suggested that self-serving bias is more evident in individualist societies due to the expectation people cope on their own, compared to collectivist societies who engage several people to cope together, decreasing the need to apply self-serving bias. A criticism of this explanation emerges when examining Nurmi (2001) and Cohen et. Al. (1986) as Finnish and Dutch culture is typically representative of western individualistic societies. Rather, it demonstrates that particular western societies demonstrate cross-cultural variation in the way in which individuals cope with the threat of failure and how they attribute success, and hence not all western societies demonstrate self-serving bias (Cohen et al., 1986; Nurmi, 2001).

Therefore even though *employees with an intellectual disability* did not demonstrate self-serving bias, despite being a sample from a western society, it may be because of the social structure of the intellectually disabled community. Individuals with an intellectual disability are encircled in a supportive network from an early age. Therefore, it is less likely this community will engage in egotistic and individualistic preservation. Rather they are more likely to demonstrate collectivist tendencies and show a humility bias. A humility bias is the tendency for an individual to be oriented towards others (Myers, 1995). It allows an individual to recognise their ability and talents, however display awareness in regards to their limitations, and therefore acknowledge the role other people play in their success (Davis, Worthington & Hook, 2009; Myer, 1995). This is consistent with the findings in Figure 2 as *employees with an intellectual disability* attribute a combination of *dispositional and situational* factors to them being able to successfully gain employment.

As per Figure 2, when *employees with an intellectual disability* were successful in gaining employment, all three stakeholders attributed support from the *employment specialists* as an important factor. *Employment specialists* offer services working with both the *employees with an intellectual disability* and the *employers* and have been shown to increase hours worked by the *employee with an intellectual disability*, higher wages and increased levels of social integration (Wehman & Moon 1988). Additionally, support from *employment specialists* has been shown to engage individuals with an intellectual disability in the workforce whom competitive employment has heretofore been unattainable (Cramm, Finkenflugel, Kuijsten & Exel, 2009). Therefore, it is not surprising that support from the *employment specialists* emerged as a top theme in the positive critical incidents. However, going beyond previous studies, Figure 2 allows for the comparison of all themes that were attributed towards successful employment and how these themes can be achieved so that *employees with an intellectual disability* are successful in employment.

As per Figure 2, the *observers (employers)* attributed the ability for the *actor's (employee with an intellectual disability)* to fit in with other co-workers as the most important factor when the *employees were successful in gaining employment*. This is consistent with previous research by Burge, Ouellette-Kuntz and Lysaght (2007) who conducted a telephone poll in Ontario, Canada, with 680 participants and found that support for segregated employment was often associated with the misconception that co-workers would be likely to have negative views on workers with intellectual disabilities. This in turn, could affect the co-workers job performance and satisfaction; hence *employers* may only be willing to hire *employees with an intellectual disability* who are likely to fit in to the work environment. Burge et al. (2007) recommended that there be an expansion of available training programmes for both *employers* and co-workers as the majority of their sample found training programmes on disability to be inadequate.

A study by Mank, Cioffi and Yovanoff (1999) found the key to successful employment was through the inclusion of co-workers and the creation of natural supports and “typicalness” of the *employee with an intellectual disability*. The more typical an *employee with an intellectual disability* was in the workplace the better the social integration and work outcomes were. Mank *et al.* (1999) surveyed 13 vocational programmes in America to gain 462 direct experiences from *employment specialists*. Their findings showed that companies that had trained co-workers without disabilities specifically on how to support *employees with a disability* resulted in a higher level of meaningful interactions.

This is relevant to the current study, as evident in Figure 2; support from the *employment specialists* is attributed by all three stakeholders to positive employment outcomes. Therefore, given that the *employers* also value the *attributions* that may be made by co-workers this evidence suggests the two variables could work together. That is, support from the *employment specialists* could also be extended to provide training to co-workers as

well as *employer* to ensure once their services with the *employee with an intellectual disability* end the creation of natural supports will ensure the employment continues to be successful.

All three stakeholders also attributed the *employers* being flexible in the hiring process and the *employee with an intellectual disability's* skills to positive employment outcomes. A literature review conducted by Timmons, Hall, Bose, Wolfe and Winsor (2011) found that as well as support and social integration with co-workers, positive previous work experiences played a role in the ability for *employees with an intellectual disability* to gain employment. The ability to trial a job not only showed the *employer* the *employee with an intellectual disability's* ability but also it gave the *employee* an idea of their employment preferences too. There is limited literature on the hiring process and how flexibility in the process is beneficial, however, given that all three stakeholders (Figure 2) attributed flexibility in the hiring process as an important factor to successful employment it is recommended this receives attention in future literature.

Therefore, although self-serving bias was not evident in the current study, Figure 2 demonstrates that there are shared *attributions* between the three stakeholders as the reason *employees with an intellectual disability* were *successful in gaining employment*. The importance of this shared perspective becomes evident when the negative outcomes are examined.

Negative Outcome

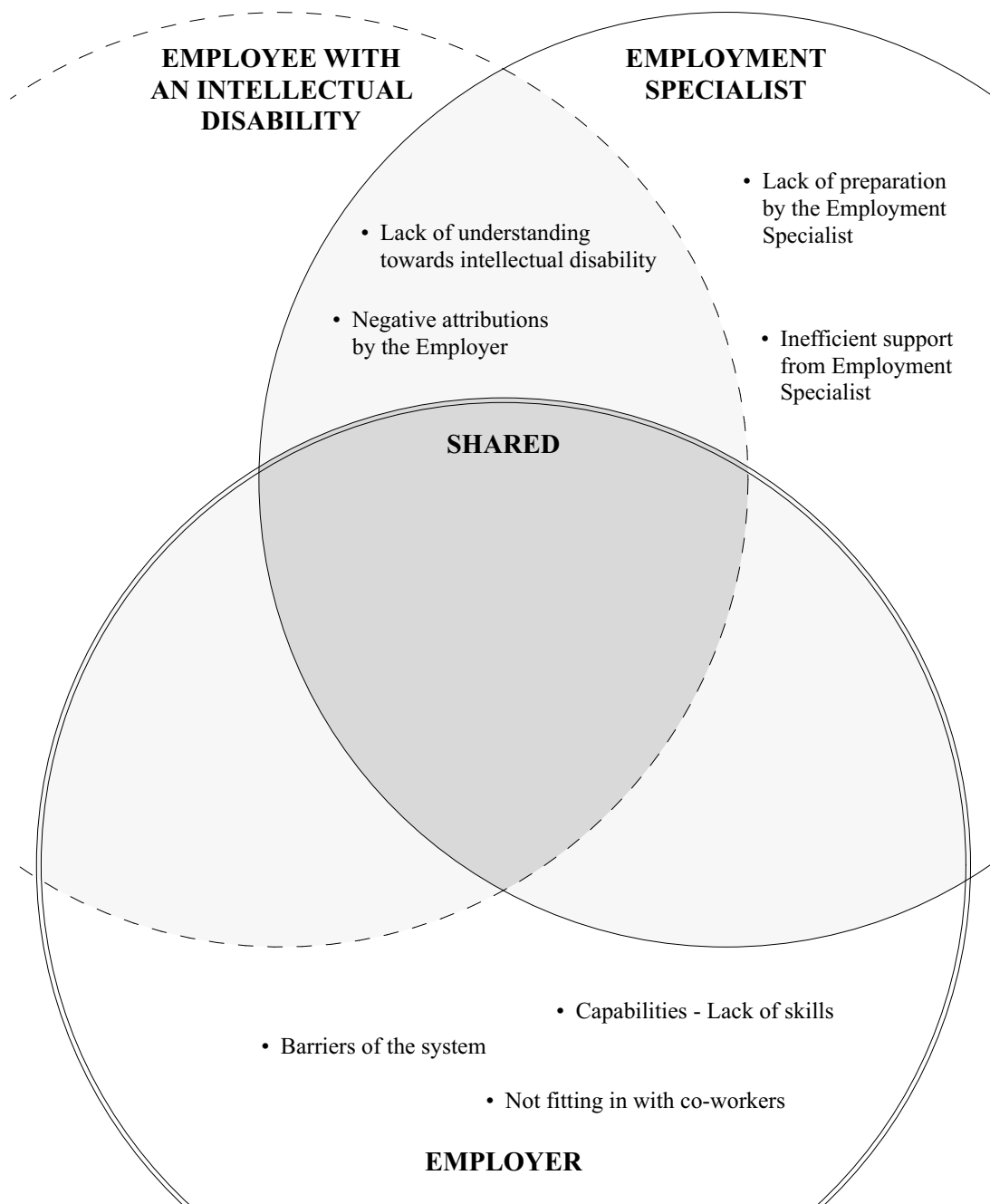


Figure 3. Venn Diagram outlining themes mentioned by over 50% of the stakeholder groups within the *negative* critical incidents when employment was unsuccessful

Whilst there was a shared perspective (Figure 2) when employment was successful, it appears that when *employees with an intellectual disability* were *unsuccessful in gaining employment* actor-observer differences were present between the *employee with an intellectual disability* and the *employer* (Figure 3).

As per Figure 1, *employees with an intellectual disability* predominately attributed *situational* factors such as negative attributions by the *employer* and a lack of understanding towards intellectual disabilities (see Table 1) as the reason they *unsuccessful in gaining employment*. Conversely, *employers* attributed the *dispositional* factor lack of capabilities such as lack of skills to do the job (see Table 1) as the most common reason they chose not to hire the individual. These findings support Figure 1 and the proposed research question 1:

Research Question 1: Will *employees with an intellectual disability* attribute *situational* factors while *employers* attribute *dispositional* factors as a main barrier to employment for individuals with an intellectual disability?

Figure 3 highlights that when *employees with an intellectual disability* are *unsuccessful in gaining employment* the *employee with an intellectual disability* and the *employers* do not share the same perspective or attribute the same cause to the outcome. When compared with Figure 2 where all stakeholders demonstrated a shared perspective when employment was successful, the data suggests that when employment is unsuccessful the stakeholders do not attribute the same factors to the outcome and this therefore may be creating a barrier to employment.

Given that *actors* have more access to their history, previous behaviour and the behavioural variations across situations compared to the *observers* (Prentice, 1990) it is often found that *actors* are motivated to see themselves as responsive to *situational* demands and in control of *dispositional* factors (Krueger, Ham & Linford, 1996).

A study by Krueger *et al.* (1996) used the *actor* common-target paradigm on 160 college students at Brown University to examine the effects of social projection on people's awareness for actor-observer differences. The study suggested that *actors* were more aware than the *observers* of the actor-observer effect, and on average, consistently rated that *observers* would view their behaviour as more consistent and therefore would attribute *dispositional* factors to the *negative outcome*. As per Figure 1, *employers* predominantly attributed the *dispositional* factor, capabilities to do the job such as a lack of skills (Figure 3), as being the main barrier to employment (refer Table 1). This is consistent with Jones and Nisbett (1972) who found that *observers* tend to explain *actor's* behaviour in terms of *dispositional* factors such as effort and ability when the outcome is negative.

The ability for an *employee with an intellectual disability* to learn new skills and abilities on the job has been demonstrated in several studies (Gomes-Machado, Santos, Schoen & Chiari, 2014; Nota & Soresi, 2009). One study of notable validity conducted by Gomes-Machado, Santos, Schoen and Chiari (2014) analysed the effects of vocational training programmes on the adaptive behaviour of individuals with an intellectual disability, and the impact training had on employability. The study trained and tested 43 individuals with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities and then used the social impact questionnaire after successful employment. Adaptive skills were assessed pre and post-training, and it was found there was a 50% reduction in support needed as well as significant improvements in learning, autonomy and social development one year after successful employment. Indicating that negative perceptions may be influencing the *attribution* that *employees with an intellectual disability* have a lack of skills (*dispositional attribution*) and that the ability of the *employee with an intellectual disability* is stable.

An explanation for the perceived lack of skills of *employees with an intellectual disability* may lie in a cross-cultural study by Fadil (1995). Fadil (1995) looked at the effect

cultural stereotypes had on leader *attributions* for minority subordinates. It was found that cultural differences in the supervisor/subordinate relationship increased the level of disagreement often resulting in conflict between the parties. It was noted that cultural differences in the leader-member dyad could leave the leader being reluctant to becoming more involved with the subordinate, therefore decreasing the ability to create a shared perspective and overcome barriers when evaluating the subordinate's performance.

Similar to Fadil (1995) findings, there is evidence that this may be applied to a disability population too, given individuals with an intellectual disability are consistently rated lower in preference compared to other disabilities (Tringo, 1970). Kocman, Fisher and Weber (2017) used a mixed method approach to sample 30 Human Resource (HR) Managers based in Vienna, Austria, to assess perceived barriers to employment for multiple disabilities and then more specifically for intellectual disabilities. Consistent with previous literature, Kocman *et al.* (2017) found that *employers* perceive there to be more significant barriers when employing someone with an intellectual disability as opposed to a physical disability. For example, hiring an individual with autism is perceived to require more effort, given the potential unpredictability, compared to a neurotypical individual in a wheelchair that may only require a few physical modifications in the workplace. Kocman et al., (2017) found that *employers* saw *dispositional* factors, such as a perceived lack of skills and legal issues, as the main barrier to employment for individuals with an intellectual disability. However, when Kocman *et al.* (2017) asked the *employers* to suggest solutions, *employers* believed that an increased awareness and education on intellectual disability, as well as support, were vital to promoting inclusivity.

This is relevant to the current study, as when the employment outcome was positive, *employees with an intellectual disability* recognised that their level of skill was important in determining the outcome. However, when the employment outcome was negative, *employees*

with an intellectual disability did not attribute the outcome to a lack of skills rather a lack of understanding and negative attributions being made by the *employers* (Table 1).

A study by Rose, Gallivan, Wright and Blake (2014) conducted four surveys over a two month period with care staff that worked with individuals with an intellectual disability. They found evidence that a one-day challenging-behaviour training course using positive behavioural support produced statistically significant changes in staff *attributions* towards individuals with an intellectual disability. This is relevant to the current study as it demonstrates that *employers* recognise the benefit in receiving support (such is the role of the *employment specialists*) and outcome-focused training sessions (Kocman et al., 2017). These findings combined, demonstrate that training programmes can produce a change in *attributions* and offer a solution in changing the perspective of the *employers*.

As well as training courses, Blessing & Jamieson (1999) found that interaction with *employees with an intellectual disability* could alleviate negative *attributions* of the *employers*. Blessing & Jamieson (1999) assessed *employers* who were either experienced ($n=20$) or inexperienced ($n=18$) in hiring and working with *employees with an intellectual disability*. They used a modified version of the attitudes towards employability of persons with severe handicaps scale (Schmelkin & Berkell, 1989) and found that a lack of skills was the most significant perceived barrier to employment for *employees with an intellectual disability* when the *employers* were inexperienced in hiring *employees with an intellectual disability*. Although both groups perceived favourable attitudes to employability towards *employees with an intellectual disability*, the experienced group of *employers* perceived more advantages than disadvantages in employment. These findings are relevant to the current study as they demonstrate that a lack of skills as attributed by the *employers* is reflective of potential negative perceptions as identified by the *employee with an intellectual disability*

(Figure 3) and can be negotiated through experience and knowledge about intellectual disability.

As per Figure 3, the *employers* also attributed barriers of the system, a *situational* factor, as affecting their ability to hire *employees with an intellectual disability*. *Employers attributed* increased costs such as additional training or supervision and health and safety concerns as a *situational* factor that produced a barrier to employment. A discussion paper by Maxim Institute (Van Dalen, 2017) reviewed literature on the barriers to employment for people with disabilities in New Zealand. The report found that *employers* felt they could not hire people with disabilities because of the perceived additional cost. However, Van Dalen found that often the perceived costs are smaller and one-off when hiring individuals with disabilities.

Similarly, Cimera (2010) conducted a cost efficiency analysis of supported employment across 231,204 people with disabilities in the United States over a six-year period (2002-2007). Cimera found that employees with an intellectual disability were cost-efficient from the taxpayers perspective however there was variation between different states depending on what government incentives were offered. Cimera concluded that many *employers* have incorrect perceptions of the costs of disability, support available, and benefits of employing people with disabilities. Graffam, Smith, Shinkfield and Polzin (2002) found comparable results when they conducted a national study that saw 643 Australian *employers* complete a questionnaire on employer outcomes when employing a person with a disability. Individual performance was considered by comparison of the employee with a disability and an employee that did not have a disability. While non-disabled employees were rated significantly better on productivity variables, employees with a disability were rated higher on reliability scales. When organizational performance was analysed, such as costs of

modifications and changes to staff training and supervision, *employers* identified more benefits than common net cost.

Therefore, although barriers of the system were identified as a main theme the *employers* attributed to unsuccessful employment outcomes, it appears based on previous literature that this may be a misconception. Given there are reports of short-term increased costs, without the education or knowledge or context of these costs in a broader long-term view it is understandable why the *employers* perceive barriers of the system to negatively affect employment outcomes.

Finding a solution to this dichotomy of perspectives (Figure 1 & Figure 3) between the *employee with an intellectual disability* and the *employers* is difficult as the two groups are unable to see the problem with each other's perspective (Figure 3). However these findings support the need for research on the effectiveness of specific interventions focused on *attribution* training. The current study highlights, as per Figure 1, that a difference in *attributions* between the *actors* and *observers* when the outcome was negative are acting as a barrier to employment for *employees with an intellectual disability*. This demonstrates the significance of creating a shared perspective as seen in Figure 2 and highlights the importance the *employment specialists* may play in reducing the barriers different *attributions* generate for *employees with an intellectual disability*.

Employment Specialists are Key

The contrast in *attributions* made when employment was successful (Figure 2) and when employment was unsuccessful (Figure 3), demonstrates that actor-observer differences between the *employee with an intellectual disability* and *employers* are acting as a barrier to successful employment. *Employment specialists*, as per Figure 1, have a relationship with both stakeholders, and play a vital role in bridging the relationship between the *employers* and the *employee with an intellectual disability*. When comparing Figure 2 and Figure 3 it

becomes apparent that the *employment specialists* may possess the ability to shift the *employers'* perspective to empathise with the *situational attributions* when employment is unsuccessful. *Employment specialists* work from the philosophy that they can create an increased awareness and provide support and education to both *employee with an intellectual disability* and *employers*.

When employment was successful (Figure 2), *employment specialists*, similar to the *employees with an intellectual disability* and the *employers*, attributed support, capabilities to do the job and flexibility in the employment process as the most important factors. However, when *employees with an intellectual disability* were *unsuccessful in gaining employment*, *employment specialists*, as per Figure 1, were found to attribute the same *situational* factors in the negative critical incidents as the *Employees with an intellectual disability*. *Employment specialists* reported that negative perception by the *employer* and a lack of understanding towards intellectual disabilities (see Table 2) was the reason they felt individuals with an intellectual disability were *unsuccessful in gaining employment*.

Therefore as per questions 2,

Research Question 2:
Will <i>employment specialists</i> help discern the most accurate reasons for employment exclusion/inclusion for <i>employees with an intellectual disability</i> as per Figure 1?

employment specialists believe the *employee with an intellectual disability* have a more accurate perspective on the barriers to employment compared to the *employers*. As shown in Figure 3, it becomes evident that the *employment specialists* as an in-between perspective, view the onus to reducing the barriers to employment for individuals with *employee with an intellectual disability* falling predominately on the *employers*. When compared to Figure 2 (successful employment), it becomes apparent that a potential solution in reducing the barriers to employment for *employee with an intellectual disability* (Figure 3) lies in the

ability to create a shared perspective between the *actor* (*employee with and intellectual disability*) and the *observer* (*employer*).

Much like Storms' Reversal (1973), the viability of shifting the perspective of the *employers* becomes hopeful when examining the *employment specialists* who demonstrate that it is possible for *observers* to take on the *actors'* perspective. The difference in perspective between the *employers* and the *employment specialists* (Figure 3) appears to be crucial given they are both observing the *actor*, yet they attribute different factors to the *negative outcome*.

A possible explanation as to why the *employment specialists'* responses were more in line with the *actors'* (*employee with an intellectual disability*) perspective, than the *observers'* (*employer*) perspectives is that *employment specialists* are active observers as opposed to passive observers (Miller & Norman, 1975). The difference in *attributions* (Figure 3) made from an *observer's* perspective demonstrates that the *observer's* perspective can be shifted from passive observer (*employer*) to active observer (*employment specialist*). Due to the relationship formed in the pre-employment preparation stages, *employment specialists* to get to know the *employee with an intellectual disability* and therefore become active observers who know more about the *actor* and their *situational* factors affecting their behaviour, as opposed to the *employers* who are passive observers.

As suggested earlier by Blessing & Jamieson (1999), interaction with *employees with an intellectual disability* can reduce the negative attributions placed on the *employees with an intellectual disability* and create a more in-depth understanding of the context or *situational* factors affecting the *employee with an intellectual disability*. Therefore, as shown in Figure 3, the current study suggests that the difference in perspective between the *employers* and *employment specialist* arises because *employment specialists* have more insight on the cause of the *actor's* (*employee with an intellectual disability*) behaviour compared to the *employers*.

Active observers are more likely to attribute *situational* factors as opposed to *dispositional* factors when a negative outcome occurs (Wolfson & Salancik, 1977).

Jones and Nisbett (1971) suggest that *observers' attributions* are directly affected by motivational or behavioural involvement in the situation and that active observers empathise with the *actor* because they have a closer relationship with the *actor*, such as a spouse, or because they are behaviourally involved with the situation. Regan and Totten (1975) demonstrated in a laboratory experiment that you could shift a target's perspective through empathy. Female undergraduate students ($n=40$) watched a video of a conversation between two students and were then, through the direction of the administrator, either manipulated to empathise with the *actor* (or not). Participants in the empathy group used more *situational* and less *disposition attributions* when assessing the *actors' behaviour* compared to the neutral observation group who used *dispositional attributions* to rate the *actors' behaviour*. This is relevant to the current study as it demonstrates the ability to shift the perspective of the *observer* and suggests this is why the *employment specialists* are seen to share the same perspective as the *actors* when employment is unsuccessful (Figure 3). However, a criticism of this study is that all the participants were females who have been shown in previous research to exhibit gender differences in levels of empathy compared to male subjects (Christov-Moore et al., 2014).

These criticisms are put to rest when a study by Wolfson and Salancik (1977) is considered. Wolfson and Salancik (1977) conducted two experiments to see if active versus passive observer differences were found. Male undergraduates ($n=85$) from the University of Illinois were asked to either operate or watch another operate a model race car set. The researchers then manipulated the *observers' expectation* by either leaving them as a passive observer who would only be watching the race or informing them, they were to become the race car operator in a future race, thereby making them an active observer. The experiment

was conducted twice in competitive and non-competitive conditions, producing the same statistically significant results in both environments. Passive observers consistently made *dispositional attributions* of the driver when they lost the race such as they lacked the skills and ability to win. The *actors* (race car operators) and active observers made *situational attributions* when the race was lost, such as luck or difficulties on the racetrack. Of particular interest was the suggestion that the expectation of being involved in the race produced the results, not the expectation of competition, given the same results were found, regardless of the competitive nature of the experiment. This supports the current study's findings and gives hope that the actor-observer differences that have been identified as a barrier to employment (Figure 1) can be shifted by using interventions that focus on the *attributions* made by the *employers*.

Eigenbrood & Retish (1988) demonstrated that *employer* participation in a work experience programme that placed individuals with an intellectual disability within their organisation through the assistance of an *employment specialist* resulted in a significant increased willingness to hire. The study surveyed 50% of the *employers* who took part in the work experience programme ($n=82$) and found that 84% of respondents were likely to hire individuals with an intellectual disability in the future. It was not clear if these attitudes were due to participation in the study, however five out of six *employers* who indicated prior to the programme they were unlikely to hire individuals with an intellectual disability, had changed their opinion in the post programme survey.

Similarly, Petty & Fussell (1997) examined the attitudes of 47 *employers*, through structured interviews, who had participated in a supported employment programme in Tennessee. The results of the study supported the idea that *employers* generally hold favourable attitudes towards hiring individuals with a disability and found that 100% of respondents would recommend an *employment specialist* to other *employers*. The main

benefit of employment services, as reported by the *employers*, was the cost-effectiveness and the training time saved by having an *employment specialist* assist in the process. These findings support and strengthen the current study's findings that *employment specialists* hold the ability to create a shared perspective between the *employer* and the *employee*.

These findings, along with the current study ignite optimism in the ability to remove attributional barriers of the *employers* through future training and exposure programmes that focus on shifting *employers* from passive to active observers through their relationship with the *employment specialist*. In an ideal world, shifting the *employer's* perspective would eliminate the need for *employment specialists* in the employment process, and *employee with an intellectual disability* would be able to navigate employment opportunities independently.

There is, however, as per Table 2 and Figure 3, a need to study the role of the *employment specialist* further to ensure their contribution is beneficial. An unexpected finding within the current study was that many *employment specialists* felt their lack of preparation with *the employees with an intellectual disability* contributed to employment being unsuccessful. Neither the *employee with an intellectual disability* or the *employers* (Figure 3) identified a lack of preparation from the *employment specialists* as a barrier to employment. However, the finding may be explained through the personal nature of the *employment specialist's* role. Given that *employment specialists* drive the employment process for *employees with an intellectual disability*, it is likely that unsuccessful employment is viewed as a personal failure. This is due to the nature of the *employment specialist's* role facilitating the employment opportunity and assisting on behalf of the *employee with an intellectual disability* throughout the employment process. This therefore creates a sense of personal achievement or failure.

Mank and Grossi (2013) conducted a review on the employment for individuals with intellectual disabilities in the United States of America and concluded that although there has

been a renewed investment in *employees with an intellectual disability*, the funding is based on outcomes rather than services. Limited funding resulted in *employment specialists* being undertrained and rushing through support programmes. This highlights the need to ensure *employment specialists* have the correct resources and funding to ensure they are successfully facilitating the relationship between the *employees with an intellectual disability* and the *employers*. Given the relatively minimal literature on *employment specialists* it is important to determine the magnitude and effect of this finding, which may represent feelings of failure, or in the worst case it is a genuine barrier to employment.

One explanation is the personal relationship that is created between the *employment specialists* and the *employees with an intellectual disability* in the pre-employment process. *Employment specialists* are often responsible for creating opportunities for the *employees with an intellectual disability* through personal guarantees to the *employers*. Thus, creating a greater sense of responsibility that extends beyond the role of an active observer. Another explanation is the *employment specialists*, as Mank and Grossi (2013) suggest, are lacking sufficient funding to focus on the level of service they provide. Rather they are pressured to get as many *employees with an intellectual disability* and *employers* through the process in an unreasonable amount of time, which leads to lack of preparation and underestimation of the barriers to employment. This finding may also allude as to why *employment specialists* are not currently able to create a shared perspective with *employers* (Figure 3) as seen in Figure 2, when employment was successful. This is an area that requires further research focusing solely on the role and impact the *employment specialists* have, and their ability to conduct attributional training with the *employers* as recommended in the current study.

Limitations

The interview process, and thematic analysis of the data, place limitations on the current research, as both processes are very time-intensive. The findings of the research will

not be generalizable, and qualitative analysis can be prone to bias. The researcher remained impartial in the interview process, even if the response given was unexpected, to avoid any personal bias on the data. It was imperative to gain the participant's trust. However, at the same time, not to make statements that could reflect personal disagreement or differing opinions with any accounts the participants may provide. The sample size of the current study is of concern, particularly for *employers*. Although critical incident technique does not have a specific recommendation on sample size, it does recommend that incidents keep being collected until saturation is reached. Given the smaller size of the *employers* group, it cannot be guaranteed that saturation was reached and that no new themes would have emerged if more incidents were collected.

Future recommendations

Given the exploratory nature of the current study, and minimal literature on the intellectually disabled community in employment, further research is required to investigate the potential implications of this research. First, it is recommended that this study be replicated with a larger sample size, particularly for the *employer* group, to ensure that saturation was reached, and no new themes would appear over a larger number of participants. It is suggested that future studies incorporate all three stakeholders more often in research, as their responses offer contributions that are unique to their perspective. Each perspective provides invaluable comparisons that may not appear to be significant if each stakeholder was being investigated as a single entity. Due to the lack of literature on the role of *employment specialists*, future research in this domain is essential. The *employment specialist's* sense of responsibility for unsuccessful employment was a unique and interesting theme that emerged within the current study. It is recommended that this be further researched to understand the potential it may have on job performance, motivation levels and client expectations.

In particular relation to the current study, it is suggested that the relationship between passive and active observers be further investigated, specifically the level of involvement required with the *actors* to switch a passive observer to an active observer. This would have a direct implication on reducing the barriers to employment, as *employers* become aware and develop an understanding towards the *employees with an intellectual disability*.

Implications of the current study

The current study presents evidence supporting the application of attribution theory and *actor-observer* differences to the barriers of employment for *employees with an intellectual disability*. This is the first evidence of its kind to simultaneously examine three stakeholder groups and their perspectives on *employees with an intellectual disability* gaining employment in a New Zealand setting. The findings highlight that inclusion in employment is not a stable variable; instead it is subjective, and dependent on the perspective and role (*actor* or *observer*) of the person being asked. For example, when the outcome is negative, the *observers*, as demonstrated in Figure 1, are more likely to identify *dispositional* factors as barriers to inclusion for another person, while the *actor* is more likely to identify *situational* barriers. The current study emphasises the need to consider that not all stakeholders share the same perspective and that the dichotomy of perspectives creates a barrier to employment for individuals with an intellectual disability (Figure 3).

The current study has demonstrated *observers* can apply different *attributions* to the same situation depending on their connection to the *actor*. Thus, creating the possibility that the perspective of the *observer* can be shifted from passive to active allowing the creation of a shared understanding between the *actor* and *observer*. This is a significant development that could have direct implications on workplace policy and inclusion practice and needs to be investigated in future studies.

Further, the active contribution by the *employee with an intellectual disability* in the current study, demonstrates that this community has a voice that is capable of outlining their own experience of inclusion. This has a direct implication on the quality of future research as the perspective of this community has often been neglected due to uncertainty around their ability to successfully communicate their experiences. The success of this study supports the social model of disability in that people with disabilities need to be empowered to make their own decisions. This underlines the importance in the consultation and involvement of people with disabilities in the workplace to develop progressive and inclusive policy and practice to remove structural and *situational* barriers that may not otherwise be identified or addressed.

Although this is an exploratory study, the first of its kind in a New Zealand setting, attribution theory has proven to have a direct link to the barriers to employment that can be applied to help identify and eliminate unconscious biases and inequalities that result in barriers to employment. The current study demonstrates the effect different perspectives can have, and the importance of structures and *attribution* of responsibility in the workplace, which could have, direct impact on the willingness of a company to be inclusive. Therefore, it is important to consider multiple stakeholder perspectives when attempting to remove these barriers. Namely, this research has highlighted that *employees with intellectual disabilities* and *employment specialists* may see structures or situations that limit inclusion that *employers* without disabilities in the role of the *observer* cannot see.

The current study indicates there is a gap in the workplace and current literature between the importance of *situational* factors on hiring decisions. This indicates that it is not necessarily discrimination acting as a barrier rather a misalignment of perspectives. These findings could be used to inform training and policy development that would be particularly useful for *employment specialists* when working with *employee with an intellectual disability* and *employers*.

Conclusion

The current study conducted an exploratory examination of the barriers to employment for *employees with an intellectual disability*. No actor-observer differences or self-serving bias was found in the positive outcomes (Figure 2); however, they offered an insight into the factors that positively affect hiring decisions, which allowed for comparisons to be drawn between the negative critical incidents (Figure 2 & Figure 3). Support was found for Figure 1 in the negative outcome, as *actor-observer* differences resulted in a difference in perspectives between the stakeholders (Figure 3). The *employer's* data was consistent with previous research in which *observers* attribute *dispositional factors* to negative outcomes. This was seen as the majority of *employers*, Table 1, attributed a lack of skills on behalf of the employee with an intellectual disability as the reason they decided not to hire the individual.

Conversely, the *employees with an intellectual disability* (Table 1) were found to attribute *situational* factors such as negative attributions by the *employer* and a lack of understanding towards intellectual disabilities as the reason they were *unsuccessful in gaining employment*. The current study as per Figure 1, found that *employment specialists* differ from *employers* attributing *situational* factors (negative attributions by *employers* and lack of understanding towards intellectual disabilities) as the driving factor for *employers' hiring* decisions. Therefore, although traditional actor-observer differences were present between the *employees with an intellectual disability* and *employers*, there was a difference in the role of the *observers* as the *employers* and the *employment specialists* displayed a difference in *attributions* when the outcome was negative.

It is suggested that *observers* can take either a passive or active position, and while *employers* were passive observers, *employment specialists* were active observers that understood the context surrounding the *actor*. Future research is recommended to explore

how to shift passive observers to active observers through attributional training, as this would allow *employers* to better understand *employees with an intellectual disability* and may lead to an increase in successful employment for *employees with an intellectual disability*.

The current research has clear implications for policy and training development and further exploration is required to assess the effectiveness of attributional training in a disability setting. This study contributes significantly to the current literature on this topic and provides a useful platform from which future research can develop hypotheses.

Appendices

Appendix A

Critical Incident Questions

Questions for All Participants –Introduction

[Anything in Red writing is for the eyes of MUHEC only and will not be read out loud to the participant.

(The below paragraph will be read to the participants)]

Thank you for taking the time to participate in my study, as I outlined in the information letter I am exploring the perspectives of individuals with an intellectual disability (ID) and their family members as well as potential employers and not for profit organisations that specialise in helping individuals with an ID gain meaningful employment. The aim of this study is to understand different experiences of people with intellectual disabilities gaining or not gaining employment.

The method I will be using is called Critical Incident Technique and is defined “as a set of procedures for systematically identifying behaviours that contribute to success or failure of individuals or organisations in specific situations.”

[Read to employers only]

For example, the following questions will ask about a time you hired an individual with an intellectual disability (a positive incident) vs. a time you did not hire an individual with an intellectual disability (a negative incident).

Once I have received a number of positive and negative critical incidents; I will then explore common themes in people’s response to see if certain behaviours are contributing to the success or failure of individuals with intellectual disabilities gaining meaningful employment.

[Read to NGOs only]

For example, the following questions will ask about a time you facilitated the process of an individual with an intellectual disability get a job (a positive incident) vs. a time that the facilitation was unsuccessful and the individual with an intellectual disability did not get the job (a negative incident).

Once I have received a number of positive and negative critical incidents; I will then explore common themes in people’s response to see if certain behaviours are contributing to the success or failure of individuals with intellectual disabilities gaining meaningful employment.

[Read to individual with an ID only]

For example, the following questions will ask about a time went through the process of getting a job and successfully got offered the position (a positive incident) vs. a time you did not successfully get the position (a negative incident).

Once I have received a number of positive and negative critical incidents; I will then explore common themes in people’s response to see if certain behaviours are contributing to the success or failure of individuals with intellectual disabilities gaining meaningful employment.

Questions for Individuals with an ID and their family members

[The protocol used in this study to develop the questions is outlined in the psychological Bulletin Volume 51. NO.4 July 1954 - The Critical Incident Technique by John, C Flanagan.]

[These questions will be asked to a person with an intellectual disability and their supporting caregiver.

I will alternate whether I ask the positive critical incident questions or the negative critical incidents first to ensure that the participants are not primed in their responses.]

Positive Critical Incident

- Can you please think of a time when you applied for a job and successfully got offered the job.
- Can you tell me about this job? What kind of job was it and what were you going to be doing?
- Can you tell me how you got the job, what was the process that you had to go through to find it and apply for it? [Caregiver will most likely to supplementing the answers I receive with further information]. Can you tell me how you felt when you got offered the job?
- Was there anything that was hard about getting the job? For example, was there anything in the process you just told me about that was a bit difficult for you? And why was it hard?
- Was there anything in the process that you found easy?
- Why do you think they gave you the job and not somebody else?
- If you could do this process all over again, is there anything you would do differently next time?

Negative Critical Incident

- Can you please think of a time when you applied for a job and did not get it.
- Can you tell me about this job? What kind of job was it and what were you going to be doing?
- Can you tell me how you got the job, what was the process that you had to go through to find it and apply for it? [Caregiver will most likely to supplementing the answers I receive with further information].
- Can you tell me how you felt when you didn't get the job?
- Was there anything that was hard about getting the job? For example, was there anything in the process you just told me about that was a bit difficult for you? And why was it hard?
- Was there anything in the process that you found easy?
- Why do you think they gave the job to somebody else and not you?
- If you could do this process all over again, is there anything you would do differently next time?

Questions for Employers

[The protocol used in this study to develop the questions is outlined in the psychological Bulletin Volume 51. NO.4 July 1954 - The Critical Incident Technique by John, C Flanagan.]

[The following definition and example will be read out to the employers to help them understand what this study defines as ‘Intellectually Disabled’]

In this study, I have used the Social Model of disability to define ‘intellectually disabled’. This is any person who may be deemed mentally challenged in social situations. For example the individual may not fully comprehend and follow instructions or may find it hard to engage or interact in social situations to a level that society expects of this person. This can include the physiological labels of autism, Asperger’s, Down syndrome, global developmental delay etc. This does not include an individual with only physical disabilities for example the use of a wheelchair or hearing aid. It can however include an individual with Cerebral Palsy that has a cognitive impairment too. People with mental illnesses such as depression, anxiety, posttraumatic stress disorder etc. that are exclusive to that individual are not included in this study however this does not exclude that an individual with an intellectual disability may have a mental illness present.

**[The following questions will be asked to the Employer Group
I will alternate whether I ask the positive critical incident questions or the negative critical incidents first to ensure that the participants are not primed in their responses.]**

Positive Critical Incident

- Can you please think of a time when you had a job on offer and an individual with an intellectual disability applied for the role and was offered the job.
- Can you please describe the role and its duties?
- What do you think was effective in the application process?
- What do you think was ineffective in the application process?
- Do you think the application process was at all discriminatory? Why or why not?
- Why did you offer the job to this individual?
- Has the employment been successful? Why?
- If you were to re-do this process is there anything you would change or do differently?

Negative Critical Incident

- Can you please think of a time when you had a job on offer and an individual with an intellectual disability applied for the role and was unsuccessful in getting the job.
 - Can you please describe the role and its duties?
 - What do you think was effective in the application process?
 - What do you think was ineffective in the application process?
 - Do you think the application process was at all discriminatory? Why or why not?
 - Why didn’t you offer the job to this individual?
 - What do you think the individual could do differently next time?
 - If you were to re-do this process is there anything you would change or do differently?
-

Questions for Employment Specialist

[The protocol used in this study to develop the questions is outlined in the psychological Bulletin Volume 51. NO.4 July 1954 - The Critical Incident Technique by John, C Flanagan.]

[These questions will be asked to the Employment Specialist who specialises in helping people with an ID gain employment.

[There will be no explanation of intellectual disability as these participants are emerged in the disabled community and will understand the nature of this study from the information letter.]

Positive Critical Incident

- Can you please think of a time when you successfully facilitated an intellectually disabled individual get a job with an employer.
- Can you please describe the role and its duties?
- What do you think was effective in the application process?
- What do you think was ineffective in the application process?
- Do you think the application process was at all discriminatory? Why or why not?
- Why do you think the employer hired the individual?
- Has the employment been successful? Why do you think that is?
- If you were to re-do this process is there anything you would change or do differently?

Negative Critical Incident

- Can you please think of a time when you facilitated an intellectually disabled individual get a job with an employer and they were unsuccessful in getting the job.
- Can you please describe the role and its duties?
- What do you think was effective in the application process?
- What do you think was ineffective in the application process?
- Do you think the application process was at all discriminatory? Why or why not?
- Why do you think the employer did not hire the individual?
- What do you think the individual could do differently next time?
- What do you think the employer could do differently next time?
- If you were to re-do this process is there anything you would change or do differently?

Appendix B
Consent form



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
TE KURA PŪKENGĀ TANGATA

**Exploring pathways in and out of meaningful work for people
with intellectual disabilities.**

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM - INDIVIDUAL

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature:

Date:

Full Name - printed

Te Kunenga
ki Pūrehuroa

School of Psychology – Te Kura Hinengaro Tangata
Private Bag 102904, North Shore Mail Centre, Auckland 0745, New Zealand T +64 9 414 0800 extn 41244 F +64 9 414 0831
www.massey.ac.nz

Appendix C

Information Sheet



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
TE KURA PŪKENGĀ TANGATA

Exploring pathways in and out of meaningful work for people with intellectual disabilities.

INFORMATION SHEET

My name is Amy Mauer, and I am currently completing my Master of Science at Massey University, with my supervisor Professor Stuart Carr. For my thesis, I am exploring the ways that people with intellectual disabilities find access to inclusive work from a range of perspectives. The study will explore the perspectives of individuals with an intellectual disability (ID) and their family members as well as potential employers and organisations that specialise in helping individuals with an ID gain meaningful employment. The findings of this study may help to further equal access to mainstream employment opportunities for all.

I would like to invite you to take part in this study. If you decide to participate, I would like to interview you for about an hour in a location that is convenient for you. All information is completely confidential, and participation is voluntary. If you wish to participate in this study please sign the consent form provided. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to. I am happy to provide a summary of the research findings when the study is completed, please let me know if you wish to receive this.

The research will be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the New Zealand Code of Ethics, Code of Ethics For Psychologists Working in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

If you have any questions regarding this project, please do not hesitate to contact me on

Amy.Mauer.1@uni.massey.ac.nz or contact my supervisor on s.c.carr@massey.ac.nz, ph. (09) 414 0800 ext. 43108.

Please let me know if you would like further information.

Best regards,

Amy Mauer

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, Application NOR 18/35. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Associate Professor David Tappin (Chair), Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, email humanethicsnorth@massey.ac.nz.



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
TE KURA PŪKENGĀ TANGATA

Exploring pathways in and out of meaningful work for people with intellectual disabilities.

INFORMATION SHEET

My name is Amy Mauer, and I am currently completing my Master of Science at Massey University, with my supervisor Professor Stuart Carr. For my thesis, I am exploring the ways that people with intellectual disabilities find access to inclusive work from a range of perspectives. The study will explore the perspectives of individuals with an intellectual disability (ID) and their family members as well as potential employers and organisations that specialise in helping individuals with an ID gain meaningful employment. The findings of this study may help to further equal access to mainstream employment opportunities for all.

I would like to invite you to take part in this study. If you decide to participate, I would like to interview you for about an hour in a location that is convenient for you. All information is completely confidential, and participation is voluntary. If you wish to participate in this study please sign the consent form provided. I am acting as the sole researcher for this study and my affiliation with Recreate NZ is not relevant in this context. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to. I am happy to provide a summary of the research findings when the study is completed, please let me know if you wish to receive this.

The research will be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the New Zealand Code of Ethics, *Code of Ethics For Psychologists Working in Aotearoa/New Zealand*.

If you have any questions regarding this project, please do not hesitate to contact me on

Amy.Mauer.1@uni.massey.ac.nz or contact my supervisor on s.c.carr@massey.ac.nz, ph. (09) 414 0800 ext. 43108.

Please let me know if you would like further information.

Best regards,

Amy Mauer

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, Application NOR 18/35. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Associate Professor David Tappin (Chair), Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, email humanethicsnorth@massey.ac.nz

Appendix D Massey University Ethics Committee approval



Date: 24 August 2018

Dear Amy Mauer

Re: Ethics Notification - **NOR 18/35 - Exploring the relative roles of Heuristics, attribution theory and social justification theory in the economic inclusion for youth with intellectual disabilities**

Thank you for the above application that was considered by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Human Ethics Northern Committee at their meeting held on Friday, 24 August, 2018.

Approval is for three years. If this project has not been completed within three years from the date of this letter, reapproval must be requested.

If the nature, content, location, procedures or personnel of your approved application change, please advise the Secretary of the Committee.

Yours sincerely

Associate Professor Tracy Riley, Dean Research
Acting Director (Research Ethics)

Research Ethics Office, Research and Enterprise

Massey University, Private Bag 11 222, Palmerston North, 4442, New Zealand T 06 350 5573; 06 350 5575 F 06 355 7973
E humanethics@massey.ac.nz W <http://humanethics.massey.ac.nz>

Appendix E

Kappa Coefficient calculations

Employees with an intellectual disability – Positive incidents

		RATER 1																								
		Negative Perceptions		Flexibility		Recognizing the potential		Support		Capabilities		Appearance		Barriers of the system		Lack of understanding		Independence		Ability to fit in with co-workers		Lack of preparation				
		Efficient		Insufficient		Skills		Lack of skills		Present		Not present		Present		Not present		Present		Not present		Present		Not present		
		Present	Not present	Present	Not present	Present	Not present	Present	Not present	Present	Not present	Present	Not present	Present	Not present	Present	Not present	Present	Not present	Present	Not present	Present	Not present	Present	Not present	
		Negative Perceptions	Present	4	0																					4
	Not present	3	23																						26	
Flexibility	Present			26	0																				26	
	Not present			0	4																				4	
Recognizing the potential	Present					8	1																		9	
	Not present					1	20																		21	
Support	Efficient							29	0																29	
	Insufficient							0	1																1	
	Not present									0	2														2	
Capabilities	Skills											23	0												23	
	Lack of skills											1	6												7	
	Not present											3	2												5	
Appearance	Present													7	1										8	
	Not present													0	22										22	
Barriers of the system	Present															0	0								0	
	Not present													1	29										30	
Lack of understanding	Present																	8	1						9	
	Not present																	1	20						21	
Independence	Present																			18	0				18	
	Not present																	1	11						12	
Ability to fit in with co-workers	Present																				0	0			0	
	Not present																				0	30			30	
Lack of preparation	Present																						0	0	0	
	Not present																						0	30	30	
		7	23	26	4	9	21	29	1	0	30	24	6	3	27	7	23	1	29	9	21	19	11	0	30	420

OBSERVED AGREEMENT
(OA) = 0.96

AGREEMENT BY CHANCE
(AC) = 0.57

COHEN'S KAPPA
(OA-AC) / (1/AC) = 0.92

OBSERVED AGREEMENT
(OA) = 0.96

AGREEMENT BY CHANCE
(AC) = 0.57

COHEN'S KAPPA
(OA-AC) / (1/AC) = 0.92

Employees with an intellectual disability – Negative incidents

RATER 1

		RATER 1																											
		Negative Perceptions		Flexibility		Recognizing the potential		Support		Capabilities		Barriers of the system		Lack of understanding		Independence		Ability to fit in with co-workers		Lack of preparation		Present	Not present	Present	Not present				
		Efficient		Insufficient		Skills		Lack of skills		Present		Present		Present		Present		Fitting in		Not fitting in									
		Present	Not present	Present	Not present	Present	Not present	Present	Not present	Present	Not present	Present	Not present	Present	Not present	Present	Not present	Present	Not present	Present	Not present								
Negative Perceptions	Present	15	0																				15						
	Not present	1	4																				5						
Flexibility	Present			4	2																		6						
	Not present			1	13																		14						
Recognizing the potential	Present					9	0																9						
	Not present					1	10																11						
Support	Efficient							17	0														17						
	Insufficient							0	3														3						
Capabilities	Skills									0	1												1						
	Lack of skills									0	19												19						
Barriers of the system	Present									6	1												7						
	Not present									1	12												13						
Lack of understanding	Present											9	1										10						
	Not present											0	10										10						
Independence	Present											0	0										0						
	Not present											2	18										20						
Ability to fit in with co-workers	Present													13	0								13						
	Not present													0	7								7						
Lack of preparation	Present															8	1						9						
	Not present															0	11						11						
Observed Agreement	Present																	0	1				1						
	Not present																	0	19				19						
Agreement by Chance	Present																			0	0		0						
	Not present																			1	19		20						
Total		16	4	5	15	10	10	17	3	0	20	7	13	9	11	2	18	13	7	8	12	0	20	1	19	260			

OBSERVED AGREEMENT

$$(OA) = 0.95$$

AGREEMENT BY CHANCE

$$(AC) = 0.55$$

COHEN'S KAPPA

$$(OA-AC) / (1/AC) = 0.88$$

OBSERVED AGREEMENT
(OA) = 0.95

AGREEMENT BY CHANCE
(AC) = 0.55

COHEN'S KAPPA
(OA-AC) / (1/AC) = 0.88

Employers—Positive incidents

[illegible]

Employers– Negative incidents

[illegible]

Employment Specialists– Negative incidents

[illegible]

Appendix F

Total themes found in the data

Themes identified in the **positive** critical incidents for Employees with an intellectual disability (n=30)

	Situational								Dispositional					
Theme	Negative Perception	Support		lack of Understanding	lack of Preparation	Barriers of the system	Recognising the Potential	Flexibility	Capabilities		Ability to fit in with co-workers		Independence	Appearance
Subtheme		Efficient	In-efficient						Skills	Lack of skills	Fitting in	Not fitting in		
Actors		4	29						0	8	0	0		

Themes identified in the **positive** critical incidents for Employers (n=13)

	Situational								Dispositional					
Theme	Negative Perception	Support		lack of Understanding	lack of Preparation	Barriers of the system	Recognising the Potential	Flexibility	Capabilities		Ability to fit in with co-workers		Independence	Appearance
Subtheme		Efficient	In-efficient						Skills	Lack of skills	Fitting in	Not fitting in		
Observers	3	10	2	0	0	2	6	9	10	1	11	1	0	8

Themes identified in the **negative** critical incidents for Employees with an intellectual disability (n=20)

Theme	Negative Perception	Situational							Dispositional				
		Support		lack of Understanding	lack of Preparation	Barriers of the system	Recognising the Potential	Flexibility	Capabilities		Ability to fit in with co-workers		Independence
Subtheme		Efficient	In-efficient						Skills	Lack of skills	Fitting in	Not fitting in	
Actors	15	17	0	13	0	0	9	4	6	9	0	0	8

Themes identified in the **negative** critical incidents for Employers (n=13)

Theme	Negative Perception	Situational							Dispositional				
		Support		lack of Understanding	lack of Preparation	Barriers of the system	Recognising the Potential	Flexibility	Capabilities		Ability to fit in with co-workers		Independence
Subtheme		Efficient	In-efficient						Skills	Lack of skills	Fitting in	Not fitting in	
Observers	4	3	5	0	0	9	3	4	0	11	0	7	0

Themes identified in the **positive** critical incidents for Employment Specialists (n=22)

	Situational							Dispositional						
Theme	Negative Perception	Support		lack of Understanding	lack of Preparation	Barriers of the system	Recognising the Potential	Flexibility	Capabilities		Ability to fit in with co-workers		Independence	Appearance
Subtheme		Efficient	In-efficient						Skills	Lack of skills	Fitting in	Not fitting in		
Employment Specialists		8	18						1	5	3	3		

Themes identified in the **negative** critical incidents for Employment Specialists (n=22)

Theme	Negative Perception	Situational							Dispositional				
		Support		lack of Understanding	lack of Preparation	Barriers of the system	Recognising the Potential	Flexibility	Capabilities		Ability to fit in with co-workers		Independence
Subtheme		Efficient	In-efficient						Skills	Lack of skills	Fitting in	Not fitting in	
Employment Specialists	18	13	11	17	16	5	5	8	10	5	0	9	0

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