

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT AS A STRATEGY FOR ACCESS TO INCLUSIVE EMPLOYMENT FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES: A REVIEW

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Abstract

Unlike other training models, supported employment promotes training and adjustment to the job in the workplace itself. Supported employment is considered one of the most appropriate strategies to promote labour inclusion in ordinary companies, especially in the case of people with intellectual disabilities. Likewise, it favours the supply of supports of varying degrees of intensity in a longitudinal manner, as well as the establishment of natural supports among other co-workers. The objective of this study was to examine the scientific production on supported employment of people with disabilities through a bibliometric analysis. The sample of 717 documents on this subject was obtained from the core collection of the Web of Science (WoS). Data analysis was performed using the bibliometric tools available at the WoS website. The results indicate a great interest on this subject in the last decades, being reflected in a great scientific production. However, this seems to have partially slowed down since the economic crisis of 2008. This being a preliminary study, it is advisable to continue with the bibliometric analysis of the data in order to achieve a better perspective of what has been published so far.

Keywords: *Disability, supported employment, inclusive workplace, bibliometrics, barriers.*

1. Introduction

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (United Nations, 2015) establishes in target 10.2 of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality education for all) the purpose of empowering and promoting the social, economic and political inclusion of all people regardless of their age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic situation or other condition. As a consequence of the initiatives aimed at fighting their discrimination, in recent decades there has been progressively greater sensitivity in the workplace towards people with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups (Fisac, Moreno, Mataix, and Palacios, 2011). Despite the various political initiatives enacted, there is multiple evidence that people with disabilities are one of the groups most discriminated against by society, and this discrimination may manifest itself in various ways such as direct or indirect discrimination, failure to make reasonable adjustments in the environment, harassment or victimization (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2018). Khayatzadeh-Mahani et al. (2019) have identified that there are barriers both in the person and in the environment that can limit access and participation in employment for people with disabilities. Supported employment has shown its effectiveness in terms of the results of, on the one hand, the access to and maintenance of the job and, on the other, the improvement of the person's quality of life (Frederick and VanderWeele, 2019). Furthermore, there is evidence that hiring people with disabilities brings specific benefits to companies (e.g. profits and cost-effectiveness, turnover and retention, reliability and punctuality, employee loyalty, company image) (Lindsay, Cagliostro, Albarico, Mortaji, and Karon, 2018). Until now, reviews of the literature on supported employment have focused on measuring its effectiveness (Cheng et al., 2018; Frederick and VanderWeele, 2019) or the impact on people with certain types of disability (Cheng et al., 2018; Khayatzadeh-Mahani et al., 2019). Nevertheless, a general bibliometric analysis has not been shown, a deficiency that this study tries to compensate.

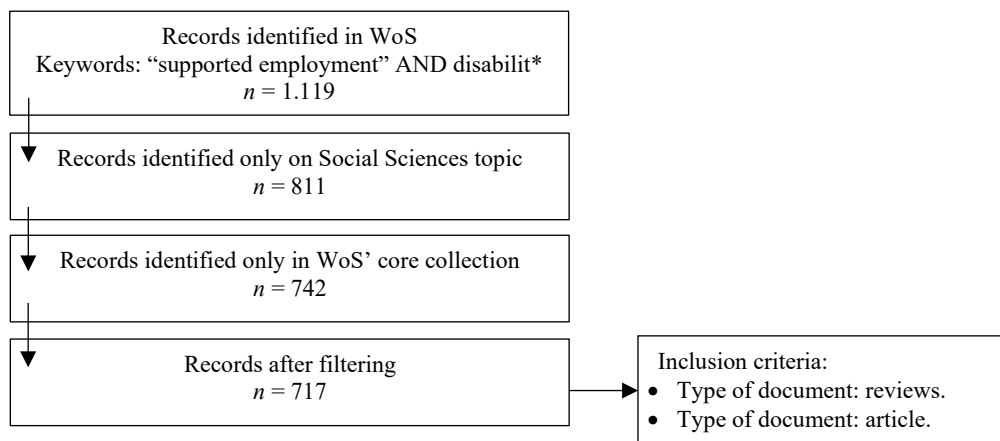
2. Methods

The purpose of this study was to examine the academic production on supported employment for people with disabilities in order to establish a preliminary overview of this area of study. This was done using a bibliometric methodology and a quantitative approach analysis to describe the evolution of research production, and productivity according to sources, authors, countries and affiliations.

2.1. Data collection

To obtain a report on the scientific production of inclusive work environments, one of the most academically relevant databases was accessed on March 11, 2021: the core collection of the Web of Science (WoS). The key terms used for the search were “supported employment” and “disabilit*”. The asterisk used in the term disabilit * served to give valid forms of the word in singular (disability) and plural (disabilities). The Boolean AND connector was used to select those documents that included both terms (inclusive employment AND disability/ies). The search allowed locating these terms in the title, the keywords and abstract of the document. There were no restrictions on time period or language. In order to refine the data, a series of criteria were applied. In the first place, only documents belonging to the field of Social Sciences were chosen. Second, only the publications belonging to the WoS core collection were selected. Finally, we chose only articles and reviews as valid documents for this study, as reflected in the following flow diagram.

Figure 1. Data collection and filtering flow diagram.



2.2. Data analysis

Once the data was compiled, these were analysed using the bibliometric analysis tools available in WoS. Consistent with the objectives of the study, production was described by year, by source, by author, and impact by country, institution, source, author, and document. The 717 documents corresponded to 592 articles (82.56%) and 125 reviews (14.44%). Most of the documents were written in English ($n = 692 / 96.5\%$).

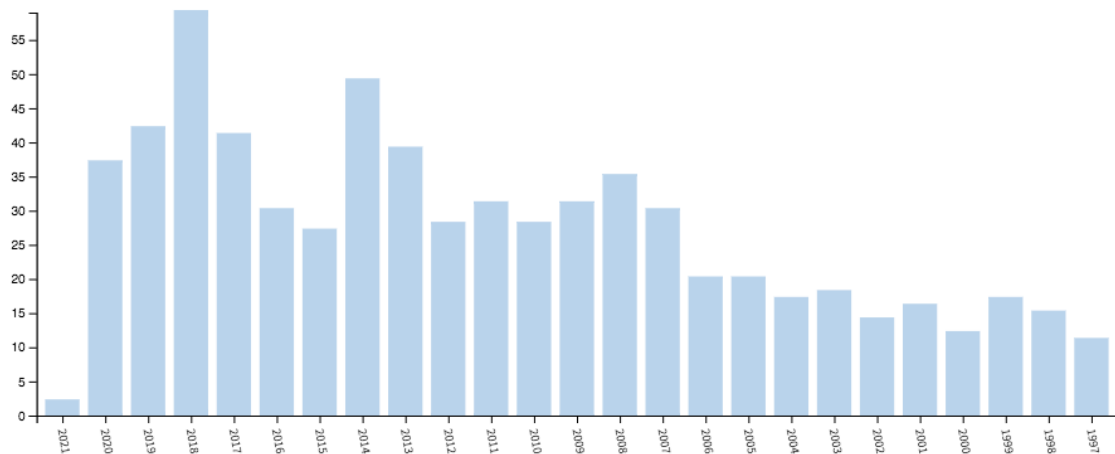
3. Results

The results are presented in subsections according to the order of planned research objectives: scientific production, production by sources, production by the authors, and production by country and affiliation.

3.1. Evolution of the scientific production by year

The production ranges from 1988 to the present, 2021, as can be seen in the data reflected in figure 2. Publications are registered every year since the beginning in 1988. In addition, the data reflect a progressive increase in papers on this subject, reaching production limits in 2018 ($n = 59 / 8.2\%$) and 2014 ($n = 49 / 6.8\%$). Despite this general increase trend in production, striking productivity valleys can be observed from 2015 to 2017 and from 2019 to the present. Likewise, a productive plateau can be observed between 2008 and 2012, probably the worst years of the global financial crisis.

Figure 2. Annual scientific production on inclusive employment.



3.2. Sources' productivity

The most relevant sources in terms of the number of publications on the subject analysed are Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal ($n = 56$), Psychiatric Services ($n = 36$) and Psychiatric Services Washington D C ($n = 36$), as reflected in Table 1.

Table 1. Main Source Productivity.

Sources	Documents
Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal	56
Psychiatric Services	36
Psychiatric Services Washington D C	36
Work A Journal Of Prevention Assessment Rehabilitation	33
Work Reading Mass	33
Journal Of Applied Research In Intellectual Disabilities	26
Mental Retardation	22
Education And Training In Mental Retardation And Developmental Disabilities	18
Disability And Rehabilitation	17
Journal Of Occupational Rehabilitation	15

3.3. Authors' scientific production

Regarding the production by authors, R. E. Drake and G. R. Bond are the most prolific in this field, having published 111 and 85 articles, respectively. The rest of the authors among the 10 most productive have published in a range of 10 to 38 articles (Table 2).

Table 2. Most relevant authors.

Authors	Documents
Drake, R. E.	111
Bond, G. R.	85
Becker, D. R.	38
Mueser, K. T.	37
Rogers, E. S.	30
Waghorn, G.	28
Cook, J. A.	22
Wehman, P.	21
Beyer, S.	10
Cimera, R. E.	10

The 10 most relevant articles by the number of citations they have received since they were published are reflected in table 3.

Table 3. Most cited documents.

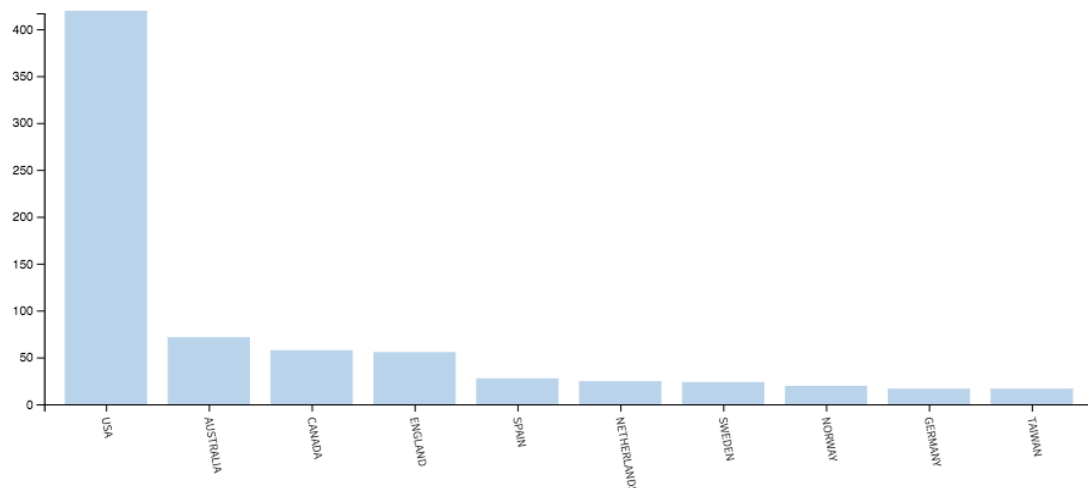
Paper	TC	TC per year
Mueser, K. T. & McGurk, S. R. (2004). Schizophrenia. <i>Lancet</i> , 363(9426), 2063-2072.	610	33.89
Lehman, A., et al. (2004). The Schizophrenia Patient Outcomes Research Team (PORT): Updated Treatment Recommendations 2003. <i>Schizophrenia Bulletin</i> , 30(2), 193–217. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordjournals.schbul.a007071	393	21.83
Rosenheck, R., L et al. (2006). Barriers to employment for people with schizophrenia. <i>The American journal of psychiatry</i> , 163(3), 411–417. https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.ajp.163.3.411	298	18.63
Bond, G. R., Drake, R. E., Mueser, K. T., & Becker, D. R. (1997). An update on supported employment for people with severe mental illness. <i>Psychiatric services (Washington, D.C.)</i> , 48(3), 335–346. https://doi.org/10.1176/ps.48.3.335	248	9.92
Krause, N., Dasinger, L., & Neuhauser, F. (1998). Modified Work and Return to Work: A Review of the Literature. <i>Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation</i> , 8(2), 113–139. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1023015622987	221	9.21
Cook, J. A., et al. (2005). Results of a multisite randomized trial of supported employment interventions for individuals with severe mental illness. <i>Archives of general psychiatry</i> , 62(5), 505–512. https://doi.org/10.1001/archpsyc.62.5.505	197	11.59
Stuart H. (2006). Mental illness and employment discrimination. <i>Current opinion in psychiatry</i> , 19(5), 522–526. https://doi.org/10.1097/01.yco.0000238482.27270.5d	166	10.38
Dunn, E. C., Wewiorski, N. J., & Rogers, E. S. (2008). The meaning and importance of employment to people in recovery from serious mental illness: results of a qualitative study. <i>Psychiatric rehabilitation journal</i> , 32(1), 59–62. https://doi.org/10.2975/32.1.2008.59.62	161	11.50
Harvey, P. D., Velligan, D. I., & Bellack, A. S. (2007). Performance-based measures of functional skills: usefulness in clinical treatment studies. <i>Schizophrenia bulletin</i> , 33(5), 1138–1148. https://doi.org/10.1093/schbul/sbm040	161	10.73
Mueser, K. T., et al. (2004). The Hartford study of supported employment for persons with severe mental illness. <i>Journal of consulting and clinical psychology</i> , 72(3), 479–490. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-006X.72.3.479	161	8.94

TC: Total citations

3.4. Country and affiliation productivity

The most productive countries in terms of scientific publications are the United States of America with 417 documents (58.15%), Australia with 69 (9.6%), Canada with 55 (7.6%) and the United Kingdom with 53 (7.4%).

Figure 3. Scientific production by countries.



The affiliations that have published more academic papers in the WoS core collection are, coherently with productivity by country, institutions from the United States of America. In particular, the most productive are Boston University, Dartmouth College and the US Department of Veterans Affairs.

Table 4. Most relevant affiliations according to their academic productivity.

Affiliation	Documents
Boston University	74
Dartmouth College	55
US Department of Veterans Affairs	43
Veterans Health Administration	40
University of Illinois System	35
Indiana University System	29
Virginia Commonwealth University	29
University System of Maryland	27
Yale University	27
University of California System	24
University of Illinois	23

4. Discussion and conclusions

The data obtained on the WoS academic productivity show that there is a broad and sustained interest from the scientific community about supported employment as a strategy for accessing and maintaining the job. This interest seems to be especially prominent in the case of people with intellectual disabilities or mental illness, groups that are especially discriminated against in hiring (World Health Organization, 2011). One evidence of this is that the three most cited articles address specific supports for people with schizophrenia. Likewise, the high productivity of the United States of America and their institutions, and of R. E. Drake and G. R. Bond as authors stands out. On the other hand, the analysis of the number of annual publications seems to indicate the sensitivity of this topic to financial crises. In conclusion, this study has shown that supported employment has captured the interest of researchers in the last 30 years, especially in Anglo-Sphere countries. However, the number of studies should be expanded in the European Union.

This study has a series of limitations that must be taken into account when interpreting its results. First, there may be relevant publications not included in the WoS core collection and that, therefore, have not been included in this analysis. Second, only papers belonging to the Social Sciences have been analysed. Finally, the use of a limited number of terms in the search could have omitted certain articles that used other concepts. Future bibliometric investigations could try to compensate for these limitations by carrying out such analyses.

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