Facilitators and Barriers of Employment Among Hispanic/Latinx Youth with Disabilities

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Introduction

• Preparing youth with disabilities for participation in the workforce is critical in an effective transition programming.

• However, there’s an ongoing need to increase accessibility and participation of career development experiences and career vocational programs for youths with disabilities in high school (Carter et al., 2010).
Challenges Youth with Disabilities Face

- Physical and emotional changes
- Limited work experiences
- Motivation
- Self-confidence
- Unrealistic experiences about work life
- Accessibility to comprehensive and current career information
- Inaccessible transportation
- Discrimination in the workplace
- Support systems in place

(Langi et al., 2017; Lindsay, 2011; Ose & Jensen, 2017; Pandey & Agarwal, 2013)
Unemployment Rates Among Youth

Youth between the ages of 16-19
- Youth with disabilities 21.1%
- Youth without disabilities 11.4%

Youth between the ages of 20-24
- Youth with disabilities 16.5%
- Youth without disabilities 8.7%

VR Enhancements and Other Influencing Factors

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014
Demographics and Employment Outcomes

Poorer outcomes

• Female youth with mental illnesses (Awsumb et al., 2020)

• Young women with disabilities, young adults with a mental illness, multiple disabilities, or traumatic brain injury (TBI) (Poppen et al., 2017)
Positive outcomes

- Not receiving public supports (e.g., SSI, SSDI)
  - Transition-age youth with TBI (Rumrill et al., 2016)
  - Transition-age youth with autism spectrum disorder (ASD; Kaya et al., 2016)
  - Male transition-age youth with visual impairment and blindness between the ages of 23 and 25 (Cimera et al., 2015)
- Higher levels of education
  - Transition-age youth with TBI (Rumrill et al., 2016)
  - Transition-age youth with autism spectrum disorder (ASD; Kaya et al., 2016)
  - Transition-age youth with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD; Glynn & Schaller, 2017)
- Participation in school transition programs and VR services demonstrated positive employment outcomes on work hours and salary (Jun et al., 2015),
# Vocational Rehabilitation Services and Employment Outcomes

## Transition age youth with disabilities
- Job placement services
- Job readiness training
- Job search assistance

(Awsumb et al., 2020)

## Transition age youth with visual impairments and blindness
- On-the-job support
- Job placement
- Job development
- Assistive technology

(Cimera et al., 2015)

## Transition age youth with ADHD
- College training
- On-the-job training
- Job search assistance
- Job placement

(Glynn & Schaller, 2017)
Vocational Rehabilitation Services and Employment Outcomes (cont.)

Transition age youth with traumatic brain injury (TBI)

- Occupational and vocational training
- Job search
- Job placement
- On-the-job support
- Maintenance
- Information and referral

(Rumrill et al., 2016)

Transition age youth with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

- On-the-job support
- Job placement services
- Rehabilitation technology
- Occupational/vocational training
- Other services
- Job search assistance
- Vocational counseling and guidance
- Job readiness training

(Kaya et al., 2016)
Hispanic/Latinx Transition-age Youth with Disabilities

May face unique challenges in employment as a result of:

- Dual-minority status
- Acculturation patterns
- Environmental and social experiences

(Quinones-Mayo et al., 2000; Velcoff et al., 2010)
Hispanic/Latinx Transition-age Youth with Disabilities

Have lower employment outcomes than White or youth of other racial/ethnic groups
(Sima et al., 2015)

Family involvement and support during the rehabilitation process has contributed to their employment outcomes
(Awsumb et al., 2020)
Youth with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) were less likely to achieve competitive employment than White youth with ASD (Kaya et al., 2016).

Youth with visual impairments and blindness were more likely to achieve competitive employment than White (Cimera et al., 2015).

Youth with ADHD were 1.4 more likely to obtain employment than White, but youth between the ages of 16-19 earned less than White youth (Glynn & Schaller, 2017).
Purpose

• Despite growing research examining various factors associated with employment outcomes in transition-age youth with disabilities, there is limited research in the supports and services that provide pathways to employment among Hispanic/Latinx transition-age youth with disabilities.

• This study aimed to identify the variables associated with employment at exit in transition-age Hispanic/Latinx youth VR participants.
Research Questions

Research question 1:

What demographic factors, barriers to employment, and services are associated with exiting in competitive integrated employment after receiving services under an IPE of transition-age Hispanic/Latinx VR participants?

Research question 2:

What demographic factors, barriers to employment, and services are associated with weekly earnings of transition-age Hispanic/Latinx VR participants who exited in competitive integrated employment after receiving services under an IPE?
Data Source

• Data for this study was collected via RSA-911 database over a 48-month period (FY2017-FY2020).

• The inclusion criteria for the sample consisted of three components:
  (1) Identified as Hispanic/Latinx
  (2) Between the ages of 14 and 25
  (3) Exited the system between July 1, 2007, and June 20, 2020

• Total of 52,048 individuals
Participants

RQ1: $n = 52,048$
- Identified as Hispanic/Latinx
- Ages 14 - 25
- Exited the system between July 1, 2007, and June 20, 2020

RQ2: $n = 17,762$
- Three initial criteria + exited VR services with competitive integrated employment
Variables

Five levels of independent variables
1. Demographic factors
2. Disability category and public supports received
3. Barriers to employment
4. Pre-employment transition services (pre-ETS)
5. Vocational rehabilitation services

Two dependent variables
1. Employment outcome at exit
   1. RSA Data Element (DE) 356
2. Weekly earnings
   1. RSA DE 360 (Hours per week at exit) and DE 359 (Hourly wage at exit)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variable Levels</th>
<th>Independent Variables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demographic factors</td>
<td>• Sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Age at application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Race/ethnicity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability category and public supports received</td>
<td>• Mental health disability only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Physical disability only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sensory and communication disability only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Medicaid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Medicare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Supplemental Security Income (SSI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barriers</td>
<td>• Low-income status, single parent, homeless runaway, foster care youth, ex-offender status, English learner, migrant and seasonal farmworker, cultural barriers, basic skills deficient, exhaust Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), long-term unemployed, displaced homemaker, and dislocated worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-ETS</td>
<td>• Counseling on enrollment opportunities, instruction in self-advocacy, job exploration counseling, work-based learning experiences, and work readiness training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VR services</td>
<td>• 35 VR services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data Analysis

• A descriptive analysis was conducted to examine the demographic characteristics of the study’s sample.

• A logistic regression was conducted to explore the relationship between the five levels of independent variables and exit at employment.

• A stepwise regression analysis was performed to assess the association between the five levels of independent variables and weekly earnings of the selected sample.

• Variables with less than <1% of the sample were dropped in logistic and stepwise regression analysis.

• Statistical analyses were conducted utilizing Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) 28.0.
Results – Research Question 1

What demographic factors, barriers to employment, and services are associated with exiting in competitive integrated employment after receiving services under an IPE of transition-age Hispanic/Latinx VR participants?

- The sample (n = 52,048) was comprised of 60.6% male, 39.1% female, and a mean age of 23 years old (SD = 1.61).
- Majority of the sample identified as White (87%), followed by Black or African American (7%), American Indian (3.1%), Hispanic only (1.3%), Asian (1%), and Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander (0.8%).
- In terms of disability category, majority had a mental health disability, (86.7%), followed by sensory and communication (8%) and physical disability (4.9%).
- The model explained 6% of the variance (Nagelkerke R2 = .058).
Results – Research Question 1

What demographic factors, barriers to employment, and services are associated with exiting in competitive integrated employment after receiving services under an IPE of transition-age Hispanic/Latinx VR participants?

The most significant positive predictors:

- Short-term job supports
- Age at application
- Maintenance
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>Wald</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Exp(B)</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
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<td>1.43</td>
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<td>1.28</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>1.40</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Note. CI = confidence interval; LL = lower limit; UL = upper limit.*
Results – Research Question 1

What demographic factors, barriers to employment, and services are associated with exiting in competitive integrated employment after receiving services under an IPE of transition-age Hispanic/Latinx VR participants?

The most significant negative predictors:

- SSI recipient
- Long term unemployment
- Assessment
Table 2

Negative Predictors of Competitive Integrated Employment at Exit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>Wald</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Exp(B)</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability category and public supports received</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability significance</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>7.44</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>0.91</td>
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<td>0.02</td>
<td>9.81</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>0.90</td>
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<td>Medicare</td>
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<td>0.05</td>
<td>15.51</td>
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<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.75</td>
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<td>0.03</td>
<td>119.47</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.67</td>
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<td>Ex-offender status</td>
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<td>Foster care youth</td>
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<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>0.85</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>-0.32</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>33.72</td>
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<td>&lt;.001</td>
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<td>Job exploration counseling</td>
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<td>0.75</td>
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<td>Vocational rehabilitation counseling and guidance</td>
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<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>0.79</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Note. CI = confidence interval; LL = lower limit; UL = upper limit.*
Results – Research Question 2

What demographic factors, barriers to employment, and services are associated weekly earnings of transition-age Hispanic/Latinx VR participants who exited in competitive integrated employment after receiving services under an IPE?

• The sample (n = 17,762) was comprised of 63.6% male, 36.2% female, and a mean age of 23 years old (SD = 1.52).

• Majority of the sample identified as White (89%), followed by Black or African American (5.2%), American Indian (2.7%), Asian (1%), Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander (0.8%), and Hispanic only (0.8%).

• In terms of disability category, majority had a mental health disability (88.4%), followed by sensory and communication (7.5%) and physical disability (4.1%).

• The last model (i.e., model 5) demonstrated that the selected variables explained 5.1% of the variance (R2 = .051).

• Coefficients of analyses demonstrated several variables were significantly associated with weekly earnings.
Most important predictors of weekly earnings

The most significant positive predictors:
- Males
- Sensory and communication disability
- Job search assistance

The most significant negative predictors:
- Disability significance
- SSI recipient
- Basic skills deficiency
- Long-term unemployment
### Table 3

**Final Model for the Stepwise Regression Analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>B (Coefficients)</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>β (Standardized Coefficients)</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
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<td>12.96***</td>
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<tr>
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<td>-3.01**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disability category and public supports received</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensory and communication disability only</td>
<td>24.22</td>
<td>5.68</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>4.26***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability significance</td>
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<td>3.13</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>-10.28***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>-5.87***</td>
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<td>0.02</td>
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<td>2.64**</td>
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<td>12.15</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>4.73***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other services</td>
<td>26.73</td>
<td>10.25</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>2.61**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supported Employment Services</td>
<td>-55.47</td>
<td>11.71</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>-4.74***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-term job supports</td>
<td>-34.20</td>
<td>7.59</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>-4.50***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace readiness training</td>
<td>67.72</td>
<td>28.77</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>2.35*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001*
Discussion and Results

Predictors of Employment at Exit

- Short-term job supports (+)
- Age at application (+)
- Maintenance (+)
- SSI recipient (-)
- Males (+)
- Job placement assistance (+)
- Long term unemployment (-)
- Job search assistance (+)
- Assessment (-)
- VR counseling and guidance (-)
- Transportation (+)
- Exhaust TANF (+)
- Medicare (-)
- Information and referral services (+)
- Ex-offender status (-)
Predictors of Weekly Earnings at Exit

- Males (+)
- Sensory and communication disability only (+)
- Disability significance (-)
- SSI recipient (-)
- SSDI recipient (-)
- Basic skills deficient (-)
- Long term unemployment (-)
- Information and referral services (-)
- Job placement assistance (-)
- Job search assistance (+)
- Supported employment services (-)
- Short-term job supports (-)
Constant Predictors Across RQs

- Males (+)
- SSI recipient (-)
- Long term unemployment (-)
- Job search assistance (+)
- Assessment (-)
# Conflicting Predictors Across RQs

## Predictors of Employment at Exit
- Short-term job supports (+)
- Job placement assistance (+)
- Information and referral service (+)

## Predictors of Weekly Earnings at Exit
- Short-term job supports (-)
- Job placement assistance (-)
- Information and referral service (-)
Sociodemographic Variables and Employment Outcomes

- Female are less likely to obtain employment (Awsumb et al., 2020).

- Presence of multiple disabilities are negatively associated with employment outcomes (Poppen et al., 2017).

- Higher levels of education and nonreceipt of social security benefits were positively associated with employment outcomes for transition-age youth with TBIs (Rumrill et al., 2016).
  - Similar findings observed in transition-age youth with ASD (Kaya et al., 2016).

- Public support has been associated with positive employment outcomes in transition-age youth with ADHD (Glynn & Schaller, 2017).

- Participation in VR services have been demonstrated to promote successful employment outcomes on work hours and salary (Jun et al., 2015).
VR-related Factors and Employment Outcomes

• Although there is limited research on Hispanic/Latinx transition-age youth with disabilities and employment outcomes, previous research has documented that VR services are effective in improving job outcomes for transition-age youth with disabilities.

• This aligns with our study’s findings given various VR services were positively associated with employment and weekly earnings of Hispanic/Latinx transition-age youth with disabilities.
## VR-related Factors and Employment Outcomes of Transition-age Youth with Disabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VR Service</th>
<th>Disability type:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job placement services*</td>
<td>• Non-specific disabilities (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• TBI (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Visual impairments and blindness (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job readiness training*</td>
<td>• Non-specific disabilities (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job search assistance*</td>
<td>• Non-specific disabilities (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• TBI (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-the-job support</td>
<td>• TBI (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Visual impairments and blindness (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job development</td>
<td>• Visual impairments and blindness (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistive technology</td>
<td>• Visual impairments and blindness (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance*</td>
<td>• TBI (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information and referral services*</td>
<td>• TBI (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational and vocational training</td>
<td>• TBI (+)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Awsumb et al., 2020; Cimera et al., 2015; Rumrill et al., 2016)
Implications

• Provision of culturally responsive services by VR professionals to ensure quality.

• Key characteristics:
  • Cultural competence
  • Person-centered viewpoint
  • Utilizing effective communication methods
  • Awareness of “familismo” value
  • Bilingual staff and/or Spanish translators

• Hispanic/Latinx families may face challenges during this process:
  • Limited knowledge on transition plans
  • Trusting educators and service-providers
  • Systemic barriers

(Stone et al., 2015; Tilson & Simosen, 2013)
Implications (cont.)

Improvement of current training for VR counselors serving transition-age youth with disabilities

• VR counselors not qualified to work with youth with disabilities in school districts

• Lack of knowledge in secondary education and best practices in providing age-appropriate employment services

• Not aware of purpose of serving youth with disabilities and their role in serving youth in high schools

(Awsumb et al., 2020; Plotner et al., 2012)
Implications (cont.)

• Sex differences in employment outcomes and weekly earnings can be associated with female youth having limited independence and experiencing an under-identification of disability diagnosis by school districts.

• Our study demonstrated a low percentage of the sample received SSI and an even smaller percentage received benefits counseling (BC):
  • RQ1: 13.9% received SSI, 0.8% received BC
  • RQ2: 11.3% received SSI, 1.7% received BC

• Further research focused on the relationship between sociodemographic characteristics, VR services, and employment as it related to Hispanic/Latinx transition-age youth with disabilities.

(Awsumb et al., 2020)
Limitations

• RSA-911 dataset is generated by VR counselors and due to error may result in incongruencies in data coding

• RSA-911 data is limited in providing other contextual data regarding variables that may be limiting Hispanic/Latinx transition-age youth with disabilities employment outcomes and weekly earnings.
  • e.g., state policies, funding, community rehabilitation agencies’ capacity to deliver the services, and level of fidelity of implementation of VR services

• State VR agencies were implementing the provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) across this time period which may have created uneven effects over the four-year period

• COVID-19 Pandemic
Limitations

• During our analysis it was observed that 20 out of 35 VR services had a <1% utilization rate
  • Benefits counseling (0.2%), customized employment services (0.1%), on-the-job training (0.4%), supported employment services (0.7%), four-year college or university training (0.1%)

• Some of the identified predictors in categories of barriers and VR services had a low utilization rate
  • Barriers: migrant farmworker (0.8%), displaced homemaker (1%), ex-offender status (1.5%), foster care youth (1.6%), and short-term job supports (1.8%)
  • VR services: maintenance (0.8%) and job search assistance (1.1%)
Conclusion

• Although growing research has explored factors associated with employment outcomes in transition-age youth with disabilities, there is limited research on the supports and services that provide pathways to employment among transition-age Hispanic/Latinx youth with disabilities.

• This study examined to what extent sociodemographic and VR-related variables associated with employment at exit and weekly earnings in transition-age Hispanic/Latinx VR participants. Our study revealed both positive and negative predictors of employment at exit and weekly earnings in transition-age Hispanic/Latinx VR participants.
Thank you!

Questions?

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References (cont.)


