



UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND WORK SCIENCE

Master thesis in Sociology, 30 higher education credits

Accessibility and participation in work and employment
for people with intellectual disabilities within
Gothenburg Municipality.

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Spring term 2021

Abstract

Work and employment are a central part of an individual's life, not only to gain financial security, but to establish your identity, gain a sense of belonging, as well as build social networks. In Sweden, participation within work and employment for individuals with intellectual disabilities is low and research about working life and intellectual disability is limited. The lack of access to the labor market for people with intellectual disabilities also speaks for greater risks of being discriminated against. This qualitative study investigates the discursive construction of intellectual disability in relation to work and employment within Gothenburg municipality policy. This has the aim to identify how formulations reinforce marginalization and exclusion of people with intellectual disabilities. This is put into perspective when investigating the experience of access and participation within work and employment for people with intellectual disability. This is done through interviews with people who participate in and work with Daily Activity. Using Critical Disability Theory (CDT) and Intersectional Theory, the results indicate a lack of complexity when talking about people with intellectual disabilities within *Gothenburg City's program for full participation for people with disabilities 2021-2026*. Through the experiences, the results indicate a need for a multifaceted and changeable perspective on work and employment. The importance of considering the individual's own needs and wishes, as well as how opportunity is dependent on hierarchical relationships of gender, age, ethnicity and disability is acknowledged. Using these indications, the impact of experience on policy considers problematizing the use of essentialist formulations through a perspective of lived experiences.

Key words: Intellectual disability, intersectionality, disability theory, discourse, work and employment.

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1. Introduction

Participation and access to work and employment are important aspects for a well-functioning society. Aside from financial support, working has positive effects on life quality. Work contributes to developing social networks, strengthening the sense of self and your identity, as well as creating structure in your everyday lives. Work is seen as crucial to achieve equal participation in society (Tideman, Lövgren & Szönyi, 2017). However, people with disabilities have difficulties accessing and participating in the labor market in Sweden. Within the working population in Sweden, about half a million people have a disability. According to the Swedish Employment Agency, people with disabilities are underrepresented in the labor market with around 75% of people between the ages of 16-64 compared to 85% of people between the ages 16-64 without a disability. Unemployment rates for people with disabilities is about 2 % higher than for individuals without a disability (SCB, 2019). About 28% of people with a reduced work ability, due to their disability, has experienced different kinds of discrimination within work or on the labor market, with higher reports coming from women and those with a lowered working ability. Negative attitudes from employers are presented as one of the most common forms of discrimination towards individuals with a disability. (SCB, 2019). People with an intellectual disability are reported to have the greatest difficulty in establishing themselves within work due to high demands on the open labor market, the lack of guidance within special education towards the labor market, as well as lack of regard within law and policy (Tidman, Lövgren & Szönyi, 2017). Mental illness is higher amongst people with intellectual disability, compared to the rest of society (Socialstyrelsen, 2020).

A report by The Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare regarding efforts and support for people with disabilities state that, within adapted employments such as Daily Activity, the purpose is for people, who are covered by the Law of Support and Service (LSS), to gain access to paid work (Socialstyrelsen, 2019). In 2018, 37,810 people were active within Daily Activity. Of these, 15,940 were women, and 21,890 were men (Socialstyrelsen, 2020). The success of accessing work on the open labor market through Daily Activity is limited, as the reports of people with disabilities gaining permanent employment within paid jobs are low. Between 2017 and 2018, these transitions into paid labor occurred in every third municipality, and only 0,2% of people with disabilities in 2014 had a long-term job two years after they left daily activity (Socialstyrelsen, 2019). Despite the relevance of work and employment for the individual and society, research about work and employment in relation to disability has been given limited attention (Rönnerberg et., al. 2012, Tideman, Lövgren & Szönyi, 2017). There is a

lack of distinction between different types of disabilities within research about working life and disability, which makes it difficult to draw conclusions specifically regarding intellectual disabilities. This study explores how intellectual disability is constructed in relation to access and participation to work and employment within Gothenburg municipality's policy. The experience of access and participation to work and employment is also investigated through interviews with people, who themselves have an intellectual disability and, or is connected to Daily Activity within the municipality. The implications of experience are then applied to policy development.

1.1 Aim, purpose and research questions

The lack of acknowledgement of intellectual disabilities within research highlights the need for further investigation in relation to the labor market, work and employment. This report aims to contribute to this through looking at how the discourse on intellectual disability is constructed in *Gothenburg's municipality's program for full participation for people with disabilities 2021-2026*. The experience of access and participation within the labor market and working life will also be explored through interviews with participants within Daily Activity, who themselves have intellectual disabilities, as well as employees that are responsible for implementing strategies for equal access and participation to work. Calling attention to both perspectives of discourse and experience also deepens our understanding of the current problematic of low participation within work for people with intellectual disabilities. To highlight structures of injustices that contribute to the exclusion from work, this report uses an intersectional perspective. This study is conducted with the purpose of exploring issues of limited understanding of intellectual disability, as well as unequal opportunity and access to work and employment. The results are to act as an incentive for policy formulation and practice within the public sector.

1.1.1 Research questions

The questions posed for the study are:

- *How is intellectual disability constructed and understood through Gothenburg city's policy program in relation to work and employment?*
- *What is the impact of having an intellectual disability on the experiences of work and employment according to people within Daily Activity, and those who work with Daily Activity in Gothenburg?*

- *How can the experiences and perspectives contribute to a more comprehensive and inclusive policy?*

2. Background and definitions

In this section, a clarification of laws, the situation on the labor market and the definition of disability and Daily Activity is made.

2.1 Definition of disability

The term disability is used to capture a wide range of physical or mental conditions. Disability (funktionsnedsättning) affects a person's physical, psychological or intellectual state in different ways. It may relate to a person's movements, learning, communication, senses or judgements, as well as other functions. Another way of describing disability (funktionshinder) is when a person becomes hindered based on their disability in relation to their surroundings (Socialstyrelsen, 2019).

2.2 Swedish legislation

Sweden's anti-discrimination law prohibit discrimination against people on the basis of gender, gender identity, ethnicity, disability, sexuality and/or age (DL, 2008:567). This operates on several societal arenas, including the workplace and the labor market. Employers cannot discriminate against their employees or those seeking work on these grounds (DL, 2008:567). The Law for Support and Service for people with disabilities is designed to promote equal living conditions and full participation in society (LSS, 1993:387). Daily Activity is one form of support for people of working age and who lack paid employment (LSS, 1993:387, 9§ 10). The municipality's responsibility for people with disabilities is covered by the Swedish Social Services Act (SoL, 2001:453). It is the municipality's obligation to provide opportunity for economic and social security, equal living conditions and active participation in society for individuals with disabilities (SoL, 2001:453, 1§). The Swedish Health and Care Law has the purpose to ensure adjusted support for people with disabilities, so that they can participate based on their abilities (HSL, 2017:30).

2.3 Situation on the labor market and employment in daily activity

People with disabilities and lower work ability have a lower participation in fulltime labor compared to those without a disability or lower work ability (61% compared to 80%). More women with a disability report having a lower work ability than men (73% compared to 63%), and there is a higher representation of older people having a disability. Most people with a disability and lower work ability are reported to have been born in Sweden (14% Swedish born, compared to 8% non-Swedish born). People with disabilities are also overrepresented within occupations with lower educational demands (SCB, 2019:38).

There are multiple definitions of work and criteria for employment. According to the Central Bureau of Statistics (SCB, 2019), the most common definition of work is that of paid full- or part time labor. Another definition includes individuals who partake in different kinds of politically initiated labor programs, such as supported employment (SCB, 2019).

Daily Activity is an adapted form of employment, aimed at people who don't work or study, who are included in group 1 and 2 in LSS (1993:387). This means people who live with a disability, as well as people living with a condition as a result from brain damage (Söder, 2011:148). Participation in Daily Activity builds on the decision made through an investigation with regards to a person's interests and abilities. The purpose of Daily Activity is to gain experience with the goal of lasting employment on the open labor market through training, internships, and supported learning (Söder, 2011:149-150). In Gothenburg, Daily Activity is described based on the importance of having a meaningful everyday life. Daily Activity is supposed to closely resemble a regular job, with assignments that fit your personal interests and needs. The Municipality states that, through internships and specific skill-building, people should be able to move to regular employment (Göteborgs stad, 2021).

3. Previous research

Different areas of previous research, presented below, are relevant to consider in relation to this specific study.

3.1 Disability discourse and working life

Hartnett, Stuart, Thurman, Loy and Carter Batiste (2011) investigates the disability discourse through employers' perceptions of benefits for hiring, promoting and retaining individuals with disabilities in the workplace. This is done from the perspective of the American Job Accommodation Network, that helps people with disabilities find employment. Through the employers' perspective, benefits include retaining quality workers, and increased profitability and productivity for the organization. The authors articulate that increased work accommodation for disabled workers aids in promoting a good organizational morale and culture, creating a sense of inclusiveness which recognizes the workers as individual human beings with individual needs (Hartnett et.al., 2011).

Imrie (2000) explores disability discourse through the concepts of mobility and movement. The dominant discourse of prioritized bodies, meaning what bodies are preferred through societal norms and values, entails the freedom and liberty to develop yourself socially and economically through the ability to move and access different spaces, both physical and social, such as within work. This is described as essentially exclusionary of people with disabilities, who often do not fit into the norms, regarding mobility and movement. Immobility, through this perspective, is seen as a burden, comparing it to the standards of independence of movements and bodily functions: a body without physical or mental impairments. These conditions are argued to be dependent on sociocultural practices and the built environment, where people with disabilities are often excluded. Social, political, and institutional structures construct the debates of mobility and movement in society, without considering the complexity of disability (Imrie, 2000).

Relating to the notion of mobility and movement, Swain, French and Cameron (2003) argue that by comparing people, there is a chance of creating valued identities. The concept of difference divides society on the basis of "us" and "them", where acknowledgement of differences, regarding ability and disability, can become a site for discrimination (Swain, French & Cameron, 2003: 55). For people with disabilities on the labor market, this could risk creating grounds for alienation, discrimination, lowered work opportunities and self-confidence when considering disabled people as "others" (Swain, French & Cameron, 2003: 55-56).

Umb-Carlsson and Sonnander (2005) points to a historical, as well as contemporary perspective when investigating differences in living conditions for people with intellectual disability. The use of social reforms to deconstruct a clinical perspective on disability, that has been depicting disability as subnormal or deficiencies of the individual, decrease the differences of living conditions in society. Despite this shift of perspective on disability, the author's point towards persisting obstacles for reaching equal conditions for people with intellectual disabilities, such as heightening demands within work. The authors state that, due to worse financial situations and marginalizing supportive efforts, people with intellectual disabilities are hindered from gaining independence and influence over their own lives. They point to the importance of physical integration, social integration and community participation (Umb-Carlsson & Sonnander, 2005).

3.2 Disability within law and policy

What disability means, and who is disabled is largely decided through legal definitions (Barron, 2004:43-44). Policies regarding disability have transformed extensively in the past decades. This has been done as a response to the growing visibility of disability in society, as well as increased participation of people with disabilities in society. Lane and Videbæk Munkholm (2015) argue that there is still an issue of low work participation, low wages and negative public perception of people with disability. It is suggested that laws become unclear in how they should be operationalized and fails to constitute a reliable source of protection against discrimination. To tackle the issues of ensuring work opportunities for disabled workers, as well as protect them from discrimination, Lane and Videbæk Munkholm (2015) argue for including a perspective and practice of diversity in laws and policies.

Elraz (2018) investigates the meaning of knowledge and awareness of disabilities within work, and its implications on policy and practice. It is argued that negative assumptions about a person's disability affects how they are perceived and contributes to stigmatization, without taking the person's individual abilities to perform within work into consideration. Increased knowledge and awareness, embracing a more inclusive culture towards disabilities contributes to preventing stigmatization and discrimination, and leads to better policy formulation and implementation (Elraz, 2018).

3.3 Disability and intersectionality

The public sector in Sweden undergoes continuous organizational changes towards a growing heterogeneity within the labor force. De los Reyes (2000) highlights the challenges involved in developing a diverse workforce. High demands on flexibility and adaptability have become basic organizational principles as a response to structural labor market changes. This puts pressure on labor force flexibility and adaptability. Diversity of employees, such as in terms of gender and ethnicity, is used as a tool to expand the organization to meet global demands, as well as a strategy for market competition. While focused largely on gender and ethnicity, the perspective of growing heterogeneity often fails to consider the intersecting impact of disability when trying to formulate an inclusive and diverse labor market (de los Reyes, 2000). The lack of pluralism reinforces marginalization and the notion of “otherness”.

Shaw, Chan, and McMahon (2012) state that the workplace is important for understanding the combined effects of membership in multiple stigmatizing groups. Focusing on only one group disregards the complexity of interacting memberships, such as race, gender and (dis)ability combined. It is concluded that a more contextualized legal approach to analyzing workplace discrimination on multiple grounds is often failed to be acknowledged. The authors exemplify this by pointing towards the higher risk of harassment when being a female, being older, having an ethnical minority status, and having a disability. (Shaw, Chan & McMahon, 2012).

Investigating inequality becomes more complex when considering diversity and fluidity within social divisions. Swain, French and Cameron (2003) argue that simultaneous oppression on multiple grounds makes it difficult to locate and prioritize one aspect of oppression without excluding another. Understanding different experiences can help generate new perspectives of what it means to be disadvantaged on multiple grounds (Swain, French & Cameron, 2003: 57-58).

3.4 Moving beyond the discourse on diversity and integration

Anthias (2013) presents a critical view on contemporary diversity discourses. The author argues that the contemporary use of integration and diversity forms boundaries and hierarchies within society. The discourse of diversity and integration aims to attack social divisions but holds the danger of sustaining essentialized constructions of these divisions, which is argued to reinforce a notion of “othering”. Looking at the discourse within social cohesion frameworks in a UK context, the author states that diversity and integration refers to “good” or “bad”

differences. This under-emphasizes structural contexts and offers a solidified construction of difference (Anthias, 2013). The meaning of diversity in contemporary society disregards the difference within cultural groups, depicting them as culturally stagnant, without contextuality. The concept of integration does not consider the diverse nature of social relations. From this, the author acknowledges a need to regard diversity through a perspective of intersectional framings and translocational interculturalism, which means to recognize diversity through a multitude of combinations of positionality within the social world. Integration and diversity should therefore acknowledge the complexity of social identities (Anthias, 2013).

3.5 Disability and advocacy

Empowerment has great meaning for individuals with a disability. Bertilsdotter-Rosqvist and Keisu (2012) explores two competing storylines of empowerment in regard to people with autism. The dominant storyline is defined as the recreated norm storyline, portraying autism as the cause for people having difficulties entering and maintaining work in the open labor market. This maintains that it is the person's own responsibility to change, whilst the dominating structures and norms of work stay intact. A counter narrative focuses on how structural barriers and discrimination on the labor market function to disadvantage people with autism. The prospect of change is directed towards structural conditions instead of the individual. A more nuanced way of defining workers includes the deconstruction of what is defined as "ideal jobs", through inviting individual storylines of people with disabilities, and letting them gain power over the discourse (Bertilsdotter-Rosqvist & Keisu, 2012).

Self-advocacy is a tool that can be used to alter the prejudice against people with intellectual disability. Tideman and Svensson (2015) speak about the issues within self-advocacy on the discourse of disability and work. There is a risk that the wish for independence overshadows the fact that many people with intellectual disability need different forms of support (Tideman & Svensson, 2015). Another issue lies within the current limits of self-advocacy. There is still an overprotective care mentality in society's view of intellectual disability, which exploits the vulnerability of people with an intellectual disability. There is a dominant influence of professionals in the decisions made for people with disabilities. According to the authors, acknowledging lived experiences of people with intellectual disabilities helps normalize different types of abilities and living conditions. This could help prohibit the reproduction of structural oppression of only professional's opinions in decision making (Tideman & Svensson, 2015).

3.6 Independence and freedom

Bostad and Hanisch (2016) explores the meaning of independence and freedom for people with disabilities through the concepts of independence, dependence and interdependence. The authors argue that freedom increases by removing situation-specific constraints and that being free means to have a choice as well as being involved in different situations. Freedom is argued to allow people to live different lives, but that this is regulated by facilitation and adjustments of the environment. In their research, it is stated that there is still a lack of respect for difference (Bostad & Hanisch, 2016). Through looking at the U.N. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), the authors conclude that traditional definitions of freedom do not take differences into consideration. Freedom needs to be conceptualized to include people with severe disabilities, who have been disregarded within the facilitation for freedom (Bostad & Hanisch, 2016).

3.7 Job satisfaction and quality of worklife

Kocman and Weber (2016) explores work quality and motivation in employees with intellectual disability. It is argued that inclusive working settings are more associated with higher job-satisfaction, where people with intellectual disabilities are often employed. The study shows that within sheltered employment or Daily Activity, job satisfaction is connected with remuneration and satisfaction with payment, even though the financial compensation often is lower within these forms of employment (Kocman & Weber, 2016).

3.8 Conclusion

Based on previous research, the aim for this research is to broaden the scope of knowledge and understanding of disability and work with a more specific focus on intellectual disability. This report also aims to consider these different empirical grounds from a Swedish context on a municipal level.

4. Theoretical framing and concepts

Multiple theoretical perspectives and concepts, explained below, are relevant in relation to this specific study.

4.1 Critical disability theory

This study draws on Critical Disability Theory (CDT). Here, Devlin and Pothier (2006) discuss a perspective of dis-citizenship. Dis-citizenship occurs through a wide network of social, cultural, political, economic and legal inequality that fails to respond to the needs of people with disabilities (Devlin & Pothier, 2006:1-2). The primary concern for CDT is to look at the use of language within these networks. The definitions and distinctions of “disability” are viewed and challenged in a way to test how these enable or hinder the full personhood and equality of a person that has a disability. Depending on how “disability” is defined, it has a different determinative impact on how others perceive people with disabilities, as well as how people choose to identify themselves (Devlin & Pothier, 2006:3-4). CDT employs a historical perspective, acknowledging the changing conditions for talking and understanding disabilities in different contexts, taking a dualistic approach into account instead of talking about disability as binary. It distances itself from fixed definitions of disability and does not aim to only regard the medical aspect of disability, instead understanding it as changing and contextual (Devlin & Pothier, 2006:5). It views disability as a question of *power(lessness)*, *power over* and *power to*, providing a perspective that questions normative assumptions on disability (Devlin & Pothier, 2006:2).

4.2 Intersectional theory

As introduced in the previous research, Intersectional theory claims that disadvantages are based on multiple sources of oppression. Identity markers do not exist independently from each other, creating levels of domination that are the basis of discrimination and power. Inequality is created through a process of interaction that creates segregation and hierarchies of power (De los Reyes & Mulinari, 2005). The questioning of knowledge production and reproduction of inequality is central since inequality is embedded in complex networks of structural relationships and human behavior. An intersectional perspective acknowledges power relations- and symmetries that creates unequal opportunities for people in different contexts. An important context being the labor market and work, where injustices, hierarchies and power-relationships are formed (Mulinari & Selberg, 2011:8).

Acker (2006) clarifies these systems of injustice as connected practices, processes, and meanings that exist within all organizations and refer to systematic differences regarding power and influence over goals, resources and decisions within the organization.

Multiple discrimination against people places them in different margins, where both gender, class, ethnicity and disability interact and produce different outcomes for different people. Multiple social penalties, also known as double disadvantages or triple burdens, may intensify the experience of one penalty and result in multiple forms of oppression (Vernon, 1999).

4.3 Work

In this study, a theoretical perspective on work is valuable. Ahrne (1987) mentions that work plays a large role in creating a sense of purpose and satisfaction in life. What makes work meaningful is subjective: what is meaningful for one person in one context might not be perceived in the same way for another person in another context (Ahrne, 1987:131-133). In Swedish society, organized work has become one of the most central places for developing and formulating a social life. Less emphasis is put on work as a means for material survival, instead focusing on its meaning on forming social relations. This is illustrated through the increasing focus on organizational cultures, cooperation and creating a sense of familiarity within the workplace (Ahrne, 1987:133-138).

4.4 Principle of normality

The principle of normality refers to the historical evolution of viewing and talking about disability in society (Tideman, 2000:50-53). Three perspectives of normality are central to this principle. The first considers normality as *static* and based on the average. Here the most commonly occurred is what is considered normal. The second perspective considers normality as based on the *current normative values* in society. The third one is referred to as *individual*, or *medical normality*. Here, normality is considered those who are healthy and do not require any medical treatment or support (Tideman, 2000:53).

This perspective has been criticized by pointing to the increasing segregation within work and employment for people with intellectual disabilities (Söder, 2011:264). There is a discussion about whether normality is something desirable and the focus of achieving normality might contribute to the isolation and invisibility of disability in society. Complying with this formulation of normality would mean that a person with a disability is put under

pressure to perform on the conditions as someone without a disability. This creates a risk of feeling unable to participate within work (Tideman, 2000:62-63).

4.5 Independence and freedom

The theoretical notion of independence and freedom is meaningful when looking at the question of access to paid employment among people with disabilities. Swain, French and Cameron (2003) acknowledge the importance of questioning the dominant definition of independence. Independence is understood in terms of self-sufficiency, and not dependent on the help of others. It is argued that this notion of independence results in the exclusion of disabled people who need different types of help in their daily lives. Reimagining the concept of independence, instead viewing it as self-determination and control, helps disabled people reject the oppressive notion that you can only be independent when you are self-sufficient (Swain, French & Cameron, 2003:76-79). Simplistic interpretations of independence fail to acknowledge that we are all dependent on help from people, with or without a disability. A more complex definition refers to independence as “being capable of acting for oneself (Swain, French & Cameron, 2003:76). It is not only about physical self-reliance, even if it has been viewed as an important factor. Instead, the view of independence is shifting towards self-determination and control. Difficulties of gaining long-term employment due to hostile attitudes and inaccessible environments, restricts access to control and independence for people with disabilities (Swain, French & Cameron, 2003:79-80).

4.6 Conclusion

By using the perspectives in relation to each other, a deeper reflection is possible when looking at the construction of intellectual disability in relation to work within Gothenburg Municipality policy, as well as when investigating the experience of work and employment for people with intellectual disability. The theory will aid the interpretations by illustrating the complexities of studying work and employment for people with a disability.

5. Method

In this section, the methodological starting point, data collection and method for analysis are presented. The empirical material consists of textual data and semi-structured interviews. The analysis is done through coding and thematization and interpreted through Critical Discourse Analysis and Phenomenology.

5.1 Methodological starting point

Since this study aims to investigate how intellectual disability is constructed within Gothenburg municipality's policy, as well as the experiences of intellectual disability in relation to work and employment, a qualitative approach is most suited.

5.1.1 Critical Discourse Analysis

Studying discourse offers an understanding of particular ways of talking about and understanding the world, seen through patterns within different social domains. Discursive relations and orders are sites where conflict and social struggle are formed (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002:1, 63,74). In this study, investigating discourse is done through looking at the patterns regarding intellectual disability in relation to work and employment within policy. A Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) means investigating the discursive practices of text and linguistics on intellectual disability in relation to the labor market and employment from a critical perspective. The use of CDA is used to uncover the production of inequality and discrimination of people with intellectual disability and the possibility to participate in work. This is done by identifying terms within Gothenburg city's policy that disregards, marginalizes or stigmatizes people with intellectual disability, or acts as a barrier for people with intellectual disability to participate in work and employment. It helps acknowledge how our understanding of intellectual disability in relation to work and employment is shaped through policy (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002:73). CDA is applied to identify and confront dominant discourses within policy that creates inequality for people with intellectual disabilities. CDA focuses on unequal power is distributed unevenly across marginalized groups and populations. (Blanco Ramirez, 2019). To critically assess a discourse on intellectual disability, work and employment within policy, means to explore the dominant discourse and its implications in relation to different contexts. This invites us to also include an intersectional perspective when conducting the research.

5.1.2 Phenomenology

Phenomenology is used to describe lived experiences in relation to a phenomenon or concept with the aim to derive an essence of this phenomenon. Within phenomenology, both the subjective and objective ideas and experiences of the phenomenon are taken into consideration (Creswell & Poth, 2018: 75-77). The focus is on describing what the interviewees have in common through the telling of their experiences, and how they have experienced it. Within this research, the phenomenon regards how individuals experience access and participation within work and employment for people with intellectual disabilities. This is done through identifying commonalities, or themes, in the participants' experiences that aids in gaining an understanding what it means to have an intellectual disability in work and employment. The challenge of a phenomenological approach includes finding individuals that all have an understanding of the phenomenon, as well as the contextuality of perceiving a specific phenomenon. Different people may experience the phenomena differently in different situations (Creswell & Poth, 2017:81-82). This needs to be considered in this specific research, as everyone has a different understanding and experience of intellectual disability, as well as work and employment.

5.2 Data collection and selection

5.2.1 Textual data

The textual data consists of the policy document, *Gothenburg city's program for full participation for people with disabilities 2021-2026* (Göteborgs stad, 2020). The material was collected through the municipality's website, by using the keywords: *disability, intellectual disability, daily activity, labor market, work and employment, support for people with disability*. The focus was put on documents regarding questions of work, employment and disability. Gothenburg city has several programs that refer to strategies to increase opportunities in society for people with disabilities. Some of these are: *Gothenburg city's program for an equal city 2018-2026* (Göteborgs stad, 2018), *Gothenburg city's plan to improve the living conditions for hbtq-people 2017-2021* (Göteborgs stad, 2017), *Gothenburg city's plan for equality 2019-2023* (Göteborgs stad, 2019) and *Gothenburg city's program for attractive employers 2019-2023* (Göteborgs stad, 2019). These documents function together, and in relation to each other. A demarcation was made to only focus on the *Gothenburg city's program for full participation for people with disabilities 2021-2026* (Göteborgs stad, 2020), seeing that the terminology that references disabilities mainly occurs within this document.

This could affect the analysis and conclusions. Including several policy's might illustrate other aspects that are important to consider when looking at the discourse on intellectual disability.

5.2.2 Interviews

Collecting data regarding experiences of intellectual disabilities in relation to work and employment, was done through qualitative interviews (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2014:41). The interview-guides (Appendix 1) are formulated in general themes to investigate the experiences of access and participation in work and employment for people with intellectual disabilities (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2014:45). The questions are semi-structured, meaning they are not limited to either an open conversation, or closed questions. This was done with the purpose of encouraging people to talk about their own subjective experiences. Through the interviews, there is an interest to highlight experiences both from people with intellectual disabilities that are currently, or have previous experience, of Daily Activity within the municipality, and people who work with questions of access and participation within work and employment in the municipality. It is acknowledged that despite what occupational position you have, you might have an intellectual disability and the aim is not to imply that having an intellectual disability means you are not able to work outside of Daily Activity.

The aim was also to reach out to people with different backgrounds, regarding ethnicity, age and gender. The recruitment of participants followed the method of snowballing (Alan Bryman, 2018:504). An email with information about the study was sent out to different actors and departments within the municipality. People who were interested in partaking in the study helped recruit further participants by recommending the study to colleagues and participants within Daily Activity. Due to a low initial response from potential participants, a second email was sent out as a remainder. A total of ten participants were interviewed. Five were conducted via video-call, and five were conducted in person with appropriate safety measures according to the government's covid-19 restrictions. Before the interview, the participants consented to participate in the study and for the interview to be recorded. The audio files were deleted after being transcribed. All names of these participants are made up for the sake of anonymity. Hasse, Beatrice, Jonas, Hanna and Carl have intellectual disabilities, and four of these are participants within Daily Activity. Lina, Tommy, Fredrik, Jenny and Sigrid do not have intellectual disabilities.

Hasse is 50 years old and has participated in Daily Activity since 2016. He identifies as male and has Swedish heritage. He works with different tasks, such as media.

Beatrice is 47 years old and has participated in Daily Activity since 2018. She identifies as female and has Swedish heritage. She works with different assignments, such as café and service.

Jonas is 57 years old and participates within Daily Activity. He identifies as male and has Swedish heritage. He works with different assignments at the activity center.

Lina is 46 years old and a unit manager for Daily Activity centers in a region of Gothenburg city. She identifies as female, and she has Eastern European heritage.

Hanna is 43 years old and has participated in Daily Activity since 2007. She identifies as female and has Eastern European heritage. She works with different assignments, mainly sewing.

Carl is 34 years old and is an employee with wage compensation at a non-profit organization that offers Daily Activity in collaboration with Gothenburg municipality. He identifies as male and has Swedish heritage and has previous experience from participating within Daily Activity. Within the organization, he works with different tasks, such as with questions regarding disability rights in society.

Tommy is 52 years old and works as a coach and lawyer at a non-profit organization that offers Daily Activity in collaboration with the Gothenburg municipality. He identifies as male with Swedish heritage.

Fredrik is 63 years old and works as a unit manager for Daily Activity centers in a region of Gothenburg city. He identifies as male and has Swedish heritage.

Jenny is 50 years old and works as a support assistant, employed within Daily Activity. She identifies as female with Swedish heritage.

Sigrid is 55 years old and works as a unit manager within the Municipalities functional-support department. She identifies as female and has Swedish heritage.

5.3 Data analysis

The analysis is operationalized through a process of coding and thematization of the collected empirical material (Bryman, 2018:688-698, 702). After the data is collected, the material goes through an initial coding. This process is done in two parts, as the analysis is divided between textual data, and interviews. A code is a phrase or sentence that captures a summative essence within the data (Saldana, 2008:3). Within this specific analysis, these codes consist of different terms that relate to the experience of intellectual disability and work, or formulations of how intellectual disability is understood in relation to participation in work within policy. These terms are put against each other to further reflect on their meaning and implication (Bryman, 2018:698-700). Relevant information within the material is patterned and clustered within themes that offer a reflection of the research questions. A theoretical reflection of the data within the identified themes contribute to the existing knowledge about intellectual disability and access and participation within work and employment (Bryman, 2018:702-703). When coding, it is important for the researcher to consider their own filters. Based on subjective experiences and individual interests, different researchers might code the same material differently (Saldana, 2008:7). This might affect the way intellectual disability in relation to work and employment is understood and presented within this report. There are challenges of translating the material, as well as deciding which excerpts to include from the empirical material. When both parts of the analysis have been concluded, a final remark about potential progress of policy based on the interviews is reflected upon. This means to look at the implications from the thematization of the interviews that can be useful when formulating municipality policy.

5.4 Ethical considerations

Anonymity and confidentiality are concretized through the use of a consent form. The data is also stored securely on a password protected device. Consent does not need to be given when using public documents but should be reflected and interpreted by the same principles of fairness (Vetenskapsrådet, 2002:5, 7-14). The protection of people, who participate in the study, is important to acknowledge. The people this study aims to investigate could be considered a sensitive group. Interpretations and remarks thus need to be made carefully to not reproduce marginalization of people with intellectual disabilities. Additionally, one important aspect of research ethics is the researcher's role and the treatment and safety of participants (Vetenskapsrådet, 2017:12). Since my intention is to acknowledge the need to develop better

strategies for policy formulation, my stance is inherently critical. Interpretations are made through a continuous reflection on my own role as a researcher and with an understanding that the production of knowledge and producer of knowledge are interrelated (Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2018:10-13). This is done so that, despite my own stance within the research, there is possibility to acknowledge different ways of interpreting the data.

5.5 Reliability and validity

Reliability refers to the trustworthiness of the research. Validity refers to the legitimacy and truthfulness of interpretations. (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2014: 295-298). Since this study is conducted on a municipal level, it is dependent on the conditions that are specific within this context. This might affect the reliability when conducting similar research in another context. Making interpretations is also dependent on translations and the collected material. The validity is considered through assessing the current study's operationalizations and results to theoretical perspectives and previous research, which help assessing the legitimacy of interpretations. The legitimacy of interviews is decided through the interviewee's own experiences, actions, self-image and knowledge.

7. Results and Analysis

7.1 The construction and understanding of intellectual disability in policy

Gothenburg city's program for full participation for people with disabilities 2021-2026 is a governing policy document, aimed to increase participation for people with disabilities (Göteborgs stad, 2020). It is designed to clarify what is expected of the municipality's boards¹, in order to ensure that people with disabilities can participate in society and work without discrimination. It proceeds from democratic values, human rights and non-discrimination and should be implemented in all functions and processes within the municipality (Göteborgs stad, 2020:1). The program has 10 focus-areas: (1) The right to an independent life, (2) the right to information and communication, (3) the right to democratic participation, (4) the right for a safe life, (5) the right to health, (6) the right to education, (7) the right to work and employment, (8) the right to living accommodations, (9) the right to movement and access to the city's spaces, and (10) the right to meaningful leisure-time (Göteborgs stad, 2020:6). The policy document works cross-sectionally with other municipality policies and frameworks (Göteborgs stad, 2020:4-5).

When investigating how intellectual disability is understood and constructed within this program in relation to work and employment, four areas of interest are identified. The first theme emphasizes the lack of acknowledgement of the conditions for specifically intellectual disability in relation to other disabilities. Secondly, access and participation on the same conditions as everyone else is explored. Here, the concept of "others" refers to people who do not have a disability. Ambiguities arise when using binary definitions of different groups in society, instead of seeing the complex nature of relationships between people. The third theme explores the construction of intellectual disability in relation to the concepts of power and independence. The policy document does not regard the specific conditions of power and independence for people with intellectual disability, which might lead to exclusion from work and employment. The last theme examines the terms knowledge and understanding, where a lack of specification and contextualization of knowledge and understanding sustains an essentialist disability discourse.

¹ The municipality has a total of 24 boards (Göteborgs stad, 2021).

7.1.1 A lack of regard for intellectual disabilities

Gothenburg city's program for full participation for people with disabilities 2021-2026 distinguishes between different disabilities according to how they are defined by the National Board of Health and Welfare (Göteborgs stad, 2020, Socialstyrelsen, 2020). Within the policy document, intellectual disability is included within a more general definition of disability.

A disability (Funktionsnedsättning) is an impairment of the individual's physical, psychological, or intellectual abilities. Disability (Funktionshinder) regards the limitations for a person in relation to your surroundings. For example, deficits in the environment, accessibility, personal resources, leadership competencies, as well as point of time for leisure activity (Göteborgs stad, 2020:14).

Disability therefore refers to all people who have different disabilities when considering participation in work and employment.

People with a disability have work or meaningful employment (Göteborgs stad, 2020:12).

In the policy definitions, it is then illustrated in a way to regard a more complex view of different disabilities.

People with disabilities possess, as everyone else, plenty of different qualities. Within this group, individual differences are also accommodated. (...). A disability can entail one or several impairments relating to the cognitive abilities, to handle different subjects, to see, hear or move (Göteborgs stad, 2020:14).

The use of the term disability in the municipality policy highlights how disability, and who is disabled, is decided and defined through national policy and legislature, as argued by Barron (2004:43-44). Within Gothenburg policy for participation, the use of the word disability as a larger term for all kinds of disabilities, such as intellectual disabilities, might stem from the perspective of social and historical contexts as forming the understanding of disability (Lane & Videbæk Munkholm, 2015). This risk sustaining a medical notion of disability. The lack of continuously contextualizing disability risks enforcing an essentialist view of disability and disregarding the complexity of people's individual needs and abilities, as argued by Imrie (2000). Categorizing people with different disabilities within the same definitions risks reinforcing the grouping of "us" and "them". It fails to acknowledge that people with different disabilities live with different conditions (Swain, French & Cameron, 2003). Not only does this disregard the conditions of having an intellectual disability, but it contributes to the conversation that difference is something binary, static and something with a negative

connotation that risks contributing to discrimination, such as within work (Swain, French & Cameron, 2003: 55-56). By highlighting the multitude of differences within the term disability, a deeper understanding of individual needs and abilities would be made possible. This is done to some extent within the policy but needs to be present in all sections that mention disability as a wider term, as to avoid misconceptions and stereotyping that reinforces the notion of dis-citizenship, talked about by Devlin and Pothier (2006).

Clarifying different conditions in relation to goals and strategies helps realize the difference in perceiving, accessing and participating within work and employment, based on individual needs and abilities. If the goal- and strategy formulation does not continuously distinguish between different disabilities and the different conditions related to situation-specific barriers, power relationships between different disabilities are reinforced within the disability discourse (Devlin & Pothier, 2006). This also makes implementation of strategies difficult, as it may disregard the contextuality of possibilities for participation within work and employment for people with intellectual disability. It does not consider that injustice, in terms of unequal access or participation within work and employment might be different for a person with an intellectual disability based on several factors, such as how the disability shows itself, as well as societal attitudes. This contributes to the large gaps of opportunity and exclusion of people with intellectual disabilities in society, which in of itself is a group that cannot only be determined by their disability and needs to be seen as diverse. This creates a demand for extensive knowledge regarding the complexity of disabilities to make the discourse of disability within policy more inclusive, as argued by Elraz (2018). This works to counteract negative assumptions, stereotypes and ambiguities of what it means to have an intellectual disability within work and employment.

7.1.2 Access and participation on the same conditions as “others”

A recurring statement within the policy document is participating on the same condition as “others”. This is exemplified through the introduction of the policy-program’s purpose, as well as different goal formulations, such as the goal of an independent life.

The purpose of Gothenburg city’s program for full participation for people with disabilities is, based on the human rights perspective and national political goals regarding people with disability, to clarify what is expected from the city’s boards to ensure that people with disabilities can fully participate without discrimination, on the same conditions as others (Göteborgs stad, 2020:4).

People with disabilities are able to live an independent life on the same conditions as others (Göteborgs stad, 2020:7).

The policy document also speaks about diversity. In relation to intellectual disability, diversity is understood through the perspective of human rights and national goals as a foundation. To have diversity is emphasized as being free with equal values that applies to everyone.

Human rights emanate from the understanding that people are born free, with equal value and that these rights apply to everyone, without distinction. (...). The national disability political goal is to, with the UN:s convention about rights for people with disabilities as a starting point, achieve equality in society with diversity as a foundation (Göteborgs stad, 2020:4).

Within the policy, diversity is also talked about in the sense that people with disabilities come from different backgrounds.

People with disabilities possess, as everyone else, plenty of different qualities. Within this group, individual differences are also accommodated. People with disabilities grow up in different socio-economic prerequisites, have different ethnic backgrounds, religions and beliefs, different ages and different sexualities and genders (Göteborgs stad, 2020:14).

The principle of universal design is presented in the policy program as a way to operationalize diversity and avoid exclusion.

Universal design is about doing what is right from the beginning, to plan and design society so that no one is excluded. (...). Universal design refers to the design of products, environments, programs and services, so that they can be used without the need to adjust or accommodate. Universal design should not exclude the use of aid and support for groups of people with disabilities that need them (Göteborgs stad, 2020:15).

The word “others” is interpreted in terms of people who do not have a disability. Like we discussed in the previous theme, this fails to acknowledge the different conditions for people with different disabilities to participate in the same conditions as those who do not have a disability. This might contribute to othering and reproduction of generalized values and attitudes that limit the opportunities of people with intellectual disabilities within the area of work and employment, as discussed by Swain, French and Cameron (2003). Using the term “others”, portrays people with intellectual disabilities as those who need to adapt to the standards of people without any disability. Not only are there different conditions for participation, based on whether you have or don't have a disability, it also depends on the type of disability as well as the specific situation and context, as depicted by Anthias (2013). The

policy does not consider that the notion of non-disabled as a normality can be interpreted as oppressive. This invites us to ask what it would mean to participate within work and employment for a person with intellectual disabilities on the same conditions as others from an intersectional perspective. Following the assumptions of de los Reyes and Mulinari (2005), inequality and oppression stem from an interplay of several aspects. Acker (2006) speaks of the relevance of an intersectional perspective on work and organizations. Here, inequality and exclusion does not only refer to if a person has a disability. Depending on factors, such as gender, age, disability and ethnicity, multiple levels of oppression, or penalties, are created (De los Reyes, 2000, Shaw, Chan & McMahan, 2012). The policy explains differences in backgrounds but fail to specify what implications it has on the goal and strategy formulations with specific regard to intellectual disability.

Acknowledging the meaning of diversity is connected to the previous theme of different conditions for people with intellectual disabilities. Diversity needs to be regarded with a critical view however, as the term diversity risks becoming essentialist in its connotation. As Anthias (2013) argues, a simplistic definition of the term diversity risks creating and reinforcing boundaries and hierarchies, as well as reinforcing a notion of othering (Anthias, 2013:323). Diversity should be conceptualized as complex and dependent on different contexts. When looking at how the policy document uses the term universal design, it is somewhat unclear what it means. Here, the term is used in a way that assumes one way to formulate the environment in a singular sense, despite there being many contextual factors, specifically for people with intellectual disabilities. This would, as argued by Anthias (2013), need to be clarified and contextualized in a way to show that adjustments of environments, programs and services are dependent on time, place, as well as the individual needs for someone with an intellectual disability.

7.1.3 Independence and Power

Another way to understand intellectual disability and participation within work and employment, is through the concept of independence and power. Within *Gothenburg city's program for full participation for people with disabilities 2021-2026*, independence and power are understood as: freedom to choose, individual rights, influence and ability to make decisions about your own life.

People with disabilities have the right to live an independent life and participate in society on the same conditions as others. This means to have knowledge and access to different forms of service, support,

rehabilitation and habilitation, living arrangements, work and employment, as well as economic prerequisites (Göteborgs stad, 2020).

The right to something, such as participation within work, is a recurring term connected to the concept of independence and power. The policy document uses the terms of norm-critical, accessible, inclusive and adapted when speaking about increasing possibilities for individuals with disabilities to gain employment and work. This is exemplified through the strategy to increase possibility for work and employment:

The city's organizations shall, through a norm-critical recruitment, accessible and inclusive workplaces and adapted employment conditions, increase the number of employees with a disability within the organization (Göteborgs stad, 2020:12).

Talking about inclusion, the policy document refers to a process of enabling full participation and belonging in society on their own conditions. It refers to the notion of adjusting the surroundings in a way so that everyone can be included.

Inclusion means full participation and belonging. Inclusion assumes that approaches, intentions and adjustments work together to enable the individual to feel belonging and participation based on their own conditions (Göteborgs stad, 2020:15).

The concepts of independence and power, used in the policy document, is aligned with Bostad and Hanisch (2016) definition of independence. People with intellectual disabilities are seen to have the right to a free choice and influence over different aspects of their life, including the area of work and employment. But with the disregard for differences, as explored in the previous themes, freedom is limited by the lack of "respect for difference" (Bostad & Hanisch, 2016). A better conceptualization that regards intellectual disability in relation to freedom needs to be made. This is also supported by Umb-Carlsson and Sonnander (2005), who points to the hardships of gaining independence and influence, specifically for people with intellectual disability. If this is disregarded, there is a risk of further marginalization for people with intellectual disabilities. This reinforces a notion of powerlessness to gain independence through participation in work and employment for people with intellectual disabilities (Devlin & Pothier, 2006). In the policy document, the use of the words "enable" and "ensure", indicates that people with intellectual disability are dependent on society to make sure that the possibilities for work and employment are realized (Bostad & Hanisch, 2016). Since there is a need to regard disability as complex, this process of ensuring and enabling would also need to be specified in regard to the conditions of people with intellectual disabilities (Anthias, 2013).

When talking about the term “rights”, it can be argued that even if a person with a disability, such as an intellectual disability, has the right to participate within a context, it does not account for their ability to feel like they have power over their situation. This sustains a simplistic discourse about the ability to affect your own situation as a person with an intellectual disability. A perspective of empowerment needs to be included. This would mean to give the power of the discourse on intellectual disability to the people it concerns (Bertilsson-Rosqvist & Keisu, 2012).

The use of the term norm-critical needs to be investigated in specific regard to intellectual disability and seen as contextual and situational (Devlin & Pothier, 2006). It could be argued that norms, accessibility, inclusiveness and adjustments do not look the same for everyone with a disability, which makes this terminology difficult to interpret. With the perspective of Imrie (2000), hierarchical relationships of dependency for people with intellectual disabilities, the assumptions of prioritized bodies, and that people with intellectual disabilities that have limited mobility assume lower work ability would need to be explicitly expressed in relation to using norm critical. Otherwise, the meaning of norms and what it takes to be critical to these norms becomes ambiguous, which limits the possibilities for people with intellectual disabilities to become independent in different situations. The use of “inclusion” on your own conditions could also become ambiguous if not clarifying what specific adjustments and support is needed in specific contexts to remove constraints that hinders participation in work and employment for people with intellectual disabilities (De los Reyes, 2000, Elraz, 2018).

7.1.4 Knowledge and understanding.

The construction of intellectual disability is seen according to a perspective of knowledge and understanding. As discussed in the previous theme, a reoccurring term within the municipality’s policy is “norm critical”. This also relates to knowledge and understanding. Norm critical is used both in the sense of thinking and practice, as exemplified within the strategy to increase participation for work and employment for people with disabilities.

The city’s organizations shall, through a norm-critical recruitment, accessible and inclusive workplaces and adapted employment conditions, increase (Göteborgs stad, 2020:12).

To regard the different conditions for participation, the policy document emphasizes accessibility through knowledge about disabilities and the living conditions that affect people with disabilities.

For Gothenburg city to be a city that makes full participation for people with disabilities possible, there needs to be plenty of knowledge and awareness of disabilities and the situation for people with disabilities (Göteborgs stad, 2020:16).

The use of the term norm critical, relates to the perspective of Elraz (2018), who argue that negative assumptions about a person contributes to stigmatization, without taking the individual's different abilities into account. The meaning of disability is therefore understood through a norm-critical perspective according to the municipality. The policy document does not explain what it means to be "norm critical" in relation to the specific conditions of someone with an intellectual disability. According to Bertilsdotter-Rosqvist and Keisu (2012), this would mean to stop seeing people with intellectual disabilities as unable to get and keep a job. The lack of formulation in specific regards to different disabilities has the potential of reinforcing stigma between different disabilities and reproduces generalized attitudes. This stigma, due to a lack of knowledge and understanding could, according to Elraz (2018) further prohibit access to work for people with an intellectual disability. The understanding of different conditions for people with intellectual disability is not explicitly stated within the policy, instead interpreted under the general term of disability. This risk creating barriers for the city of Gothenburg, and all of its organizations to gain adequate awareness of what it means to have an intellectual disability, as well as what it means to include people with intellectual disabilities. This makes it hard to eliminate structural obstacles within the labor market and workplace to enable participation for those who have an intellectual disability, as argued by Bertilsdotter-Rosqvist and Keisu (2012).

From the perspective of Critical Disability Theory, the conversation of knowledge and understanding of disabilities, as well as being norm-critical, would mean to realize that intellectual disability is reflected in the norms of contemporary society, embedded in different meanings for different contexts, as argued by Devlin and Pothier, (2006), and Anthia (2013). The distinction that showcases the complexity of disability is lost within the use of disability as a general term for people's different situations, as well as vaguely defined usage of the term "norm-critical". This creates ambiguities when interpreting what it means to have an intellectual disability and how to approach these individuals so that they get equal opportunities, in the area of work and employment. A way to introduce a perspective of awareness regarding specifically intellectual disability would mean inviting people's own perspectives. In accordance with Tideman and Svensson's (2015) argument of self-advocacy, this would mean to give control to the individual to guide the discourse on intellectual disability

and what specific aspects need to be formulated to generate the right kind of knowledge and understanding about what it means to have an intellectual disability in relation to work and employment.

7.2 The experience of work and employment.

In this chapter of the analysis, experiences regarding work and employment are explored. This is done through the perspective of people who have intellectual disabilities and have experience from participating in Daily Activity, as well as people who work with questions regarding opportunities and support for people with intellectual disabilities. The understanding of work and employment is reflected upon. Social relations, responsibility, a sense of purpose and payment are discussed as factors that make work and employment meaningful. Information and communication are discussed as an important condition for access and participation within employment, both in Daily Activity and in the transition out to the open labor market. The interviewees also discuss conditions for being included in work and employment as well as the meaning and value of differences. These themes are relevant when discussing access and opportunities for people with intellectual disability in relation to work and employment.

7.2.1 Meaningful work and employment.

When asking what work and employment entails, many of interviewees who have an intellectual disability and participate within Daily Activity have previous experience from working a “real” job. Participants within the Municipality’s Daily Activity highlight different aspects of what makes work meaningful. Several of the participants mention that work becomes meaningful when you have different responsibilities and somewhere to be outside your home, when you get to socialize and when you are productive. Hanna also discusses this, adding financial independence as another aspect.

I get to do a job and participate in activities. I can’t do some things, but I think it is important to work. (...). I like to work. The workplace gets me to leave my house and do something else during the day. When I came to Sweden, I sat at home for six years, without work. I wanted to leave the house for a couple of hours each day, to the city or school to learn Swedish. And I wanted to go to work to make money so that I can buy things and be free to do what I want. The social parts are also important (Hanna).

Similarly, Carl, who lives with an intellectual disability and is employed at a non-profit organization, also discusses work to be a way of gaining independence, both in the sense of

self-fulfillment and financial independence. At his specific workplace, he feels more liberated than he did when participating within the municipality's Daily Activity.

I am more independent and make money. (...). It means that a person gets to do what they think is fun and isn't forced to do something that other people tell them they should do. Like you often are within the municipality (Carl).

According to Lina and Jenny, who are responsible for making participation work meaningful for people with disabilities, the power to choose becomes an important aspect of accessing meaningful employment. This includes individually matching a person to a Daily Activity center. According to Lina, the use of the LOV (Law for Freedom of choice), enables freedom for people to decide for themselves what type of occupation and tasks they want to have.

Now you try to match interests and requests to all different centers, no matter what district you live in. (...). It is their own choice. It happens that some daily activities do not have the right adjustments for a specific person's needs, and then the social secretary can ask me for suggestions. Most people choose what's close to where they live, but some do not care that they have to travel across the city just to be at a place that fits their interests (Lina).

We try to adjust for the participants within Daily activity, but they are also the ones choosing us. They know what they're choosing when they are looking for "what activity centers are there, what fits me", and choose based on that. But we try to adapt to their needs and interests as well. So, there is an interplay between these things (Jenny).

Sigrid mentions that meaningful work for a person with intellectual disabilities within Daily Activity is enabled through training. She mentions that there is a difference of how close you are to the labor market depending on the severity of your disability and its impact on your work ability.

It means to train for things you struggle with. Then there are people with multiple disabilities, where meaningful employment entails having a good environment around you and lighter tasks. It can be anything from jumping in a ball-pit, to mindfulness or listening to music. It varies very much. And then there are people who manage doing tasks for 10 minutes every hour or need sufficient rest. So, it is very individual (Sigrid).

The different ways that work becomes meaningful shows the multifaceted meaning of work and employment. According to Lina and Beatrice, the experience of meaningful work is not limited to traditional work within a "regular" job, meaning paid employment on the open labor market.

And I see this (Daily Activity) as a regular job because I do everything you would do at a regular job. (Beatrice).

We say that they work here because the participants see it as a job. And if they make mistakes, that's ok. There are no consequences for making mistakes here. Also, there is always the possibility to try something new. They are not just here to perform tasks; it is about the social aspect and to be a community as well. Many people haven't been active within work for a long time so it's about breaking that isolation so to come here is a big step (Lina).

From this, independence, financial compensation, responsibility and social community life are important aspects of work. From the view of the employee and participants in Daily Activity, who have intellectual disabilities, there is no singular definition of what makes work important and meaningful. To be satisfied with work means to be able to do what you, yourself, are interested in, as well as gain financial stability. It enables independence and a sense of safety. This aligns with the multifaceted perspective of work, argued by Ahrne (1987) and Kocman and Weber (2016). The notion of independence as a theoretical concept also invites us to challenge a simplistic interpretation of what it means to be independent (Swain, French & Cameron, 2003:76). Independence is talked about in a way to not disregard the need for support, instead insinuating that having access to support and being free from judgement is a part of being independent for a person with an intellectual disability. Relating to independence, being able to choose your tasks according to your interests, which are made possible if appropriate adjustments of the environment are made, enables a sense of power and freedom, as argued by Bostad and Hanisch (2016).

Access to work means to enable social interaction and fulfill a sense of usefulness by having your own responsibilities and demands, which according to Umb-Carlsson and Sonnander (2005), is an important aspect that helps people with intellectual disabilities to integrate into work and employment. In this discussion of work, the statements made by Ahrne (1987) allows for a critical interpretation that work does not only regard the process of production and result. Instead, it is shown that work is talked about as a place for purpose making. Work needs to be considered from the perspective of the individual to further understand how people with intellectual disability relate to work and employment. This relates to the argument of Devlin and Pothier (2006), that definitions of work in relation to intellectual disability are contextual and dependent on societal changes. If the experience of the meaning of work is disregarded, the progression of our knowledge about work in different contexts becomes restricted, risking sustaining unequal conditions in the area of work and employment for people with intellectual disabilities.

7.2.2 Information and communication

Information and communication play a big part when assessing access to work and employment for people with intellectual disabilities. Participation in Daily Activity is described as dependent on the access of information. This information concerns working tasks, your rights or about possibilities to move and enter a job on the open labor market. Beatrice and Lina talk about this based on their experiences. Firstly, it helps people choose where they want to participate. Secondly, even though there might be limited knowledge about the municipality's documents, accessing information is still meaningful for participants within Daily Activity. Participants get to know more about their own situation, as well as what possibilities there are. Access to information is seen to enable a feeling of independence for people with intellectual disabilities.

I have come into contact with the information that my social secretary works with. But I know little about the documents that the municipality has (Beatrice).

Accessibility here also regards easy access to information about how they get to the center (...). This way they can be more independent (Lina).

There are many ways of communication, which needs to be considered when understanding the work-life situation for people with an intellectual disability. Hanna mentions that she, because of her disability, as well as not being a native Swedish speaker, has difficulty communicating. Those in charge of Daily Activity, and workplaces, have a large responsibility in making communication comprehensible for the participants. Tommy talks about making understanding information easier through using alternate methods of communication that are more adapted to different people's needs. The use of verbal communication is discussed.

I have (...), which makes it hard to do things and read all the information from the Swedish government (Hanna).

There is an implementation plan, but our participants don't read that because it is written in a way that fits more to the municipality's norms (...). It is incomprehensible for them. We work a lot with verbal communication. Most people with an intellectual disability have some form of difficulty receiving and interpreting written material(...). You need to have conversations with these people. That also means that people get to hear their rights based on what me and my colleagues tell them. It becomes fragile if this was to be applied on society as a whole, but since we work with these questions in our organization, maybe we are more trusted to do it this way (Tommy).

Fredrik also considers communication in terms of how easy it is to partake in information posted on the municipality's website.

You have to click your way forward, which is not totally uncomplicated. Even I have difficulty finding my way to the right page. So of course, others must find it difficult as well. You have to have patience (Fredrik).

Available information is also time sensitive and needs to be regularly updated. Carl and Lina talk about the importance of keeping information updated. Here they talk about including feedback in the process of communicating and relaying information, so that people with intellectual disabilities can make their opinions heard.

It is important that the websites are being updated regularly (Carl).

We have posted brochures all over the establishment on how to make your opinions and complaints heard. (...). Everybody has the right to communication. We have meetings with the participants regarding organizational questions that affect them. We also use an "idea box" and we work with opinions, and complaints from the participants. Here, they can suggest new tasks to develop the organization. By including their complaints and opinions it helps acknowledge different needs for change. If we don't acknowledge this, the development within Daily Activity stops. Our participants grow through these meetings as well (Lina).

Accessible and comprehensible communication and information is essential for people with an intellectual disability to avoid injustice and conflict, as argued by Mulinari and Selberg (2011:7). When considering work and employment, communication and information is also a way to manage increasing work requirements on the labor market (Umb-Carlsson & Sonnander, 2005). Having access to updated information regarding the possibilities and opportunities, both within Daily activity and on the open labor market, increases the chance of people with intellectual disability gaining employment on equal conditions. The lack of access and tools to interpret information, such as through the example above, relates to the idea of prioritized bodies (Imrie, 2000). People with intellectual disabilities have different ways of understanding and interpreting information, which becomes difficult when information is formulated towards people who don't have any difficulty interpreting information.

Due to the contextual and developing understandings of intellectual disability and work, information and communication needs to consider relevant sources. The issue of not participating within work and employment for people with intellectual disabilities can be interpreted as a result of non-accessible information and communication. As exemplified

through Hanna's experience of not understanding information, as well as Fredrik's statement about the difficulty accessing information online. If there is no way of understanding or accessing different types of information about your rights and possibilities, it becomes difficult to enter the open labor market and your chances of lasting employment decreases. This also creates ambiguity where to turn to with specific questions regarding possibilities to enter the labor market or access the right tools for skill-building in preparation to enter work. A perspective of Critical Disability Theory would mean to establish information and communication as a tool for people with intellectual disability to gain power over their situation. The lack of information or communication can in this context be understood as a factor, which contributes to the dis-citizenship of people with intellectual disabilities (Devlin & Pothier, 2006:2).

7.2.3 What it takes to be included.

When exploring experiences of access to work and employment, inclusivity is a recurring theme. The right to work and employment does not guarantee equal access and participation within work. This is connected to the previous theme, where information and communication also could be considered conditions for inclusion. The process of adapting and adjusting, according to the individual's needs and requests, prevents exclusion and discrimination of people with intellectual disabilities on the labor market. Participants within the municipality's Daily Activity illustrate their own needs for support to be able to participate in work. The right kind of support is not only focused on physical adjustments of the environment. Support often means encouragement and verbal guidance of tasks. The need for support is illustrated as being time-sensitive and depends on how you are feeling that day.

Sometimes I need motivation to finish my task before starting with another one. I need help with structure as I can be easily distracted. That means that sometimes I need someone to prepare the thing I'm going to do. Peace and quiet is also important for me to be able to focus (Jonas).

Sometimes I like being alone, and sometimes I like being around people. It completely depends on what kind of day it is for me (Hanna).

Considering previous reflections on independence, Carl and Lina state that support should not be used as a way of doing people's tasks for them, instead it should make sure people can perform their own tasks. It should be available when it is needed. Lina mentions the use of smart goals to oversee this process.

Coaches offer support whenever something goes wrong but usually it is the people themselves that should do the work. The coaches only intervene when they have to (Carl).

It is about offering support but not doing the work for them. (...). We work a lot with smart goals that we measure and evaluate. We have noticed that fewer goals are more effective in developing the participants ability. Too many goals can be difficult to achieve (Lina).

According to the employees within the Daily Activity, the right support and adjustments are sometimes difficult to achieve. As a coach, Tommy also speaks about the need to be attentive to your surroundings when working with people that need different kinds of support, which also means to let go of control over different situations. Fredrik talks about difficulties offering support to choose a Daily Activity center based on limitations to advertise different establishments.

You have to be aware of things that work and don't work. You have to be attentive because there will always be surprises. (...). We try to be very receptive to what help is needed. No one is going to say "No, we have no obligation to do this so you have to do it yourself", it's more "if it is possible, we will help". (...). The most important thing as a coach is to dare to let go. It's easy to think that "you can't do what I can". It's about trusting people's abilities. For people with intellectual disabilities some things don't work but that's okay (Tommy).

We are a bit tied here. For example, we can't promote our own organization because it is supposed to be equal with all the others. I feel like that can limit the spontaneity and humanity of it. That you don't get the chance to hear the truth about how it really is at a place from someone. But that's the thing, that it is your choice, and nobody should affect it. (...). We try according to our best abilities to make individual assessments. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't (Fredrik).

Inclusion is not only spoken about in terms of adjustments and support within Daily Activity. It is also spoken about in terms of the transition to get a "regular" job, and the difficulties of reaching out on the open labor market. Fredrik talks about obstacles from the competition with other people. Lina mentions the individual aspect of wanting to get a job.

The truth is that these people with intellectual disability are in such hard competition with other "weak groups"² in society. The issue with this is that the expectation from the participants here is that it is supposed to move very quickly. But that is not always the case because often there are several steps. Perhaps the person needs to get a certain education before getting a job. It's a big dilemma how to approach this (Fredrik).

² By other "weak groups" the interviewee refers to people who are marginalized in different ways.

Some people do not want those demands of employment, so they are happy with only having an internship. In 4 years, two participants here gained employment in other workplaces. 17 participants have moved to internships at different organizations. Some people may say they are being exploited but if they want to apply for a job there, we help them. But many of them don't want that and feel pressured. We have a goal to get more people to participate in the labor market but it's only when they show that they want to we can help them (Lina).

Jenny underlines the changeable nature of having an intellectual disability in relation to the open labor market.

There are people who have had jobs on the open labor market before but did not manage it in the long term. There are those who come to Daily Activity and want to try to get a regular job again. It's not that common, but it happens. Then there are those who think it's a goal. After some time, they want a regular job. There are also those who want a job, but after a while in Daily activity, they feel like it's the right place for them here (Jenny).

Tommy talks about the issue of not gaining employment on the open labor market in relation to self-confidence. Sigrid also mentions the need for incentives to increase employment opportunities for people with intellectual disabilities within "regular" work.

The issue is that when you come to Daily Activity, you've already lived 20 something years surrounded by people that say "you can't get any job" (...). Some people are not able to work, but oftentimes it is a case of people having a filter around themselves. You need to work up their self-confidence. That's the biggest issue because people have no idea that it is even possible. People know that they can go to the employment agency, but that you don't get any help. And then you give up because people have already told you it's no point. Here you are treated as an adult but with an understanding of their issues. In another workplace you're worried about people not understanding and that they think you're annoying. Then you lose hope because of that. There is a will but if you have difficulties as a result from your intellectual disability to make long-term plans and goals, then it becomes insurmountable (Tommy).

We try to help people to reach out to the open labor market. Then there often is some sort of incentive for organizations to employ people so that if a person gets regular employment as a result from being in Daily Activity, the company gets some money. For the people with disabilities that do not have a job and have a wish to work, we can include this in their plan of action. Then they can work with specific tasks and train to be able to achieve this. It can take years before this person figures out the right resources to use to be able to achieve this (Sigrid).

In terms of Daily Activity as a form of work, Sigrid also illustrates inclusion through the perspective that only people with a decision from the Social Services can participate within Daily Activity.

It is only certain people who have the right to Daily Activity. You have to belong to category 1 or 2. You have to have medical documentation that supports your case. (...). Then we do a needs assessment based on your needs, abilities and your disability. You can still belong to category 1 or 2 but not get approved for certain efforts if you don't have that specific need (Sigrid).

Even if there is a difficulty to increase the transitions from Daily activity to the open labor market, it does not mean there is no wish to evolve in your working role. As we have established, work is not limited to paid labor. By reflecting upon participation within Daily Activity, work can be many things and serve many purposes.

Some of us come from "regular" jobs to daily activity and don't have the goal to go back working again. (...). It has been good for me to not work among so many people. I have worked at regular workplaces before, and it sometimes became too much for me and felt really messy. So, I see it as a positive if the workplace doesn't have a lot of people (Hasse).

When I overcame the obstacles, it was quite easy (to get a job). Especially from the municipality where I grew up. They didn't want me to join a daily activity in Gothenburg municipality. So, we had to solve it through me getting an employment at the specific organization. So that was the biggest issue I had to deal with. There are a lot more possibilities in bigger municipalities, than smaller ones. So, it's good in that sense (...). The goal is to do that (reach lasting employment, but it is difficult. For example, managers have to be prepared when hiring these people and often they see it as a hindrance instead of it as an asset (Carl).

Understanding what it takes for people with intellectual disabilities to be included is highlighted through the experience of individual adjustment, giving people power to do their tasks on their own, obstacles and difficulties of being included, as well as the wish to have access to work and employment on the open labor market. Here, understanding inclusion for people with intellectual disability needs to be regarded in relation to Devlin and Pothier (2006), who argues that conditions are changing and contextual. The reconceptualization of independence, argued by Swain, French and Cameron (2003), applies to this understanding of inclusion. That people can be included with the right help and still feel like they have power over their own situation. This view of inclusion also aids in counteracting the oppressive notion of self-sufficiency (Swain, French & Cameron, 2003). Knowing what it takes to be included requires adequate supportive efforts to be available, without risking reinforcing further social marginalization (Umb-Carlsson & Sonnander, 2005). This could be the case when interpreting the use of internships as a way to gain employment at a workplace outside of Daily Activity, through training for specific tasks and getting a feel for what a "real" job entail. The understanding of internships as a "try-out" could on the other hand contribute to marginalizing

people with intellectual disability by separating them into a specific category of people that belong within these internships. This is one way, argued by Devlin and Pothier (2006), people with intellectual disabilities are hindered from gaining full personhood. By sustaining an essentialist notion of disability, individuals with intellectual disabilities are not being considered as eligible for the same kind of work as those without intellectual disabilities. This results in exclusion. Additionally, as we have discovered through the experience of people within Daily Activity, it is not always the wish to move on from an internship to a “real” job. That people are satisfied with the setting that they are in currently. It is therefore important to adhere to individual requests and conditions of people with an intellectual disability when considering transitioning to the open labor market. Increasing participation in work through offering incentives for organizations could also be seen as having a positive effect of heightened morale, argued by Hartnett et.al. (2011). This could also lead to individuals with intellectual disabilities to be seen as an asset. In accordance with the argument by Kocman and Weber (2016), this also supports the notion of a more inclusive work setting heightening the sense of job satisfaction.

When talking about obstacles, people with intellectual disabilities risk being excluded due to the notion of dependence on help from others. Illustrated through the interviews, and argued by Imrie (2000), people with physical or mental impairments have been depicted as a burden to society, where only people with full mobility are allowed to participate and evolve. Introducing the argument, made by Swain, French and Cameron (2003), that no matter if you have an intellectual disability, or no disability, we are all dependent on help from others. Access to work and employment and the adjustments of environments should therefore consider the complexity of disability. As Bostad and Hanisch (2016) argues, there is a need to remove situation-specific restraints to enable freedom for the individual. In regard to this specific research, freedom means to access and participate within work and employment. Bostad and Hanisch (2016) also illustrate this through the need for adjustments of the social and physical environment so that people can participate. That freedom to live different lives is made possible through environmental facilitation.

This chapter on inclusion and the obstacles that cause exclusion relate to the idea of normality, argued by Tideman (2000:53). What is considered normal is based on the amount of support and help you need. This can be exemplified through the notion of paid work on the open labor market, without adjustments. A critical view of this invites us to question the construction of normality, instead viewing normal as a concept with many meanings and not reliant on the adjustments and amount of support you need.

7.2.4 What it means to be “different”

A perspective on differences offers a closer look at the meaning and implications of diversity for people with intellectual disability. Not only is the conversation about differences regarding ethnicity, culture, age, gender, sexuality and religion important. It is also valuable to acknowledge differences in terms of disabilities. Hasse and Jonas emphasize a difference of viewing intellectual disability within Daily Activity and on the open labor market, as well as in society as a whole. Jonas explains that his abilities are not only dependent on his diagnosis and that your work abilities can depend on several things.

Here (Daily Activity), we don't need to talk about our disabilities because there is no interest in doing that. It is more that people work together as colleagues. I have chosen to tell people about my disability but in reality, it's not that important. But, whenever I'm around “normal” people, I don't talk about it because then maybe they will think I'm weird. If anyone says, “you have an intellectual disability and you're not as good as me”, I say “I'm as good as anyone else, just with special needs, or gifts” as some might say (Hasse).

When people talk about those things, it can be a bit condescending. Also, with how people treat you. Some people are very badly treated because of their disability at their jobs. But here, it is dealt with in a good way. (...). I would also like to say to people that just because I can't do some things does not mean it's connected to my disability. It does not decide what I can and cannot do (Jonas).

When talking about differences, a perspective of different conditions based on what type of disability is brought up. It is stated that there are different conditions for the possibility to access and participate in society, based on how your disability presents and shows itself.

Well, it shouldn't but unfortunately, I do think it does. With a visible disability I think it's easier to get help, than if you are like me and have an invisible disability (Carl).

Yes, with the surroundings expectations and assumptions. Even if I can't see a disability doesn't mean it doesn't show itself in other ways (Fredrik).

There is some increased awareness that intellectual disabilities are not that different from psychological or physical disabilities. But the will to adjust things to cater to their needs is extremely low. If you see someone in a wheelchair, you build a ramp as it is more of a natural step for society. But to say people should use pictures instead of text, because people can't read, they say “that's not possible”. Even if the prejudiced ways of thinking have decreased, there is no active thought to do anything (Tommy).

The lack of access and participation within work and employment for people with intellectual disabilities is seen as a result of a lack of knowledge and understanding about what it means to

have an intellectual disability. Hasse and Jonas share their experiences of the lack of understanding for different conditions for people with intellectual disability in society. It is shown that the understanding is greater within establishments that are adapted to people with different disabilities, as well as when interacting with people with intellectual disabilities.

There is always a need to acknowledge these things. I think that within Daily Activity, it is more accepted than if you work a real job because then there are a lot of people who think we, with intellectual disabilities, are a bit strange. Then, we're placed at the bottom of the ranks so to speak (Hasse).

If you know someone or live closely to someone with an intellectual disability it's easier to understand what it means and can learn about it in another way, than if you don't know anyone that has an intellectual disability. That is something to acknowledge (Jonas).

With difference, there is a need to acknowledge different identity markers and their impact on each other, such as gender, ethnicity, age, as well as different disabilities. The experiences of different representations within Daily activity, or supported employment are discussed as being valued and appreciated. Beatrice and Jonas talk about the value of having large representations of different people within Daily Activity, as well as the understanding of what it means to be different.

It's important to have all different ages, ethnicities and mixed people. I think it's interesting to meet different cultures without any culture shocks. A problem can be the language and that everyone doesn't know Swedish. Not being able to speak the same language makes it so you're not able to communicate the way you want (Beatrice).

Here (in Daily Activity), it is seen as an asset and is dealt with in a good way. It doesn't affect the way you work here that much (Jonas).

To combine the perspectives of diversity and difference, Jenny states that inequality can "add up", making it harder to transition to the open labor market. Fredrik mentions that the perspective on diversity and different disabilities is dependent on political and historical processes.

It can be about having difficulty with a language. Then it is already hard for people with intellectual disability to get out on the open labor market, so everything added to that makes it harder (Jenny).

With intellectual disabilities, it is hard to tell where the boundaries are. There are a lot of question marks in the grey-areas that could contribute to a better dialogue. Everything we say and do has meaning and it is important to have a humanistic approach. (...). The competition is hard and there is a lot of politics involved. If you look at the term of intellectual disability, historically it has had different meanings. (...).

This has a lot to do with how the political situation and what the public opinion looks like. It also depends on the current state of the world. There are many people coming here from different countries, who don't know the language or carry different trauma. There has to be an openness for these people. This might cause some defiance amongst those who are against this, but I see it as our duty to make it as accessible for as many as possible. But it's not an easy task because it is an interplay of different factors (Fredrik).

From Tommy's experience, it is also acknowledged that there is an order to injustice, based on a combination of identity markers. It is seen that intellectual disability goes "above" all the rest" in terms of structures of inequality.

I would say if you had a visible intellectual disability it goes above all the rest. The rest doesn't matter if you have a visible intellectual disability. But then if you have a high-functioning disability that doesn't show it is easier, the visual aspects play a big part. If it doesn't show it's the usual order of power, that it is better being a man than a woman, it's better being Swedish than being an immigrant (Tommy).

When exploring the experiences of working to ensure equality for people with intellectual disabilities, Lina and Sigrid talk about the Municipality being strict to not segregate or exclude people.

We should not think that "he's from Italy or Serbia, we don't want that" or "he has dark skin, he has difficult parents, he is homosexual". Instead, we accept everyone especially in this area which is very multicultural. The issue can instead be that a person does not fit into the specific daily activity center. We don't really talk about specific diagnosis, instead we talk about the fact that everyone is here because they need support. There are participants that don't want to be defined because of their disability. There are also people who don't want to be in a daily activity center where people have visible disabilities. They want to be in a group where they can be seen as any other person (Lina).

It does not matter what gender or who you are as a person. We are clear that everyone is equal in front of the law. So based on our decisions, no distinctions are made. Then, at the specific Daily Activity, practice of this might look different (Sigrid).

Jenny talks about inviting people into the conversation about diversity and difference through every-day conversations, which allows people to reflect on their own situations.

It is acknowledged in every-day conversations. Many of these conversations regard the person's identity with thoughts like: "Who am I in this world? How should I perceive myself in this world, which puts demands on me that I can't live up to?" (Jenny).

Tommy illustrates another perspective of the municipality's practice for non-discrimination. He explains that the lack of interference for who can join a specific Daily Activity center might

become exclusionary in its own right. That a lack of control for diversity might mean a lack of diversity at the different places.

The municipality has decided that we don't get to choose who comes here so we can't actively choose to foster a diverse crew. However, we are able to specify that we prefer diversity and give access to more languages so that it is possible to have ethnic diversity. The municipality choose who is easier to make money from and as a non-profit organization we don't care about the money. So, the rules are blocking this. But we do what we can. We invite speakers from RFSL (Riksförbundet för Homosexuella, Bisexuella, Transpersoners och Queer-personers rättigheter) (Tommy).

Within this theme of the meaning of difference, an intersectional perspective explains the experience of exclusion based on multiple grounds, as previously discussed by de los Reyes (2000), Shaw, Chan and McMahon. (2012) and Swain, French and Cameron (2003). The intersection of factors such as age, gender, ethnicity and disability contribute to a layered perspective on inequality and injustice. Based on the experiences from the interviewee's it is also assumed that there is a hierarchical dynamic depending on what type of disability a person has and how it shows itself. In this case, an intellectual disability is regarded as more exposed to the risk of exclusion and discrimination. Attitudes of difference, according to the experiences of the interviewees, follow the norm of seeing people with intellectual disabilities as subordinate to those who do not live with a disability. But through the experiences of Jonas, who puts another connotation to having an intellectual disability. Rather than using a notion of difference, risking reinforcing a negative perspective on intellectual disability, he highlights it as something positive. This relates to the perspective of Swain, French and Cameron (2003). That asserting a positive identity and self-advocacy is used against discriminatory norms and values. Empowerment as a way to regard diversity and difference, as discussed by Bertilsdotter-Rosqvist and Keisu (2012), would also mean to conceptualize the demands and expectations from "real" jobs in contemporary society, which, according to de los Reyes (2005) put a lot of emphasis on flexibility and adaptability on the individual. Instead of talking about the differences of people and how they should all fit into the expectations of working a regular job, focus should instead be shifted to adapt structural conditions so that they can cater to a diverse group of people. This is, according to Bertilsdotter and Keisu (2012), and Svensson and Tideman (2015) achieved through self-advocacy. Experiences regarding self-advocacy lies within everyday conversations between each other and the personnel at the Daily Activity centers, which implies advocacy does not have to be organized for the specific purpose of advocating.

Within the conversation about differences and diversity, a critical perspective of the principle of normality needs to be included. Since difference and diversity is understood as having several meanings and is regarded as something positive, and wished for, it would mean to disregard the notion of normality as something desirable (Tideman, 2000., Söder, 2011). Not only do we need to question the principle of normality, but diversity in itself. As touched upon previously, the term diversity needs to be problematized as to take the contextuality of differences into account (Anthias, 2013). This means not to only regard diversity in a singular way based on the interviewee's answers, instead viewing this as having different meanings in different situations.

Building on Anthias' (2012) argument, Devlin and Pothier (2006) emphasizes knowledge and understanding, not only about intellectual disability but also in relation to other disabilities and identity markers, as a contextual process. If people do not regard the perspective of difference as a changeable process, inequality, marginalization and discrimination is reproduced. Also discussed by Devlin and Pothier (2006), full personhood, and citizenship is hindered if we do not regard intellectual disability in relation to other identity markers, as injustices are created through an interplay between several factors. The knowledge of difference and its impact on relationships of power need to be seen as embedded in complex networks that are situational and multiple (de los Reyes & Mulinari, 2005, Acker, 2006, Vernon, 1999). This is exemplified in the empirical material through Daily Activity having a more inclusive regard for intellectual disability in combination with identity markers, than on the open labor market.

8. Discussion

In this section, I aim to summarize the analysis and results, showcasing the implication of the results in relation to the research question.

How is disability constructed and understood through Gothenburg city's policy in relation to work and employment?

Intellectual disability in relation to work and employment within Gothenburg's policy is constructed with a lack of regard for different disabilities. The policy refers to intellectual disability within the general term of disability. The understanding of disability also refers to participation on the same condition as "others". Here, the discourse disregards the complexity of disability, sustaining an essentialist understanding of intellectual disability and undermining specific conditions that marginalizes people with intellectual disabilities from participating in work. The notion of "others" disregards what it really means to participate on the same conditions as people without intellectual disabilities. This could result in othering and exclusion. With the perspective of normality, this division of people with and without disabilities is too general and does not take the changeable nature of what is considered "normal" into account. Without a specification of appropriate measures for adjustment and support, this risk putting pressure on individuals with intellectual disabilities to comply with unrealistic standards of what is considered normal in society and within work (Tideman, 2005, Söder, 2011).

The impact of several conditions, such as the intersection of gender, ethnicity, age and type of disability is not described in relation to the difficulties of participating for people with intellectual disabilities. This contributes to marginalization of people with several interacting conditions of injustice (Vernon, 1999). Different conditions for participation in work and employment for people with intellectual disabilities need to be interpreted in terms of contextuality and intertextuality, argued by Anthias (2016). The possibility to access and participate in work and employment for people with intellectual disability cannot be seen as only dependent on whether you have a disability or not. All individuals in society have different conditions that affects your ability to participate in work and employment, which are fluid and changeable. This aligns with Acker's (2006) argument of understanding inequality as unequal access to power and embedded in complex networks. Without a complex understanding of disability, people with intellectual disability risk being hindered from gaining full personhood and citizenship in society (Devlin & Pothier, 2006). Another remark of the policy is made

concerning what it actually means to be norm-critical in terms of knowledge and how this affects the way strategies are implemented. With the perspective of Devlin and Pothier (2006), continuous contextualization and reevaluation of societal norms needs to be done in order to use a norm-critical perspective to increase participation for people with intellectual disability successfully. Independence, as mentioned within the policy, also risks being affected negatively if not seeing intellectual disability as situational, contextual and evolving. Independence is also a general term that entails different things for different people. The use of independence therefore needs to be questioned and evaluated in relation to intellectual disability in relation to work and employment to minimize the risk of exclusion and hostile attitudes (Swain, French & Cameron, 2003).

What is the impact of having an intellectual disability on the experience of work and employment according to people within Daily Activity, and those who work with Daily Activity in Gothenburg?

The findings from investigating experiences illustrate the need for a deeper reflection about intellectual disability and work. According to the employees and participants in Daily Activity, recognizing the meaning of work in different situations showcases different ways of conceptualizing work, also argued by Ahrne (1987). The multifaceted nature of participation in work and employment for people with intellectual disabilities is not only motivated by paid labor, but it is also about building social networks and feeling involved and productive.

The interviews indicate that enabling participation in work and employment is dependent on comprehensive and accessible information, knowledge and individual support. The difficulties of entering the labor market for people with intellectual disabilities, according to the interviewees, stem from a lack of understanding what it means to have an intellectual disability. This leads to a reproduction of marginalizing attitudes in society, limiting the chances of an open and accessible environment on the labor market. Inclusivity through awareness and support is therefore seen as conditions for gaining freedom and independence, which will increase the chances of gaining lasting employment that suits the person's own needs (Swain, French & Cameron, 2003). The interviewees acknowledge the right kind of social and physical support to enable independence, which can be contrasted with an understanding of independence as being self-sufficient. Here, independence is instead achievable through empowerment, as previously investigated by Bertilsdotter-Rosqvist and Keisu (2012). This offers tools to deconstruct the notion of individuals being the site for change

to fit into “ideal jobs” and become “ideal workers”, instead encouraging them to work from their own abilities.

Access and participation in work are shown to be dependent on gender, age, ethnicity and disability, but also how your disability is made visible in different situations, which deepens the argument of inequality complexity by de los Reyes and Mulinari (2005). Levels of oppression are situational. Different conditions have different meanings in different contexts, which relates to seeing difference as intertextual (Anthias, 2013). Through the participant’s experiences of access to work and employment, it is acknowledged that a number of different factors affect your ability to participate in work, not only your disability. This allows a continuous reflection on the impact of having an intellectual disability in work and employment. It showcases the impact of having an intellectual disability in different work-related situations, counteracting normative and static assumptions of people with intellectual disabilities (Devlin & Pothier, 2006).

Looking at the meaning of difference underlines the experience of not wanting to be seen as different based on your disability, as well as not wanting to fall into society’s standard of normality. As mentioned by the participants and employees in Daily Activity, they do not focus on specific diagnostics. Yet, normative assumptions on the open labor market contribute to othering and further marginalization for people with intellectual disability. By redefining the standard for normality in society (Tideman, 2000, Söder 2011), there will be less need to distinguish what is “not normal”, creating opportunities for a more inclusive labor market. This would contribute to the view of people with intellectual disabilities as assets within work (Hartnett et. al., 2011).

How can the experiences and perspectives contribute to a more comprehensive policy?

Seeing how experience could contribute to a more comprehensive policy, a multifaceted perspective on disability and work needs to be considered. Regarding intellectual disability specifically, this could help shed light on the difficulty of entering the labor market for this specific group, which could result in a more specific and effective strategy. As seen from the material presented in this study, the voices of people, who themselves have an intellectual disability or work in direct contact with people with intellectual disabilities, could contribute to this. Not only could an aspect of self-advocacy within policy help contribute to a more nuanced perspective on intellectual disability. It could function as a tool that can be used to challenge structural barriers, such as altering prejudiced attitudes and practices that exclude

people with intellectual disabilities from work and employment. This builds on Bertilsdotter-Rosqvist and Keisu's (2012), as well as Tideman and Svensson's (2015) argument for reclaiming power over the discourse for people with disabilities. This empowers their position in society, as well as increases independence without exploiting their vulnerability by only letting professionals formulate policy.

The interviews undertaken as a part of this study illustrate the importance of investigating experience from an intersectional perspective when formulating policy, reflecting on the complex nature of having an intellectual disability in relation to work and employment. This helps reconceptualize terminology to avoid ambiguous definitions that risk reproducing an essentialist disability discourse, as mentioned by Devlin and Pothier (2006). In accordance with Lane and Videbæk Munkholm (2015), and Elraz (2018), a perspective of including experience within policy also means to specify operationalization as a way to protect people against discrimination and stigmatization. This raises awareness and contributes to knowledge about the specific conditions for participation within work and employment for people with intellectual disabilities. These experiences consider the impact of intersectionality by showcasing how a growing heterogeneity functions on the labor market. It counteracts otherness by acknowledging intersecting memberships in multiple groups, such as what it means being a woman with non-Swedish heritage and an intellectual disability (Shaw, Chan & McMahon, 2012, Swain, French & Cameron, 2003). It would contribute to policy that illustrates the benefits of enabling participation in work and employment for people with intellectual disabilities. As seen in this study, these benefits regard a more open and inclusive climate and better understanding of differences. According to Hartnett (2011), this increases the morale and profitability in organizations. Emphasizing these benefits increases motivation to implement strategies for increased participation for people with intellectual disabilities.

A continuous reconceptualization of work and the meaning of work from experience is also valuable to highlight these different perceptions that work is not just paid labor on the open labor market, argued by Ahrne (1987).

The implication of experience on policy needs to be understood as having some limitations, such as the question of how much experience can be included for the policy. Yet, I argue that drawing on lived experiences to formulate policy will make the understanding of intellectual disability in relation to work and employment more comprehensible, not only from official actors, but to those who live in similar situations. It helps the progression of disability discourse towards a more inclusive and open approach by continuously problematizing and

contextualizing fixed and oppressive definitions of intellectual disability in relation to work and employment.

9. Conclusion

When looking at the discourse on intellectual disability in policy, and the experience of work and employment, we acknowledge the complex situation for people with intellectual disabilities in relation to the labor market. To formulate a more inclusive policy that helps increase participation in work and employment, as well as work against discrimination, extensive comprehension of different conditions for different people and different disabilities is needed. This can be done by including a perspective of experience. To build on this study, future research can be further imagined and investigated through a comparison of several policy documents. It would also be necessary to conduct interviews with a more diverse group, both regarding age and ethnicity. As this study is conducted on a municipal level, a larger perspective could illustrate this research within other municipalities or on a national scale.

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Appendix 1

Interview guide for participants within Daily Activity.

Background

Could you tell me about yourself?

- Name, age, gender, nationality

Employment and Participation

Could you tell me about your working role?

Could you tell me about your experience of participating within Daily Activity

- In relation to other work experiences

What does work and employment mean to you?

How do you view the situation regarding access to work and employment for people with intellectual disabilities?

Information and Accessibility

What's your experience of seeking employment?

- Both within Daily Activity and on the open labor market?

What is your experience of the information that is provided by the Gothenburg Municipality?

- about support, rights, opportunities for accessing etc.
- Have you come into contact with any of the policy documents that the Municipality works with to create opportunity to participate and access work and employment?

Support and Prerequisites

How do you perceive the support and adjustments that are available to be able to participate?

- What specific conditions for support and adjustments do you think are important for you specifically?

The conversation about Disability and Intersectionality

What is your experience of how you talk and approach intellectual disability?

- In society, Daily Activity, other work experiences.

In the conversation about the meaning of a diverse workforce: What is your experience of how people regard diversity in Daily Activity and other work settings?

- How do you think differences affect the ability to gain work and employment for someone with intellectual disability?

Interview guide for people working with access to work within Daily Activity.

Background

Could you tell me about yourself?

- Name, age, gender, nationality

Employment and Participation

Could you tell me about your working role?

- previous working background

What does work and employment mean to you?

Could you tell me about your experience of working with questions regarding Daily Activity and people with intellectual disabilities opportunity to gain employment and work?

- How do you work with creating opportunities to participate within Daily Activity, work and employment?

How do you view the situation regarding access to work and employment for people with intellectual disabilities?

Information and Accessibility

What is your experience of the information that is provided by the Gothenburg Municipality?

Could you talk about how you work with different types of information within the Municipality?

What is your experience with different policy documents, and their goals and strategies, within the municipality?

- What is your perception of their function to increase opportunities for people with intellectual disabilities in work and employment, as well as within Daily Activity?

Support and Prerequisites

Could you talk about how you work with providing and deciding about support and adjustment for people with intellectual disability to increase opportunity for participation within work?

- From your experiences, what are different conditions that help in this situation?

The conversation about Disability and Intersectionality

What is your experience of how you talk and approach intellectual disability?

- In society, Daily Activity, other work experiences.

In the conversation about the meaning of a diverse workforce: What is your experience of how people regard diversity in Daily Activity and other work settings?

- How do you think differences affect the ability to gain work and employment for someone with intellectual disability?