# The Impact of Early Work Experience on VR Outcomes

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## Introduction

Since the summer of 2015, Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation has provided access to a summer work experience for students with disabilities who are entering their final year of high school. This project was designed in order to better understand the impact of participation in the summer work experience on VR employment outcomes.

## Study Purpose & Research Questions

To better understand the mechanisms that underlie one specific program (SWE) on post-secondary employment outcomes.

Research Question: Are SWE participants more likely to exit VR with employment than those who do not participate?

## Methods

Design: Quasi-experimental design, adopting the propensity score matching method.

Data Source:Administrative data from the Missouri VR case management system

Sample:816 summer work experience participants; 2,005 non-participants (control)

Data Analysis:Descriptive statistics & a series of Logistic Regression

Propensity Score Model: *Summer work experience participation = β0* + β1 (gender) + β2 (race/ethnicity) + β3 (age) + β4 (primary disability) + β5 (MSD) + µ.

Linear Probability Model: *Successful Employment Outcome = β0* + β1 (summer work experience participation) + β2 (gender) + β3 (race/ethnicity) + β4 (age) + β5 (primary disability) + β6 (MSD) + µ.

## Results

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Variable | Model 1 | Model 2 |
| SWE Participant | -0.08 (0.00) | -0.09 (0.00) |
| Age 16 |  | 0.06 (0.11) |
| Age 17 |  | -0.009 (0.65) |
| Age 18  |  | Reference Group |
| Male |  | **0.09 (0.00)** |
| White |  | Reference Group |
| Black |  | **-0.08 (0.001)** |
| Other race |  | -0.04 (0.35) |
| Most Sig. D |  | 0.02 (0.26) |
| Sensory |  | 0.04 (0.39) |
| Physical |  | **-0.10 (0.01)** |
| Cognitive |  | Reference Group |
| Psychosocial |  | **-0.05 (0.03)** |
| Other Mental |  | -0.07 (0.11) |
| Adj. R(2) | 0.005 | 0.02 |

## Conclusions and Future Directions

* Do not see that SWE positively impacts outcomes given this design.
* Explore ways to reduce the time between SWE and post-SWE VR services.
* Consider other dependent variables of interest in order to better understand other ways that SWE is impacting participants beyond only successful employment outcome measures.

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