Applicability of the Self-Assessment for Students and Counselors (SASC) for Work Supporters and Job Coaches in Japan

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Introduction:
A Systems Approach to Placement (SAP) is a holistic technique used in job placement of people with disabilities. One of the 2 instruments of SAP is “Self-Assessment for Students and Counselors (SASC)” which allows rehabilitation students and job placement practitioners to assess their skills, knowledge, and competencies. The present study examined the applicability of SASC to be used in Japan.

Methods:
A questionnaire including the 80-item Japanese version of SASC (SASC-J) was distributed to: (1) a chief coordinator, (2) a work support coordinator, and (3) a life support coordinator employed at each of the 247 Work Support Centers available as of July 2010 in Japan. The returned 328 questionnaires (return rate of 52.6%) was analyzed using alpha coefficient for internal consistency of the SASC-J. Demographic data was also analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Results and Discussion:
About the half (52.3%) was male, and their major job title was “Work Supporters” (62%) instead of “Job Coaches” (3%). The main service consumers were individuals with intellectual disabilities (65%) and psychiatric disabilities (60%). The overall Alpha coefficient of 0.93 was obtained. It was found that assessment scores of the eight subsystems in SASC-J, namely, Client subsystem, Health subsystem, Education subsystem, Family subsystem, Social subsystem, Employer subsystem, Placement Personal subsystem, and Funding subsystem, varied according to the demographic characteristics of the sample.

It was suggested by the original author that the average 3.0-4.0 in any sub-system would mean “you have enough knowledge to teach someone that subsystem”, and average 0.0-3.0 in any sub-system would mean “you need to read a textbook on placement and/or a course in Placement” (Kundu, et al, 2005). Although “work supporters” or “job coaches” in Japan have not had enough learning opportunities specific to vocational rehabilitation through colleges and universities, they scored relatively high in the Employer subsystem and the Placement Personal subsystem.

Conclusions:
One of the plausible reasons for those Japanese work supporters and job coaches to score high enough on SASC-J without having formal vocational rehabilitation education is that many of their professional background are in the field of social work and education. Future research should identify more specific training needs for those “Placement” specialists who have a holistic technique.

Reference:

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