Evidence of Effectiveness: Research Gaps in Customized Employment

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Having Fun: Perceived Time of 1 Minute
Doing Nothing: Perceived Time of 1 Minute
Waterboarding: Perceived Time of 1 Minute
Listening to a Presentation about Research: Perceived Time of 1 Minute
Evidence-Based Practice

- No Child Left Behind (2001)
  - “rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures to obtain reliable and valid knowledge” (20 USC § 7901)

- IDEA (2004)
  - Requires special education and related services use “peer-reviewed research to the extent possible” (20 USC §1414[D])
Evidenced-Based Practice

Four levels of evidence (NSTTAC) - NTACT

- **Evidence-Based Practices**
  - Based on rigorous research designs
  - Have demonstrated a record for improving outcomes
  - Have been through a systematic review process that uses quality indicators to evaluate evidence.

- **Research-Based Practices**
  - Based on rigorous research designs
  - Have demonstrated a record for improving student outcomes.

- **Promising practices**
  - Based on research
  - Have limited success
  - Have weak research designs.

- **Unestablished Practices**
  - Not based on research
  - Have no data to support their effectiveness
  - Based on anecdotal evidence.
Quality Indicators for Research (Gersten et al., 2005; Horner et al., 2005)

- **Descriptions of participants.**
  - Was sufficient information provide about the participant?
- **Descriptions of setting and conditions.**
  - Was sufficient information provide about the participant?
- **Operational description of the independent variable.**
  - Was it clearly described?
  - Was fidelity of implementation described and assessed?
- **Operational description of dependent variable.**
  - Were outcomes measured at appropriate times?
  - Inter observer reliability?
- **Description of social validity measures.**
  - Are interventions socially valid?
Challenges in Disability Research
Challenges in Disability Research

- Heterogeneity of sample
  - High – Low incidence disabilities.
- Variability in settings and conditions
  - Community settings, vocational settings, classroom settings, staff, etc.
- Appropriate design to answer question
  - Experimental group designs (Randomized Controlled Trials & quasi-experimental) correlational, signal subject, & qualitative.
Existing Literature on CE

- Review of Articles on CE
  - Electronic search of articles on CE published between 2001 – 2015
    - Academic Search Premier, PsychINFO, Eric
    - Customized Employment + Disability
  - Pre-screening
    - Publications in peer-reviewed journals in the U.S.
    - Description of CE for people with disabilities, including components of the CE procedures.
    - Examination of policy related to CE, and procedures implemented in the U.S.
Existing Literature on CE

Classification of Articles

- Non-Data
  - No methods sections
  - No participants
  - No outcome summaries

- Data-based
  - Descriptive data
  - Individual, groups, or quasi experimental data
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Article Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Griffin, C., Hammis, D., Geary, T., &amp; Sullivan, M. (2008).</td>
<td>Customized Employment where we are; where we’re headed.</td>
<td>General CE Article</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inge, K. J. (2007).</td>
<td>Demystifying customized employment for individuals with significant disabilities.</td>
<td>General CE Article</td>
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<tr>
<td>Targett, P., Young, C., Revell, G., Williams, S. &amp; Wehman, P. (2007).</td>
<td>Customized employment in one stop career centers.</td>
<td>CE &amp; Transition</td>
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</table>
Existing Literature on CE

- Non-data
  - Provides conceptual information about CE
    - 5 Articles examined CE and Transition
      - Certo & Luecking
        - Models of transition service delivery that used CE strategies.
          - Service Integration, collaboration, customized job development.
    - 9 General CE articles
      - Overview of CE
      - Funding & technical assistance.
    - 1 Article on systems change in Florida
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<td>Citron, T., Brooks-Lane, N., Crandell, D., Brady, K., Cooper, M., &amp; Revell, G. (2008).</td>
<td>A revolution in the employment process of individuals with disabilities: Customized Employment as the catalyst for system change.</td>
<td>Descriptive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvey, J., Szoc, R., Rosa, M.D., Pohl, M., &amp; Jenkins, J (2013).</td>
<td>Understanding the competencies need to customize jobs: A competency model for customized employment.</td>
<td>Descriptive</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Existing Literature on CE

- Data-Based Studies
  - 1 article provided descriptive survey data from 9 employers who have hired using CE.
  - Remaining articles reported outcome data.
    - Model demonstrations
    - Wage – all showed positive wages
    - Changes in quality of life
    - Competency Model
Existing Literature on CE

- General Observations
  - Expand research to establish the efficacy of CE using quality research indicators.
    - We do not know what components of CE account for successful outcomes.
      - Discovery
      - Job coach
      - Individual characteristics
      - Employers
      - Instruction
    - We do not have sufficient information about fidelity to allow for replication across studies.
5 Recommendations for future CE Research

- Conduct validation research on the effects of CE.
  - Quality indicators in both group/quasi-experimental research and single subject research.
    - Descriptions of participants.
    - Descriptions of setting and conditions.
    - Description of the independent variable.
    - Description of dependent variable.
    - Description of social validity measures.
Existing Literature on CE

- Conduct validation research on the effects of CE.
  - Control group research on the effects of CE or its components in producing desired outcomes.
  - Research examining retention of jobs across time and the services necessary for sustaining employment.
  - Research on Systematic instruction.
Recommendations

- Develop and validate a CE fidelity scale
  - Determine the degree to which programs are adhering to high quality, validated CE competencies.
  - Capture essential practices and procedures used in service delivery.
  - Guide practitioners to systematically implement CE
  - Serve as an objective measure of performance during training on the critical features.
  - Assist funding agencies determine which community rehabilitation agencies were aligning their practices with those outlined on the scale.
Conduct research on employer engagement.

- How best to engage and develop relationships with employers that result in placement and maintenance of employees with disabilities.

- Examine how employer policies and practices influence.
  - Employer decisions to customized jobs.
  - Formal policies and procedures that impede customizing a job.
  - How on-the-job training and supports can be developed.
**Recommendations**

- Conduct research on CE sustainability.
  - Cost effectiveness of service delivery
  - Identify different funding streams to support and maintain CE.
  - Examine how time-limited funding agencies (VR) and long-term agencies (I/DD) can braid funding to meet the individual support needs of the customized employee.

*Sustainability!*
Recommendations

- Conduct research on utilizing CE in transition from to employment.
  - Examine how to effectively implement CE in schools.
  - Examine how transition teachers can conduct discovery activities with their students.
    - How embed discovery information into IEP goals.
  - Examine school and district facilitators and barriers to CE implementation.
  - How to effectively train special education teachers, paraeducators, and others involved in customized service delivery.
Conclusion

- Value of the current peer-reviewed literature on CE.
  - Helped establish a conceptual framework for CE.
  - Provided descriptions on how to implement CE in a variety of contexts.
  - Provided descriptive evidence that CE practices are improving integrated employment outcomes such as wages, hours worked, and quality of life.
- Adequately described CE and outcomes
  - Research needs to establish cause and process.
More research is needed to:

- Ensure implementation with high fidelity across different settings and agencies.
  - Potential to lead poorly informed practitioners providing services under the guise of “customized employment.”
- Ensure adequate preparation of pre-service professionals (VR counselors, transition teachers).
- Ensure we do not adopt an under-defined model with poor fidelity of implementation.
More research is need to

- Create more buy-in and promote sustainability from various stakeholders such as vocational rehabilitation, intellectual and developmental disability state agencies, and special education transition.
- Lead to more efficient, effective, and individually tailored service to people with significant disabilities.