

Guest Editorial

Workplace Issues and Placement

Challenges to potential employees in the world of work persist. With more than 51 million persons with disabilities representing 18 percent of the US population, several articles are presented in this Special Edition that relate to workplace issues and placement. In a commentary by past US Rehabilitation Services Commissioner, Dr. Frederick Schroeder discusses these issues and comments on conditions for employment opportunities and issues with persons with disabilities.

One of the salient considerations affecting practitioners throughout the field of rehabilitation is the World Health Organization's International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF). In her article entitled, *Using the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) in Job Placement*, Homa discusses the ICF, designed to be universally applicable to all persons, helping to decrease fragmentation in services and increase effective communication among vocational rehabilitation professionals. Leading forth from a discussion of the International Classification model to the next article, a systems approach may be useful in the career decision-making process as well.

According to Zimmerman and Kontosh, in their article entitled, *A Systems Theory Approach to Career Decision Making*, career indecision have been linked to interpersonal and intrapersonal processes. In this study, Systems Theory Framework (STF) is presented as a way to collectively integrate both content and process into career indecision, identifying how systemic constructs can be useful in the career decision-making process.

Regarding nurses with and without disabilities, in their article, *Work Place Issues Surrounding Healthcare Professionals with Disabilities in the Current Labor Market*, authors Kontosh, Fletcher, Frain and Winland-Brown analyzed data regarding the perceptions of employers and nurses with and without disabilities. The results are quite interesting.

In the article, *Gender as a Differential Indicator of the Employment Discrimination Experiences of Americans with Multiple Sclerosis*, Rumrill, Roessler, McMahon, Hennessey and Neath discuss differences in the experiences of women and men with Multiple Sclerosis in relation to employment discrimination. Factors including demographic characteristics, industry designations, location and size of employer, the nature of discrimination alleged, and resolution of those allegations are discussed. Following along the lines of discrimination in the workplace, in the article, *Workplace Discrimination and Cancer*, McKenna, McMahan, Fabian, West, and Hurley analyze data from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Integrated Mission System database in reference to allegations of workplace discrimination among individuals diagnosed with cancer. Issues involving terms and conditions of employment, lay-off, discharge, wages and demotion are discussed.

Regarding assessment of vocational preference, can brain hemisphericity affect employability options? In the article entitled, *Brain Hemisphere Dominance and Vocational Preference: A Preliminary Analysis*, by Szirony, Pearson, Burgin, Murray and Elrod, a canonical correlation analysis of brain hemispheric preference, vocational personality (Holland RIASEC Codes) and perceived ability in Math or Music resulted in the consideration of global brain hemisphere preference as a possible indicator of vocational choice.

In a captivating and revealing study entitled, *Problem Gambling in the Workplace, Characteristics of Employees Seeking Help*, Hawley, Glenn, and Diaz of West Virginia University present seminal evidence exploring the vocational patterns and demographics of callers with self reported gambling problems to a state helpline. Utilizing Chi-squared Automatic Interaction (CHAID) dendograms to analyze 1072 working age callers to a state helpline with gambling related problems, the authors of this exploratory investigation set out to deter-

mine issues salient to the problem of gambling in the workplace.

In, *An Ecological Approach to Facilitate Successful Employment Outcomes Among People with Multiple Chemical Sensitivity*, by Koch, Rumrill, Hennessey, Vierstra, and Roessler, the authors considered the situation of adults with multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS) and their premature exit from the workforce due to the severity of MCS symptoms. The resulting disability stigma and unmet needs for on-the-job accommodations are also addressed. In this article, an Ecological Model of Career Development is presented as a potential method of identifying barriers and implementing rehabilitation interventions in an effort to improve the employment outcomes of persons with MCS.

Hennessey, Rumrill, Fitzgerald and Roessler present findings from a study of college and university students with disabilities from 7 different institutions. Four disadvantage-related predictors of career optimism were considered – gender, race/ethnicity, perceived impact of disability, and disability benefits status. A multiple regression analysis indicated that race and ethnicity and impact of disability predicted career optimism, with non-minorities and people with lower perceived impact of disability reporting higher levels of career optimism. Implications for rehab and career services practice are discussed.

Within the category of student paper submissions, a discussion of Situational Leadership takes place. This edition proudly presents a student submission by Christopher Cubero, accepted for its content and focus on organizational development and persons with

disabilities. Cubero asks, “*Does situational leadership style impact workers with disabilities?*” In this piece, employer and employee perceptions of the workplace are analyzed in relation to leadership style and its potential impact on workers with disabilities. Implications of the situational leadership model along with potential outcomes for workers with are discussed.

We thank the authors of these interesting and valued studies. It is with great pleasure that we, the guest editors of this special issue, present a collection of empirically derived information about the workplace and some of the issues facing individuals with disabilities, those who dedicate their lives to resolving such issues, and to educators and investigators alike whose interests promote betterment within the world or work.

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