

The Evidence-Based SE Fidelity Criteria as an Evaluation Tool in Finnish Context



The Objective and the Evaluation Context

The objective was to assess transferability of the Evidence-Based SE fidelity scale in Finnish context

- The research literature suggests implementing the Evidence-Based SE
- However, some items on the scale seem to be directly related to the U.S. service system and towards a certain target group

An evaluation of a 4-year year SE development project to create a regional SE service for disabled unemployed

- Friends of the Young – A third sector service provider
- Evaluation targeted the final service model
- External evaluation against the EB SE Fidelity criteria
- Evaluation-based feedback and recommendations
- Evaluated data included individual casebooks and a two-day monitoring with the service provider



The Target Group of the Evaluated Project

		n	%
Sex (n=41)	Male	23	56
	Female	18	44
Age (n=41)	< 30	21	51
	30 - 39	13	32
	40 <	7	17
Education (n=40)	None	11	28
	Vocational	25	63
	Lower high grade or above	4	10
Job experience (yrs) (n=40)	< 1	14	35
	1 - 2	10	25
	2 <	16	40
Obstacles to employment (n=41)	Health	32	78
	Social factors	11	27
	Other	15	37



Rehabilitation and SE in Finland

The main developments started during and after The Second World War

- During the 1950s and 60s building of the welfare services relied on the Nordic principles and an extensive network of rehabilitation institutions was created in Finland during the 1970s and 1980s. Legislation was completely revised in 1991.

Several SE development projects since 1990s with national and EU funding

The implementation of the Evidence-Based SE is still not very common in either project or integrated settings



The Method

The IPS 2008 Fidelity Scale

- Proven predictive and discriminative validity
- Strong evidence base
- 25-point scale, each item rated 1–5
- Sections on service providers staffing, organization and on the service provided

The objectives of the analysis

- To assess transferability of the IPS Fidelity scale to the evaluation context
- To identify potentially conflicting or problematic segments of the scale

Consensus method with two independent reviewers

- Ex ante analysis of the scale



The Results

22 out of 25 items can be described generic

3 out of 25 items concerning "service integration" were found contextually bounded and problematic from the evaluation perspective

1. Integration of rehabilitation with mental health treatment thru team assignment
2. Integration of rehabilitation with mental health treatment thru frequent team member contact
3. Collaboration between employment specialists and Vocational Rehabilitation counselors



The Service Integration

Core rationale: "Job coaches are expected to spend most of their time in the community meeting with clients and employers"

- Services should be set up so that employment specialists work with a limited number of referral sources with which they can develop relationships
- Job coaches should co-ordinate services with VR and mental health



The Scale Transformation

Items 1–3 on Organization–scale were assessed not to be transferable as such

- Item 1 was adapted to meet local conditions
- Items 2 and 3 were merged in order to better reflect the context evaluated

Modification resulted a 24–item and 120–point scale

- All thresholds were lowered by 5 points

The Score Summary

Points total 93

Point average 3.88

Threshold levels

110 – 120 Exemplary Fidelity

95 - 110 Good Fidelity

69 – 94 Fair Fidelity

< 69 Not Supported Employment



The Summary

The IPS is a fit for use method in a quality enhancing process of SE services

- Most items on the scale were assessed transferable to most contexts
- In this sense scale transformations made can be deemed acceptable

The Fidelity Scale is not sensitive to different target groups and following differences in service provision

- At present the EB SE Fidelity Scales "service integration" items must be treated ad hoc
- The Scale would require situational adaptations to deal with contextual differences and the "service integration" items (i.e. referral sources, co-operational organizations)



The Discussion

Major challenges lie in the implementation of the EB practices in integrated settings & required support structures

- The SE implementation has been an emerging topic in the SE research literature
- The "service integration" has been seen a major hindrance in implementing SE in previous projects

Further research and decisive action is needed to approach the challenges in implementing Evidence-Based practices

- The EB SE cannot be treated as an isolated VR measure
- It can be seen as a critique of current vocational rehabilitation and employment services for vulnerable groups challenging the role of sheltered and intermediate labour market institutions



Thank You!

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