

Employer Attitudes Towards Psychological/ Neuropsychological Disabilities and Job Accommodation in Mental Health Conditions

Dr. Izabela Z. Schultz, Ph.D., ABPP, ABVE
2nd Canadian Congress on Research on Mental
Health & Addiction in the Workplace
May 17-18, 2007
Vancouver, B.C.



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RESEARCH TEAM

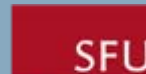
University of British Columbia

- Dr. Izabela Z. Schultz
 - Ruth A. Milner
 - Douglas Hanson
 - Dr. Oonagh Zuberbier
 - Alanna Winter
-
- Acknowledgement:
 - Study funded by Social Development Canada



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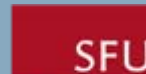
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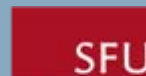
MENTAL HEALTH DISABILITY EPIDEMIC IN THE WORKPLACE

- Mental disorders comprise four of the ten leading individual causes of disability worldwide (WHO, 2001)
- Account for 10.5% of the global burden of illness (Canadian Senate, 2004)
- Depression: 2nd highest burden of disease (Murray & Lopez, 1996)



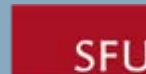
MENTAL HEALTH DISABILITY EPIDEMIC IN THE WORKPLACE

- Presence of mental disorder translated into an average of one day of work absence and three days of work cut back per month
 - Mood disorders: 6 cut-back days
 - Anxiety disorders: 4.5 cut back days
(Lim, Sanderson & Andrews, 2000)



MENTAL HEALTH DISABILITY EPIDEMIC IN THE WORKPLACE

- Most frequent work disabilities:
 - Dysthymia, Major Depression, PTSD, Panic Disorder & Social Phobia
(Alonso et al., 2004)
- Presence of mental disorder reduces probability of employment by 11%
(Ettner, Frank & Kessler, 1997)



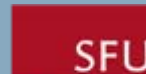
SOCIAL STIGMA IN MENTAL HEALTH DISABILITY

- More disabling than primary condition
(Goldner et al., 2004)
- Impacts opportunities for securing employment, career advancement and tenure
(Kusznir, 2001)
- Most salient barrier to work
(WHO, 2001)



SOCIAL STIGMA IN MENTAL HEALTH DISABILITY

- Based on workplace myths which perpetuate employers' discriminatory attitudes
(Harnois & Gatchel, 2000)
- 90% of employers would hire a person with physical disability but only 20% would hire a person with mental illness
(McFarlin, Song & Sonntag, 1991)



SOCIAL STIGMA IN MENTAL HEALTH DISABILITY

- Employers attitudes improved with:
 - Previous positive experience
 - Government sector
 - Female employer
 - Higher level on education
 - On-site training from a supportive agency

(Graffam, Shinkfield, Smitz & Polzin, 2002)



STUDY QUESTION

- What is the relationship between employer attitudes towards workers with mental health disability and job accommodation?



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METHOD

- National survey of employers using a random sample from all of the English-speaking Canadian provinces



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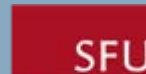
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METHOD

- Disproportional stratified random sampling of 20 employers from 10 industrial groups of the National Occupational Classification
 - N: 83
- Instrument: The Employer Attitudes Questionnaire (Diksa & Rogers, 1996)



EMPLOYER ATTITUDES QUESTIONNAIRE

Industry Category	Frequency	Percent
Agriculture	4	4.8
Mining	5	6.0
Construction	4	4.8
Manufacturing	8	9.6
Transportation	15	18.1
Wholesale	9	10.8
Retail	6	7.2
Finance	4	4.8
Service	15	18.1
Public administration	13	15.7
Total	83	100.0



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EMPLOYER ATTITUDES QUESTIONNAIRE

Size of Company	Frequency	Percent
100-499 employees	49	59.0
500-999 employees	9	10.8
1000+ employees	25	30.1
Total	83	100.0



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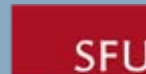
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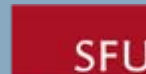
EMPLOYER ATTITUDES QUESTIONNAIRE

Company Characteristic	Frequency	Percent
For profit	56	67.5
Not for profit	15	18.1
Government agency	11	13.3
Total	82	98.8
Missing System	1	1.2
Total	83	100.0



EMPLOYER ATTITUDES QUESTIONNAIRE

Company Policy (Does company have a policy towards hiring PWD?)	Frequency	Percent
No	50	60.2
Yes	32	38.6
Total	82	98.8
Missing System	1	1.2
Total	83	100.0



EMPLOYER ATTITUDES QUESTIONNAIRE

Hired person with mental illness	Frequency	Percent
No	50	60.2
Yes	33	39.8
Total	83	100.0



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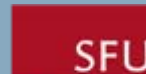
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EMPLOYER ATTITUDES QUESTIONNAIRE

Concern	Frequency	Percentage
WORK PERSONALITY		
Being flexible	39	47.0
Being reliable	53	63.9
Being on time	39	47.0
Show up for scheduled shifts	43	51.8
Adjusting to the work environment	57	68.7
Benefiting from the standard amount of supervision	48	57.8
Seeking assistance to perform job better	44	53.0
Respecting authority	37	44.6
Getting along with co-workers and supervisors	37	44.6
Communicating with others	46	55.4
Taking pride in work	30	36.1
Keeping the job	43	51.8
Responding to criticism	48	57.8



EMPLOYER ATTITUDES QUESTIONNAIRE

Concern	Frequency	Percentage
WORK PERFORMANCE		
Being able to perform job tasks	55	66.3
Being able to produce an acceptable quantity of work	52	62.7
Being able to produce an acceptable quality of work	55	66.3
Possessing adequate academic skills	21	25.3
Possessing adequate problem solving skills	52	62.7
Being able to perform job tasks safely	62	74.7
Being able to tolerate the working conditions	62	74.7
Being able to advance in organization	39	47.0
Being able to be accepted by co-workers	40	48.8
Being able to be accepted by the public or customers	44	53.0
Ability to discipline or fire the person once hired	44	53.0
Possibility of incurring unknown costs	44	53.0



EMPLOYER ATTITUDES QUESTIONNAIRE

Concern: SYMPTOMATOLOGY	Frequency	Percentage
Bizarre behaviours	67	80.7
Having the ability to maintain emotional stability	69	83.1
Needing time off for medical appointments	36	43.9
Ability to leave personal problems outside work	56	67.5
Becoming violent	63	75.9
Withdrawing into own world	56	67.5
Showing poor judgment	54	65.1
Lacking enthusiasm	41	49.4
Ability to tolerate work pressure and stress	66	79.5
Lacking initiative	39	47.0
Ability to pay attention to detail	51	61.4
Having poor physical coordination	31	37.3
Having poor memory	43	51.8
Having poor grooming skills	40	48.2



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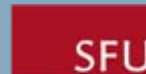
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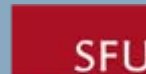
LEAST KNOWN / USED ACCOMMODATIONS

Stamina	Percent of employers with no or minimal experience
Allow longer breaks	32.5
Self-paced workload	44.6
Back-up coverage	40.2
Supported employment	44.6
Work from home	74.7
Part-time work	37.4



LEAST KNOWN / USED ACCOMMODATIONS

Concentration	Percent of employers with no or minimal experience
Reduce distractions	51.8
Space enclosure	62.6
White noise	74.7
Music	53.0
Natural light	53.0
Uninterrupted work time	59.0
Frequent breaks	37.4
Restructure job	46.3



LEAST KNOWN / USED ACCOMMODATIONS

Organization	Percent of employers with no or minimal experience
Daily to do lists	40.9
Use calendars	44.6
Electronic organizer	47.0



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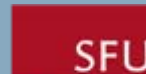
LEAST KNOWN / USED ACCOMMODATIONS

Memory	Percent of employers with no or minimal experience
Provide day planners	31.4
Tape record meetings	68.7
Typewritten minutes	35.0
Software organizers	53.0
Use of email	33.8
Environmental cues	42.2
Post instructions	36.2



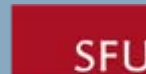
LEAST KNOWN / USED ACCOMMODATIONS

Effective work with supervisors	Percent of employers with no or minimal experience
Strategies to deal with problems	36.1
Evaluate effectiveness of accommodation	35.0
Extra supervision	32.6



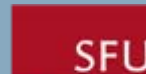
LEAST KNOWN / USED ACCOMMODATIONS

Interaction with coworkers	Percent of employers with no or minimal experience
Sensitivity training	41
Non-work related conversations out of work areas	35



LEAST KNOWN / USED ACCOMMODATIONS

Difficulty handling stress	Percent of employers with no or minimal experience
Allow a support animal	68.6



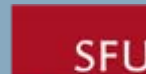
LEAST KNOWN / USED ACCOMMODATIONS

Attendance issues	Percent of employers with no or minimal experience
Self-paced work load	42.2
Home work allowed	71.1
Part-time schedule	39.8
Make up time	35.0
Job sharing	55.4



WHAT PREDICTS JOB ACCOMMODATION?

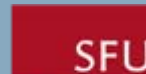
<u>Employee Stamina</u>	
Predictors	R Square
Industry and work personality	0.237



WHAT PREDICTS JOB ACCOMMODATION?

Employee Concentration

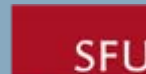
Predictors	R Square
Industry and size of company	0.154



WHAT PREDICTS JOB ACCOMMODATION?

Employee Memory

Predictors	R Square
Industry and size of company	0.146



WHAT PREDICTS JOB ACCOMMODATION?

Employee Supervisor

Predictors	R Square
Size of company and industry	0.207



WHAT PREDICTS JOB ACCOMMODATION?

Employee Stress

Predictors

R Square

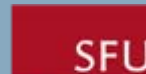
Industry and size of company

0.180



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WHAT PREDICTS JOB ACCOMMODATION?

Employee Attendance

Predictors

R Square

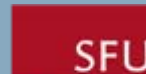
Work personality, size of company & industry

0.306



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WHAT PREDICTS JOB ACCOMMODATION?

Predictors of attitudes towards persons with mental health disabilities and job accommodations

	Dependent Variable	Company policy	Hired Individual	Company size
Attitudes	Work performance	Sig. assoc	Not sig.	Sig. assoc.
	Work personality	Sig. assoc.	Not sig.	Not sig.
	Symptomatology	Not sig.	Sig. assoc.	Not sig.
Job Accommodations	Employee stamina	Sig. assoc.	Sig. assoc.	Not sig.
	Employee concentration	Sig. assoc.	Sig. assoc.	Not sig.
	Employee organization	Not sig.	Sig. assoc.	Not sig.
	Employee memory	Sig. assoc.	Sig. assoc.	Not sig.
	Employee-supervisor relationship	Sig. assoc.	Sig. assoc.	Sig. assoc.
	Employee-coworker relationship	Sig. assoc.	Sig. assoc.	Not sig.
	Employee stress	Sig. assoc.	Not sig.	Not sig.
	Employee attendance	Sig. assoc.	Not sig.	Sig. assoc.
	Change issues	Sig. assoc.	Sig. assoc.	Not sig.



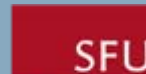
CONCLUSIONS

- Over 50% of employers have significant concerns about workers with mental disabilities



CONCLUSIONS

- Most significant concerns include:
 - bizarre behaviours:
 - 80.7%
 - having the ability to maintain mental stability:
 - 83.1%
 - becoming violent:
 - 75.9%
 - ability to tolerate work pressure & stress:
 - 79.5%
 - being able to tolerate working conditions:
 - 74.7%



CONCLUSIONS

- Least known accommodations:
 - Work from home
 - Reduce distractions
 - Space enclosure
 - Music and natural light
 - Uninterrupted work time
 - Tape recorded meetings
 - Software organizers
 - Support animal
 - Job sharing



CONCLUSIONS

- The most significant predictors of application of job accommodation by the employer were:
 - Industry category
 - Size of the company
 - Perception of the worker personality (stamina, attendance)
 - Worker performance (organization)



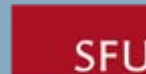
CONCLUSIONS

- Employer attitudes were predictive of accommodations in the employee stamina and in employee attendance categories only.
- Industry category and company size were generally stronger predictors.



CONCLUSIONS

- Company policy on hiring persons with disabilities and prior experience in hiring a person with mental health disability were more predictive of attitudes and accommodations than company size
- Company size was a predictor of attitudes towards work performance and experience with accommodations related to employee attendance and employee-supervisor relationship



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Awareness-raising, education and fear reduction among employees and co-workers regarding employees with mental health disabilities
- Awareness, education and training regarding accommodations for mental health disabilities



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RECOMMENDATIONS

- Structural and organizational changes to ensure:
 - flexibility, self-pacing in schedule and location
 - reduction of unnecessary and adverse environmental and social demands
- Increased knowledge of specific accommodations for stress management and cognitively-based difficulties



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Increased research and training focus on accommodations in “blue collar” context and for smaller companies
- Development of written company policies for job accommodations for PWMHD
- Volunteer and subsidized employment opportunities to assist in desensitizing employers’ fears and to provide valuable management and job accommodation experience

