

Development of an Innovative Mobile Phone Application for Employment of Persons With Disabilities Toward the Inclusive Society

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Abstract : Background: To build the inclusive society, the Japanese government provides “transition support for employment system” for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs). It is, however, difficult to provide appropriate accommodations due to their changeable health conditions. Mobile phone applications (App) are useful to monitor their health conditions and their environments, and effective to improve reasonable accommodations for PWDs. Purpose: This study aimed to develop an App that PWDs input their self-assessment and make their health conditions and environment conditions visible. To attain the goal, we investigated the items of the App for the first step. Methods: Qualitative and descriptive design was used for this study. Study participants were recruited by snowball sampling in July and August 2023. They had to have had minimum of five-years of experience to support PWDs’ employment. Semi-structured interviews were conducted on their assessment regarding PWDs’ conditions of daily activities, their health conditions, and living and working environment. Verbatim transcript was created from each interview content. We extracted the following items in tree groups from each verbatim transcript: daily activities, health conditions, and living and working. Results: Fourteen participants were involved (average years of experience: 10.6 years). Based on the interviews, tree item groups were enriched. The items of daily activities were divided into fifty-five. The example items were as follows: “have meals on one’s style” “feel like slept well” “wake-up time, bedtime, and mealtime are usually fixed.” “commute to the office and work without barriers.” Thirteen items of health conditions were obtained like “feel no anxiety” “relieve stress” “focus on work and training” “have no pain” “have the physical strength to work for one day.” The items of categories of living and working environments were divided into fifteen-two. The example items were as follows: “have no barrier in home” “have supportive family members” “have time to take medication on time while at work” “commute time is just right” “people at the work understand the symptoms” “room temperature and humidity are just right” “get along well with friends in my own way.” The participants also mentioned the styles to input self-assessment like that a face scale would be preferred to number scale. Conclusion: The items were enriched existent paper-based assessment items in terms of living and working environment because those were obtained from the perspective of PWDs. We have to create the app and examine its usefulness with PWDs toward inclusive society.

Keywords : occupational health, innovative tool, people with disability, employment

Conference Title : ICNH 2024 : International Conference on Nursing and Healthcare

Conference Location : Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Conference Dates : December 23-24, 2024