

Ethical Considerations of ICT Integration in Careers Practice

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Organization of the Presentation

- Introduction
- Social Equity Issues
- Resource Issues
- Service Issues
- Professional Standards

Introduction

- Evolution of ICT in guidance
 - Batch processing of career assessments by mainframe computers and minicomputers
 - Local delivery of career assessments, information, and instruction on personal computers
 - Distance delivery of career assessments, information, and instruction on the Internet, along with distance service delivery and social media via the Internet
- Evolution of ethical issues – stability & change

Social Equity Issues

- The Internet allows counseling and guidance to transcend geographic and physical barriers
- Increased Internet access from cheaper computers and mobile devices (smart phones & tablets)

Social Equity Issues

- However, access is still not universal
 - With a global population in 2011 of almost 7 billion, this still means that 4,620,000,000 people in the world do not have ready access to the Internet
- Even in the most economically advanced countries there are still individuals with little to no access to the Internet – Public access points are inadequate

Social Equity Issues

- Equity of access to career interventions is a social justice issue
- Equity of access to the Internet is also a social justice issue
- The costs of computer hardware and access fees puts the Internet further out of reach of persons with limited financial resources

Resource Issues

- Quality of Assessments and Information Delivered on the Internet
- Availability of User Support when Needed

Quality of Assessments & Information

- Highly variable quality of assessments online with little evidence of validity
- Variable quality of test interpretations
- Career information has similar problems of variability and validity evidence
 - Some data inaccurate, biased, out-of-date
 - Some good data is poorly presented
- Individuals may be getting better access to inferior guidance resources

Quality of Assessments & Information

- Economics of publishing a factor
 - High costs of developing and distributing paper products created a disincentive for producing low quality resources
 - Lower costs for electronic publishing make it more economically viable to produce and distribute poor quality information
 - (Many responsible publishers remain who produce high quality resources)

Availability of User Support

- Successful use of resources dependent on readiness for career decision making
- Individuals with lower readiness need more assistance to make effective use of career resources
- Individuals with higher readiness need little or no support from a practitioner to use career resources

Availability of User Support

- Resources in the past were provided by a practitioner
- Resources now widely available on the Internet
- Many users unprepared for independent use of resources
- Web sites do not generally indicate circumstances where help is needed

Service Issues

- Confidentiality and User Privacy
- Distance Service Delivery
- Social Media

Confidentiality and User Privacy

- The expanded access to information increases the chances for inappropriate access
- Data security measures not uniformly followed
- A Lack of auditory and visual privacy is also a problem, especially at public sites

Distance Service Delivery

- The Internet improves access due to problems of disability or geography
- Potential problems:
 - Inappropriate clients (mental health/literacy)
 - Unavailability of local emergency contacts
 - Limited awareness of local conditions
 - Limited awareness of culture
 - Confusion regarding practitioner credentials

Social Media

- Used to deliver and market services
- Potential problems:
 - Maintaining professional boundaries between practitioners and the individuals they serve
 - Reaching a mutual understanding with the client of the purpose and use of social media in service delivery

Professional Standards

- Ethical Standards
- Credentialing Standards
- Accreditation Standards

Ethical Standards

- Ethical codes created to educate professionals, as well as protecting the public
- Three approaches in developing ethical codes
 1. Incorporating elements of ICT use into relevant sections of a general code
 2. Creating specialized codes
 3. Including ethical issues related to guidance as one component of standards for the design and delivery of computer-based career resources

Ethical Standards

- Codes are keeping up-to-date, such as distance services and social media
- Changes in the way that individuals gain access to resources and services have not made issues that were originally identified thirty years ago any less relevant today

Credentialing Standards

- Credentialing standards were created, in part, as a conceptual basis for voluntary professional certification
- Function similar to ethical codes with ICT elements added to general credentialing standards or creation of specialized standards

Accreditation Standards

- Accreditation standards are intended to ensure that students graduating from preparation programs have the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively practice
- Accreditation standards are more general than ethical or credentialing standards regarding ICT in service delivery

Conclusion

- Professional associations are working to keep standards up-to-date
- However, research is needed to guide the development of future standards and training resources
- The success of ICT in guidance depends on our ability to shape fast changing technology in organizations and professions that change more slowly

Reference

- Sampson, J. P., & Makela, J. P. (2014). Ethical issues associated with information and communication technology in counseling and guidance. *International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance Journal*, 14, 135-148. doi:[10.1007/s10775-013-9258-7](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10775-013-9258-7)

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