

An explorative study of the experiences of participation in an "Individual Placement and Support" (IPS) program in Denmark for people with severe mental illness

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Introduction: Worldwide people with severe mental illness experience high rates of unemployment, which are related to individual and societal costs. Individual Placement and Support (IPS) is an evidence-based vocational rehabilitation program, which seems to be effective in employing people with severe mental illness through a place-train approach with rapid job-search and ongoing support. The assumptions behind the IPS-program agrees well with the Occupational Science Perspective, that highlights meaningful occupations, like work and education, as the premise for health and quality of life. However, little is known about the participant's own experience of participating in an IPS-program.

Objectives: To explore the experience of participation in an IPS-program based on an Occupational Science Perspective

Method: Four participants were purposefully sampled and qualitative interviews were conducted with each of the participants. The interviews was subjected to a thematic analysis and elaborated by use of Activity Theory.

Results: Participation in IPS was associated with experiences of safety and security and a sense of autonomy and confidence. In addition, IPS was experienced to provide daily structure and facilitate engagement in meaningful occupations related to work or education.

The analysis is still in progress and will be elaborated and presented at the conference.

Conclusion: IPS was identified to contribute with structure and encouragement, which enabled the creation of a meaningful everyday life.