Chapter 11

The Employment Status and Support Needs of Persons With Disabilities in Japan:
Analysis and Generation of Narrative Using a Narratology and Text Mining

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ABSTRACT

This chapter has two objectives: (1) to describe the significance and applicability of narratology, which features computational and cognitive approaches, in the field of interpersonal relationship supports for persons with disabilities; and (2) to determine effective work supports by analyzing the narratives of the persons with disabilities. In this chapter, the narratives were operationally defined as free-expression answers obtained from mail-survey questionnaires from people with various disabilities describing their work and work life. The questionnaires were sent to 14,448 people and, of these, 4,546 responded. The survey items included their employment status, problems they encountered before employment, problems in their working life, support required in their working life, and opinions regarding disability employment. The results suggested that employment status and problems at work depended on their disability type and the presence of effective supports.

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Any effective disability employment support, whether national policy or interpersonal practice, must be based on the reality of the working life of persons with disabilities. However, the national-level surveys (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, 2014a, 2014b) are mainly composed of selective questions for statistical analysis. Although some free-expression questions are usually added, traditional analysis of unstructured descriptions, such as the KJ method or the grounded theory, requires extensive human power for reading, classifying, and compiling the results. This methodological drawback has largely limited our understanding of the quantitative side of the reality. This study attempts to introduce an innovative analysis of the "narrative" of persons with disabilities that is derived from the national big data (National institute of vocational rehabilitation, 2011) in order to determine effective employment supports for persons with disabilities.

In recent years, there has been a growing focus, both internationally and domestically, on promoting the employment of persons with disabilities. In December 2006, the United Nations (2007) adopted the "Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities," which Japan ratified in January 2014. Article 27 of the Treaty prescribes prohibition of discrimination and supports reasonable accommodations for securing the right to work of persons with disabilities. Also, Article 2 of the Japanese "Act for the Promotion of Employment of Persons with Disabilities" (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, 2015) defines vocational rehabilitation as "establishing independence in the career of persons with disabilities by taking measures prescribed in law, including job guidance, vocational training, and job placement." However, several problems persist in the current situation of the employment of persons with disabilities. Although in 2017 the number of persons with disabilities who were employed reached a record high of approximately 490,000 people (the highest for 14 years) (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, 2017), the practical employment rate is merely 1.97%, which is short of the legal quota of 2.0%. In addition, per company, the ratio of legal employment rate achievement was 50.0%, indicating that half of all companies do not achieve the minimum legislated employment rate. In addition, the following problem was noted in the qualitative aspect: mentally disabled individuals who had not received sufficient support for work experienced more unemployment, occupational changes, and disability aggravation (National Institute of Vocational Rehabilitation, 2017). Furthermore, in 2018, it became clear that there is a problem with public institutions. The problem is that ministries and agencies reported to have employed more persons with disabilities than was actually the case (Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare, 2018). Furthermore, by law, employers will be obligated to include more persons with mental disabilities from 2018 on and, as a result, the quota will be raised accordingly to 2.2%. In addition, it has determined that a legal employment rate for people with disabilities will increase to 2.3% by April 2021. Accordingly, the further quantitative expansion of the numbers of employed disabled persons will be necessary. Therefore, under such circumstances, the following is expected. In other words, effective disability support must be developed to promote the employment of persons with disabilities, and such employment should promote their quantitative and qualitative aspects of their work.

It is important to establish evidence for providing employment supports for persons with disabilities (Yaeda et al., 2012; Yaeda, Ozawa, & Wakabayashi, 2013). The concept of this evidence-based approach originated from 1990s EBM (evidence-based medicine) (Guyatt, 1991; Sackett, Richardson, Straus, Rosenberg, & Haynes, 1997), and evidence in this regard is objectively demonstrated. Sackett et al. (1997) define EBM as "the conscientious, explicit and judicious use of current best evidence in mak-

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