

# Chapter 8

## Perspectives on Career Transition Counselling Services for Students With ASD

### **ABSTRACT**

*This study examined perspectives on career transition counselling services for students with autism spectrum disorders (SASD). This study focused specifically on needs assessment and personalisation, counselling processes and techniques, resource availability and accessibility, and outcome monitoring and feedback dimensions. Using a quantitative cross-sectional design, data were collected from 160 teachers and parents. This study revealed that there is a moderate overall evaluation of counselling services, with relatively stronger endorsement of counselling processes and personalisation, and consistently weaker ratings for resource availability and accessibility. Underpinned by the Ubuntu theory, the findings suggest that while counselling practices reflected communal care and engagement, limited resources constrained the realisation of equitable transition outcomes.*

### **BACKGROUND**

There is an increasing consensus that effective transition counselling for students with autism spectrum disorders (SASD) should be based on thorough needs assessments and tailored strengths-oriented planning to facilitate successful outcomes at old age (Stampoltzis et al., 2025; Dipeolu et al., 2015; Hannah & Topping, 2013). A comprehensive and individualised need assessment is important for effective support and career transition counselling for SASD. This approach is expected to focus on

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strengths-based profiling, which incorporates several aspects like cognitive abilities, vocational interests, sensory preferences, communication styles, and contextual supports. Transitional services are expected to be tailored to the individual needs of SASD, highlighting their strengths and potentials rather than dealing with their limitations (Lam et al., 2023; Lee & Carter, 2012; Rashid & Ostermann, 2009). Some individuals with high-functioning autism spectrum disorders may display a sensitive attention to detail; exhibit thoroughness regarding rules, accuracy, and routines; possess a high degree of reliability, conscientiousness, persistence, and technical proficiency; retain extensive, accurate facts; and show remarkable long-term memory (National Autistic Society, 2004). If harnessed effectively, these attributes enable SASD to excel in positions that necessitate specific skills for preparation for employment. The career transition processes offer a crucial framework for identifying the particular services that SASD need for effective preparation for employment. Best practices suggest that SASD should be afforded significant prospects and practice to take on administrative roles (Martin & Williams-Diehm, 2013). Furthermore, empirical evidence from The Learning Academic (TLA) revealed that placing responsibility and accountability on the SASD was extremely impactful (Lam et al., 2023). This denotes that if students comprehend that they have responsibilities and that there are expectations, they will strive to achieve their goals if given the opportunity. Strength-based assessments provide a detail picture of each SASD, promoting their clinical clarity and improving the range of information for planning (Rashid & Ostermann, 2009).

Furthermore, assessment of vocational interest for SASD to understand their unique strengths, challenges, and preferences to tailor supports and interventions is significantly effective for their successful career transitioning. As stated in the National Autism Plan for Children (2003), individuals exhibiting signs of autism spectrum disorders (ASD) ought to undergo assessment that (a) establish their specific health and educational requirements, taking into account differential diagnosis; (b) assess the possible consequences of the condition, enabling the implementation of suitable intervention and support strategies, and (c) cater to their needs within the family setting, fostering the ability of family members to assist each other. Several assessment tools and approaches have been developed and evaluated, including the Work Rehabilitation and Adaptation Profile for ASD (WRAP-ASD), an Excel-based observation grid for evaluation of work functioning of several domains like motivation, attendance, peer relationships, communication, and cognitive skills (Zemrani et al., 2025). In addition, there is the Ready, Set, Work (RSW), a video modelling programme designed to assist individuals with ASD prepare for vocational settings by simulating social dilemmas (Zemrani et al., 2025). Another example is the Pre-vocational Skills Laboratory (PVS-Lab), an online-based learning environment aimed at enhancing pre-vocational and employment skills (Tsiopela & Jimoyiannis,

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