
Measuring the Impact of Career Development Services in Canada: Current and Preferred Practices

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ABSTRACT

There is a lack of knowledge regarding the value and impact of career development services, particularly in Canada. The goals of this research were to better understand career development services' evaluation practices and the value of these practices from the perspectives of Canadian agencies, practitioners, policy makers, and employers. Data were collected using a survey, focus groups, and telephone interviews. Differences were found between the type and size of career service providers regarding the importance and practice of career development evaluation. Overall, practitioners, agencies, policy makers, and employers agreed that it was important to evaluate career development services; however, there is a great need to improve how and what is being measured. Implications for future research and evaluation practices are considered.

RÉSUMÉ

Nous manquons de connaissances sur la valeur et les répercussions des services de perfectionnement professionnel, en particulier au Canada. Les buts de cette recherche étaient de mieux comprendre les pratiques d'évaluation des services de perfectionnement professionnel et la valeur de ces pratiques du point de vue des organismes, praticiens, décideurs et employeurs canadiens. Les données ont été recueillies en utilisant une enquête, des groupes d'étude et des entrevues téléphoniques. Des différences ont été trouvées selon le type et la taille des fournisseurs de services d'orientation concernant l'importance et de la pratique de l'évaluation du perfectionnement professionnel. Dans l'ensemble, praticiens, organismes, décideurs et employeurs ont convenu qu'il était important d'évaluer les services de perfectionnement professionnel, mais il y a un grand besoin d'améliorer ce qui est mesuré et la façon de le faire. Des conséquences sur la recherche future et les pratiques d'évaluation sont envisagées.

It is a common contention that the provision of career development services facilitates individual career development by improving decision-making, helping with the acquisition of satisfactory work, and promoting a balance among multiple life roles. Career development services may include individual and group interventions and programs, such as career assessment, counselling, information and resource management, work development, and community capacity building (National Steering Committee, 2004). It is also assumed that career development services have the potential to lead to substantial benefits for employers, the labour market, and the economy in general (Mayston, 2002). However, there is little research providing evidence to support these assumptions about the value and

impact of career development services. Furthermore, little is known about the evaluation beliefs and practices of those providing career services in Canada. This article describes research conducted by the Canadian Research Working Group for Evidence-Based Practice in Career Development (CRWG) to better understand the current evaluation practices of career development service providers in Canada (Magnusson & Lalande, 2005).

Despite an increasing awareness of the need for better understanding of how and why career services are effective (Herr, 2003; Watts, 2005), the number of outcome research studies has actually decreased in the last 20 years (Whiston, Brecheisen, & Stephens, 2003). The difficulties associated with documenting the impact of career interventions may be attributable, in part, to the growing recognition of the complexity of career planning and the related challenges of efficacy research: (a) the range of factors influencing individual choice; (b) the wide variance in client groups, issues, and concerns that makes comparison of evidence difficult; and (c) the lack of common outcome measures in the field of career development (Hughes, 2004).

A review of 53 research articles published in the last 10 years in English-language journals on the topic of the efficacy of career development services, highlight a number of issues contributing to the lack of evaluation research (Roest & Magnusson, 2004). These included the perception of the lack of relevance that evaluation holds for practitioners, difficulties in identifying and measuring outcomes, and problems in conducting research designs that clearly demonstrate cause and effect. Despite these limitations, this review of career efficacy research indicated that career interventions or programs (a) had a positive effect on participant satisfaction, (b) increase client exploratory behaviours, and (c) increased the likelihood that participants would make career decisions.

A number of recommendations have been made regarding efficacy research of career development services. Roest and Magnusson (2004) suggested that a comprehensive research strategy was needed for assessing the efficacy of career interventions and taking into account the complexity of variables involved, the processes utilized, and the differential and longitudinal impact of interventions. Herr (2003) suggests the need for a cost-benefit analysis to document the results of career services, and the creation of national research databases to collect and distribute such information. Watts (2005) urges efficacy research to link career practices to economic efficiency, social equity, and sustainability. In Canada, Hiebert (1994) has called for increased and more precise efficacy assessment in career counselling.

Within Canada, two symposia held in 2003 highlighted the need for public policy to be guided by evidence pertaining to the efficacy of career development practice (Symposia on Career Development and Public Policy, n.d.a). The first was an international symposium (Career Guidance and Public Policy: Bridging the Gap) with 28 countries represented. The second was a national symposium (Working Connections: A Pan-Canadian Symposium on Career Development, Lifelong Learning, and Workforce Development) with all provinces and territo-

ries represented. Participants included career practitioners, policy makers, and employers. A consistent theme that emerged from both symposia was the need to develop effective systems for gathering data concerning the impact of career development/career guidance services on a number of levels, such as individual well-being, social inclusion, and economic development (Symposia on Career Development and Public Policy, n.d.b). Furthermore, participants in both symposia discussed the need for data to inform and influence public policy related to the provision of career services. They agreed that Canadian career service providers are under increasing scrutiny and pressure to prove that the services they offer are both cost-effective and beneficial. They also agreed that an important first step toward assembling an evidence base for career practice would be to determine the current state of outcome evaluation practice in Canada.

Following these symposia, the CRWG conducted a study to explore the current state of practice regarding the evaluation of career development services in Canada so as to better understand how evaluation procedures are currently being used, whether evaluation is a valued practice, and the nature of the outcomes that career service providers were achieving. Specifically, the goals of this research were to:

1. Determine what service outcomes are gathered and reported by front-line career practitioners and how those outcomes are measured.
2. Determine the service outcomes gathered and reported at the office, agency, or school board levels.
3. Discover whether there are service outcomes that are being achieved by front-line and office, agency, and/or school board levels but are *not* reported.
4. Find how policy makers (who fund services) evaluate the services, what they want back from the services, and the kinds of evaluation information and data they prefer to have about the services.
5. Determine how employers evaluate career development services in the workplace, what outcomes they want from these services, whether the evaluation information is useful to them, and the kinds of evaluation information they would prefer to receive.

METHODOLOGY

The research involved (a) an online survey (in French and English) that was made available in the fall of 2004 to Canadian practitioners and agencies that provided career development services, (b) focus groups (French and English) conducted at the National Consultation on Career Development (NATCON) in 2005, and (c) telephone interviews conducted with policy makers and employers in December 2004 and January 2005. For the purposes of this research, “outcomes” were defined as the specific result or product of an intervention including changes in client competence (i.e., knowledge, skills, or attitudes), changes in client behaviours (e.g., increased job-seeking behaviours), changes in client situation (e.g., employment or educational status), and/or broader changes for the client and/or community (e.g., impact on families, community

economic development). Interventions were defined as any intentional activity implemented in the hopes of fostering client change. The purpose of the survey was to explore (a) the importance of assessing the impact of career services, (b) how the impact of career services is determined, (c) the results achieved through the provision of career services, and (d) the means by which the results were measured. The survey included demographic items, rating scales, and open-ended questions.

The purpose of the focus groups was to provide feedback on the themes identified in the survey results. After an introduction to the research, the themes representing the results of the survey were presented. Participants were asked to discuss each theme in terms of whether they agreed or disagreed with the theme, adding their own ideas about the themes.

Telephone interviews were conducted with policy makers and employers. The interviews ranged from 10 to 35 minutes in length and included two interviews conducted in French. The goal of the interviews was to better understand (a) the desired outcomes of career development services, (b) how evaluations are conducted to determine whether they are obtaining these desired outcomes, and (c) the evidence and data they would like to have about these services.

Participants

Invitations to participate in the surveys were distributed by e-mail to a master list of agencies and practitioners who provide career development services in Canada, maintained by the Canadian Career Development Foundation (CCDF). This list included participants from Working Connections: A Pan-Canadian Symposium on Career Development, Lifelong Learning and Workforce Development (held in Toronto in November of 2003; $n = 150$); the Career Circuit Network ($n =$ approximately 3000); the Stakeholder Liaison and Advisory Council (SLAC) of the Canadian Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners ($n = 65$); and the Canadian Career Development Foundation Board of Governors ($n = 11$). Those receiving an invitation were also encouraged to forward the invitation to other agencies or individuals engaged in the provision of career development services. A total of 173 agency representatives completed the survey (147 English-language respondents and 26 French-language respondents). A total of 214 practitioners completed the survey (168 were Anglophone practitioners and 46 were Francophone practitioners).

The participants for the focus groups were recruited at a national conference of career services personnel (National Consultation on Career Development) through an announcement in the conference program. There were 24 participants in an English focus group and 20 participants in a French focus group; practitioners and policy makers were represented in both groups.

The telephone interviews were conducted with 9 policy makers (out of 41 who were contacted) and 7 employers (out of 23 who were contacted). Letters of invitation to participate in a research interview were sent to participants of the Canadian symposium, Working Connections: A Pan-Canadian Symposium on

Career Development, Lifelong Learning and Workforce Development. Follow-up e-mails were then sent to those who did not respond to the initial invitation. Individuals who agreed to participate in the research were sent a copy of the appropriate interview protocol prior to the interview.

Data Analysis

Surveys. The relationship between language of respondents and the two global criteria variables of *importance of outcome measurement* and *practice of outcome measurement* was assessed using chi-square tests. This was done to determine whether the data could be merged for the French and English surveys. Simple frequency analyses were conducted for demographic variables, items pertaining to perceived importance, and the practices of outcome assessment. Chi-square analyses ($p \leq .05$) were conducted between demographic variables and the criteria variables of perceived importance of impact assessment and actual practice of impact assessment. Chi-square analysis was also used to determine whether or not there were significant differences on these variables between respondents who completed the surveys in English and those who completed them in French.

The written responses on the surveys were analyzed using content analysis techniques, involving the identification of general themes from specific responses (Colaizzi, 1978). Twenty participant cases were randomly drawn from the database, and verbatim responses were first examined for the presence of themes or patterns. As each new case was examined, the responses were coded into themes and categories; when a new theme or category emerged, each prior case was reviewed again to search for the existence of the new theme in that data. This process was repeated until no new themes emerged. As a check on the reliability of the themes, a second set of 20 cases was randomly drawn. No new themes were found, indicating that data saturation had been reached.

Focus groups. Notes from the focus groups were carefully reviewed. The responses were categorized according to (a) accuracy or inaccuracy of the survey results, and (b) additional information that was not captured in the survey results.

Telephone interview data. Written notes from telephone interviews were also analyzed using content analysis. The first step in the telephone interview data analysis involved reviewing the participants' responses to each question and grouping similar responses into themes or categories. The number of responses in each theme was noted. These initial groupings of responses to each question were then reviewed, and higher-order themes were identified that represented categories of responses. Because some of the responses to each question were related to some of the responses to other questions, the higher-order themes were reviewed across the questions. This resulted in two lists of general themes that represented the responses made by the group of policy makers and those made by the group of employers.

One individual initially conducted the analysis of the data. Then the original responses and themes were sent to another person who confirmed the interpretation of the results. This enhanced the validity of the content analysis.

RESULTS

Survey

A total of 173 agency representatives completed the survey (147 English-language respondents and 26 French-language respondents). A total of 214 practitioners completed the survey (168 were Anglophone practitioners and 46 were Francophone practitioners). A chi-square analysis was conducted of the relationship between language of respondents and the two global criteria variables of *importance of outcome measurement* and *practice of outcome measurement*. No significant differences were found, enabling these data to be merged for subsequent analysis of the agency data.

There was a significant difference between Anglophone and Francophone practitioners regarding the importance of outcome measurement ($\chi^2 = 55.14$; $p < .01$). Francophone practitioners were more likely than Anglophone respondents to rate the measurement of outcomes as *not at all important*. There was also a significant difference between Anglophone and Francophone practitioners on the practice of outcome measurement ($\chi^2 = 9.39$; $p < .01$). Anglophone practitioners were more likely to report on the outcome of their services. Because of the significant differences on the key criteria variables of the study, the Anglophone and Francophone practitioner data will be reported separately.

Most respondents from agencies represented not-for-profit agencies (50.3%) or provincial government settings (23.3%). Other kinds of agencies represented included school (K to 12; 8.6%), post-secondary (8.6%), private (for profit) agencies or private practice (6.1%), and federal government agencies (3.1%). The agencies reported a wide variety of career development services that they provided. The most common services provided by Canadian agencies were career education (100%), job search information (94%), career and labour market information (89%), individual career counselling (86.7%), employment counselling (83.3%), and group counselling (78.6%).

All client age groups received services provided by both Anglophone and Francophone practitioners. A greater percentage of Anglophone practitioners provided services to adults, whereas a higher percentage of Francophone respondents provided services to younger children. Otherwise, services are similarly distributed across age groups. The Anglophone practitioners reported a different pattern of service provision from the Francophone practitioners. While all Anglophone practitioners reported providing career education programs, they also all reported providing assessment services (compared to only 76.2% of the Francophone practitioners). There was general agreement between agencies and practitioners about the types of career services offered and about the relative ranking of the frequency of the provision of these services. However, with the exception of the role of assessment for Anglophone practitioners, the rank order of service provision was much the same for Francophone practitioners. This distribution of types of services provided, as well as the variety of clients served, suggests that this was a representative sample of the variety of career development practitioners and agencies in Canada.

Participants were asked, "How important is it to measure the outcomes/impact of career services?" The responses included (a) not at all important, (b) somewhat important, and (c) very important. Agency respondents indicated that it was either very important (73.2%) or somewhat important (24.4%). When asked if they actually reported on the outcomes or impact of their services, 84% of the agencies replied "Yes."

Anglophone practitioners agreed on the importance of measuring the outcomes of their services (20.5% rated it as somewhat important and 78.9% rated it as very important). Forty percent of the Francophone practitioners rated it as somewhat important, 33.3% rated it as very important, and 26.7% responded that impact measurement was not at all important. The actual practice of impact measurement for both groups was reported as different in that 71.1% of the Anglophone practitioners and 46.7% of the Francophone practitioners responded that they actually reported on the outcomes or impact of their services.

A significant relationship was found between the type of service provider and the perceived value of measuring the impact of career services for agencies ($\chi^2 = 25.04$; $p = .02$). Respondents from K-12 school settings were less likely to rate the impact measurement as being very important, and those in post-secondary settings were more likely to say it was somewhat important. Overall, respondents who worked in educational settings placed less importance on impact measurement than their counterparts in not-for-profit or government settings. There was also a significant relationship between the type of service provider and the perceived value of measuring the impact of career services for Anglophone practitioners ($\chi^2 = 40.8$; $p < .01$). Practitioners in schools were less likely to view impact measurement as very important, and not-for-profit agencies were more likely to rate it as very important.

A significant relationship also existed between the type of service provider and the actual measurement of service impact for both agencies ($\chi^2 = 32.39$; $p < .01$) and practitioners ($\chi^2 = 47.81$; $p < .01$). Agency respondents representing K-12 settings were less likely to report on the impact of their services; not-for-profit agencies were more likely to report on the impact of their services. This finding essentially parallels the results noted above for the importance of measuring career services impact. Practitioners in federal government agencies, K-12 schools, and private practice were less likely to engage in impact reporting.

Agency respondents reported a significant relationship between the size of the service provider and the importance of service impact measurement for agencies ($\chi^2 = 24.41$; $p < .01$). In general, the larger the agency, the more importance it placed on measuring the impact of its services. No significant relationships were found between size of the service provider and the importance of service impact measurement for practitioners. When size of service provider was compared to whether they reported the actual measurement of outcomes, a significant relationship was found in the agency data ($\chi^2 = 11.81$; $p = .01$) but, again, not in the practitioner data. The larger the agency, the more likely it was to report on the outcomes of their services.

Measures of association between all remaining demographic variables and the criteria variables of *perceived importance of outcome measurement* and *actual reporting of outcomes* were also conducted. However, no other significant relationships were found. Therefore, it was concluded that, for both agencies and practitioners, the kind of services provided, the target age group of clients, the cultural focus of services, and the employment status of the intended clients were all unrelated to either the importance or the practice of outcome measurement.

In response to the survey question, "What are the three most important outcomes that actually get reported?" practitioners and agencies had similar responses. Three themes were identified as being (a) changes in client situation such as employment status and goal attainment; (b) the number of clients served; and (c) client change, growth, and empowerment. In response to the question asking how outcomes were measured, the responses of the practitioners and agencies were again very similar. The common means to measure outcomes included (a) frequency counts, (b) interviews and surveys completed by clients and stakeholders, (c) observations of client change, and (d) cost-benefit analysis. Additional comments related to the outcomes that were reported and how they were measured included themes related to (a) the difficulty of the evaluation process, (b) the overemphasis on employment statistics as an outcome, and (c) the need for research on the impact of career interventions on special populations.

Agencies and practitioners responded similarly to the question "What outcomes do you believe you are achieving that you are either not required to report or that you are not directly measuring?" The common responses were (a) client empowerment, (b) client satisfaction, (c) benefits to the community, and (d) increased referrals for services. When asked about the difficulties faced when collecting evidence to measure the impact of their services, agencies and practitioners seemed to agree that some outcomes are complex and unmeasurable. They reported difficulty in acquiring client feedback and the absence of agency protocols for evaluation procedures. The services are frequently changing, which also makes evaluation difficult. Agencies and practitioners also noted that there was a perceived lack of importance placed on evaluation and that a lack of agreement existed between agencies and funding sources about definitions of outcomes, making it difficult to compare service outcomes. In addition, they reported a lack of experience and knowledge about how to conduct impact assessments.

Responses to the question "What things would you like to report on if you could?" resulted in similar response themes for agencies and practitioners. These responses included (a) social impact of services; (b) client empowerment, growth, and satisfaction; (c) service quality and utilization; (d) longitudinal impact of services; and (e) how their evaluation results compared with those of other agencies and national research.

When asked "How could the value of your services be better measured?" agencies and practitioners responded similarly by suggesting (a) more consistent service delivery goals and measurement methods to assess whether these goals were reached, (b) better tools to measure service impact, (c) having evaluation embedded in serv-

ice delivery, and (d) increased cooperation between provinces. There was generally a reported discrepancy between what practitioners and agencies were required to evaluate and what outcomes they believed were more important to report. This led to considerable levels of frustration, and a mind set that could be described as “us versus them.” For example, practitioners frequently noted that “they”—meaning the people responsible for the funding of their services—were not interested in anything other than “job placements,” and the implication was that the funding sources did not truly appreciate the full impact of the services they were funding.

Focus Groups

A total of 21 people attended the English-language focus group and a parallel group for French-speaking participants was held at the same time. The participants in both groups discussed the findings from the survey and agreed the results provided a good representation of how career services impact assessments in Canada are valued and conducted.

Telephone Interviews of Policy Makers and Employers

Interviews were conducted with nine Canadian career development policy developers and seven employers. Policy makers reported that they were interested in receiving a range of outcome data from the career development service that they fund. They wanted specific outcomes of services, such as client outcomes; external indicators of client outcomes; indicators that the services made a difference and added a value or return on investment; and longitudinal evidence that the outcomes persisted. Policy makers also wanted information about how career services were provided (for example, the number of clients and whether the level of services were the most appropriate means of service delivery). Current evaluation procedures included (a) monitoring financial and activity outcomes; (b) acquiring feedback from employers or teachers about client outcomes; (c) use of client portfolios; (d) observation of client outcomes; (e) surveys of practitioners, clients, or organizations; (f) qualitative data; and (g) acquiring information about whether other organizations use the program (e.g., as an indicator of the quality of the program). Most policy makers expressed a need to improve the current evaluation procedures, and a total of 19 suggestions were made. Examples of these suggestions include a better understanding of core concepts such as “outcomes,” the need to demonstrate cause and effect, better tools for evaluation, and the ability to compare outcomes between service providers.

Employers expressed more interest in tangible results related to their organizational effectiveness. As a result of their investment in career development services, they wanted trained, motivated, and satisfied employees with increased productivity and less employee turnover. Employers were also interested in obtaining feedback from the career development service providers regarding attendance numbers and what services seemed to be working best. Three employers said that they were getting the information they needed to make informed decisions about the career services offered, one disagreed, and two said they needed more information. A

variety of suggestions (26 in all) were made regarding how evaluations could better provide the information that employers need. Examples of these suggestions include better outcome indicators, employee satisfaction with the services, and improved methods for measuring the effectiveness of career development services over the long term.

DISCUSSION

This preliminary exploration regarding the evaluation of career development services in Canada provides some insights into what is currently practiced, valued, and desired for practitioners, agencies, policy makers, and employers. The results seemed to suggest that Anglophone practitioners valued and practiced the evaluation of their services more than Francophone practitioners. However, the findings also indicated that service providers in the school system (kindergarten to grade 12) were less likely to evaluate their services than were those providing services to adults and in larger agencies. It is important to interpret these two findings together: the Francophone practitioners in this study primarily provided services to younger children in educational settings, so the differences in evaluation practices and reported values may be more attributable to the type of workplace than the language used by the practitioner. The Francophone sample was also very small and may not be representative of this population.

Canadian agencies that deliver career development services agreed that it was important to evaluate their services, and most did practice some form of evaluation. Schools were less likely to report on the impact of their services than were not-for-profit agencies. This may be due to the tendency for not-for-profit agencies to be accountable to the organizations that fund their services, whereas schools tend to be publicly funded in Canada and do not regularly compete for the funding of services. It would be interesting to explore the impact that service evaluation in educational settings would have on the perceived credibility of those services within the educational system.

Respondents from larger agencies were also more likely to report evaluation results than were respondents from smaller agencies. This might be indicative of a lack of resources available in smaller organizations to conduct and report the evaluation of their services. However, all practitioners and agencies indicated in their written responses that evaluation was important and that there is a need for better evaluation practices. This was echoed by policy makers who publicly fund schools, suggesting that evaluation practices need improvement in all agencies, including the school system.

Overall, the results of this research suggest that in Canada, agency representatives, career practitioners, policy developers, and employers believe in the importance of assessing the impact of career development services. These representatives of people who work in the career development community of Canada expressed concern about the current state of impact assessment and have many suggestions regarding how to improve the evaluation of career development services.

Of importance are the discrepancies between how evaluation is currently being conducted and reported as compared with the practices and outcomes that respondents would prefer. The practitioners, agencies, policy makers, and employers all expressed dissatisfaction with current evaluation processes and the outcomes being measured. All respondent groups indicated that important outcomes were being achieved but were neither being reported nor measured in any systematic way. This discrepancy led to considerable levels of frustration; however, despite this frustration, a broad range of possible outcomes was suggested that could indicate the quality of the services provided. A definite interest was also expressed by all groups for more standardized definitions of concepts such as outcomes, allowing for standardized measurement approaches, and the comparison of results between service providers.

Most of the respondents also expressed the need to develop improved procedures for measuring outcomes. The nature of the services was described as complex, and thus requiring more sophisticated measurement tools and processes for hard-to-measure results such as improvement in client confidence. It was also suggested that there was a need to develop procedures that can measure the differential impact of services and assess the longitudinal impact as well as the immediate impact. These evaluation processes and tools were recommended to be integrated as core components of service delivery and given the same priority as the services provided. A need was identified for more information and training regarding how to determine the efficacy of career development services, as well as increased resource provision for evaluation from the funding agencies of the services.

The small sample of employers who participated in this research expressed an interest in determining whether career development services were of value to their employees. They tended to focus on outcomes that were more relevant in their organization and the workplace. These types of outcome indicators may be important to include as indicators of how career development services impact the labour market and the economy.

Implications for Research and Practice

The results of this research need to be considered with caution, as this represents an initial exploration of this topic. The survey sample was large; however, it is difficult to determine if this is a representative sample of career development practitioners and agencies in Canada because there is limited data available about this field of practice. The number of respondents who were Francophone, policy makers, and employers was also very small. It is difficult to know whether the samples of policy makers and employers were representative of people in these professions.

However, the results suggest that there is a demand for more information and training regarding effective evaluation procedures that can differentiate between the effects of a variety of interventions, determine the impacts over time, and assess the cumulative effects of interventions. There is also a need for evaluations that can define a variety of standardized outcomes at the individual, organizational,

and societal levels. There is a need for more resources for (a) training agencies and practitioners regarding evaluation procedures, (b) the development of better evaluation processes, and (c) increased communication between the stakeholders.

Future research is needed in the field of evaluation of career development services. Clearly defined concepts, interventions, outcomes, and procedures are required to allow for the comparison of results across settings and the accumulation of knowledge in this area. The demonstration of the efficacy of career development services in Canada is needed to confirm the perceived value of these services and to increase the efficiency in this important field of practice.

To fully demonstrate the value of career development services, it will be important to develop a culture of evaluation for all stakeholders. Such a culture would be characterized by the belief that the identification of outcomes is an integral part of the provision of services. Measuring and reporting outcomes needs to be integrated into the provision of career development services, and evaluation practices must be included from the initial planning stages through to the actual implementation of the services, and beyond to determine the post-intervention effects of services. To reach this goal, it will be important for outcome assessment to take a more prominent role in counsellor education programs. It will also be important for the reporting of outcomes to become a priority for all parties, including practitioners, agencies, policy makers, and employers.

A culture of evaluation will enable career development service providers to demonstrate the value of their work to all stakeholders and thereby increase the likelihood of receiving support for ongoing practice and improvements in this field. Career development services in Canada are recognized as having significant value and impact for clients, groups, and society; however, further research and development are required to demonstrate these outcomes and inform future practices.

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