

PAS AND THE REHABILITATION OF THE MENTALLY RETARDED

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Prior to 1981, little work had been done, using the PAS with the Mentally Retarded, especially in the field of rehabilitation. Recently, two different MR Sheltered Workshop environments have provided both interesting and challenging information about the potential of PAS to provide critical information for more adequate placement and management of the Mentally Retarded in a work environment. The managers and case workers of both sheltered workshops expressed common frustrations over their inability to assess accurately the natural aptitudes of their clients, leading to inappropriate work assignments and subsequent frustrations and explosive behaviors.

Case workers described the efforts of the psychologist to determine accurately the vocational aptitudes of their clients, but emphasized that the level of intelligence of the mentally retarded client inevitably seemed to confound the measurement of aptitude. Since the Wechsler scales were the most frequently used measures of intelligence, case workers were able to provide a number of protocols from each workshop. These were converted to PAS profiles and, then, interpreted to the case workers. The case workers agreed that the behaviors described by the PAS profile, the aptitudes indicated, and the emotional needs illustrated were consistent with their own day-to-day observations of each client.

In this exploration of the use of PAS with the Mentally Retarded, one of the most important concepts of the PAS was emphasized. Since the PAS profile is obtained, regardless of intellectual level, by the deviation of subtest scores from Normal Level, it doesn't, then, matter whether the population in question is a mentally retarded one or a gifted population.

The important conclusion, from this initial work with the Mentally Retarded, is that the PAS accurately measures an individual's preferred type of reactivity in his primitive profile and that his or her level of intelligence need not confound the measurement of aptitudes, as indicated by his primitive profile and the compensations and modifications he has experienced. In addition, since the WAIS or the WISC-R were most frequently used as the intelligence test of choice by the Consulting Psychologists, no additional testing would be necessary to obtain PAS profiles of all clients in Mentally Retarded Sheltered Workshops.

In summary, the application of the PAS subtest scores of a number of Mentally Retarded clients from two distinct Sheltered Workshops in two different geographical areas of the United States indicated that accurate measures of PAS dimensions were possible at the lower intellectual levels and that the PAS profile provided continuing assistance for the management of the Mentally Retarded worker. These results have encouraged additional discussions in a third Sheltered Workshop and additional work in the original two workshops.