

Abstracts

(in alphabetical order of last names)

Please note: the following pages contain the abstract of all the theses of the students who are graduating, but not all the theses will be presented in the seminar

Arends Danée (October 2023)

*Exploring the lived experience of dissatisfied clients: goals achieved, yet lacking satisfaction
Understanding unhappiness after achieving goals*

Introduction: Satisfaction with treatment results addresses a client's experience with the clinical outcomes of treatment. Several factors influence satisfaction with treatment results, goal setting being one. Not all clients who achieve their personal treatment goals are satisfied with their treatment results. The aim of this study is to explore the lived experiences of clients who self-reported being dissatisfied with their treatment results, considering they achieved their personal treatment goals.

Methods: The researcher performed a qualitative study, using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis to collect and examine the data. In this study six clients, four females and two males, were interviewed in semi-structured interviews. All clients reported to be very or extremely dissatisfied with their treatment results and had reached their personal treatment goals.

Results: Engaging in activities is an important yet sometimes unstated treatment goal for patients. The ability to do activities again results in more satisfaction with treatment outcomes. Furthermore, the impact of adverse medical events, the treatment journey, and the patient's personal needs and traits influence satisfaction with treatment results.

Conclusion: Despite achieving personal treatment goals, some clients remain dissatisfied, often due to shifting priorities post-treatment. This study shows that the ability to do activities is an unspoken yet crucial treatment objective which influences satisfaction. Therefore, occupational hand therapists need to minimise the disruption of activities for their clients. The client's treatment experience and personality traits are other key factors influencing satisfaction with treatment results and must be addressed during treatment.

Claessens Ellen (October 2023)

*The development of professional identity of occupational therapists in Flanders (Belgium):
A narrative approach*

Background: International literature indicates various reasons for occupational therapists (OTs) having low professional identity (PI) levels. As this negatively influences their mental well-being, it affects the provided quality of care which may negatively affect their clients' well-being. Therefore, a high level of professional identity is important and the aspects that underpin its development. Within the context of Flanders, this has not been researched.

Aim: This study aims to gain an understanding of the professional identity development (PID) of OTs in Flanders throughout education and professional life. Specifically, how events were important in their PID, and what role did self-efficacy play in the process?

Method: To answer the research question five Flemish OTs were interviewed twice. The semi-structured interviews and open follow-up interviews were all conducted online. Data was analysed by using a narrative- and narrative slopes analysis.

Results: Each participant experienced a unique path of PID. There were some similarities such as getting to know the profession by chance, wanting to quit the education program during challenging placements, perceiving the first placement as important, feeling insecure after finishing the bachelor's degree, experiencing role conflict with other healthcare professionals at work, and continued professional development solely being intrinsically motivated.

Conclusion: This research shows the unique narratives of the PID of five Flemish OTs. These results may encourage reflection on how PID can be supported and raise awareness for everyone involved in the profession and the education of its students.

Keywords: Professional identity development, professional identity, self-efficacy, occupational therapy, Flanders (Belgium)

Craver Tessa

(October 2023)

'Eye Opening': An interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of International Occupational Therapists' Experience Working in the British National Health Service

Background: In the United Kingdom, the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) has a steadily growing number of registered international occupational therapists whose professional training and cultural backgrounds differ from their colleagues, clients and health care system. However, evidence-based literature of non-British educated and trained therapists' perspectives while working in the National Health Service (NHS) and the impact on their professional identity is limited. The purpose of this study is to explore the lived experience of international occupational therapists working in the NHS, their perceptions of preparedness to work abroad, challenges and opportunities they have faced, and how they have adapted.

Method: In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with six practicing occupational therapists who were trained internationally. An interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) approach was taken whilst two researchers completed a high level of interpretation of the data generated to develop themes and discussion points.

Findings: The narrative of participants' experiences generated three themes namely: 'difference of perspectives of challenges versus opportunities', 'professional communication discrepancies', and 'cultural integration and adaptation'. Their experiences highlight reduced preparation for work, leading to varying perspectives of role expectations and career development opportunities. A phase of cultural integration and adaptation followed through their communication style, professional resiliency and appreciation of service.

Discussion: After initial feelings of anxiety, therapists' experience was influenced by varying perceptions of the challenges and opportunities they face. Their professional development from overcoming challenges and extended opportunities outweighed the difficulties endured, encouraging them to continue working in the NHS.

Keywords: International Occupational Therapists, Migration, Phenomenology, Communication, Cultural Integration, Cultural Humility

Decker Alexandra (October 2023)

Exploring the flowerbed full of meaning. A qualitative single-case study on finding meaning in occupation(s)

Introduction: This study explores how Gia, a 41-year-old woman, finds personal meaning in her everyday occupations, with a particular focus on the process of exploring and talking about meaning.

Method: Multiple methods, including interviews, photovoice, photointerview, go-along method and journaling were used to understand meaning in occupations. Narrative analysis was then applied to analyse the data, leading to the development of the metaphor of a 'flowerbed full of meaning' to illustrate the participant's journey of finding meaning.

Findings: During 8-weeks Gia explored her garden filled with all her everyday occupations and identified those with most meaning. Each occupation has its own shape of meaning that unfolds over time. As Gia studies her meaningful occupations more closely, deeper and hidden (negative) meanings come to light. She believes the study has helped her to be more honest with herself and her daily life, including learning a lot about her occupations, herself, her life and needed changes.

Conclusion: The findings support previous research underlining the complexity, individuality and interconnectedness of finding meaning in occupations and that meaning appears to be fluid, changing with time and experiences. The narrative illustrates that it takes time to understand the full picture of finding meaning as it enables to truthfully evaluate experiences, including the positive and sometimes co-habiting negative side of meaning. The experiences of others may align or differ depending on the number of meaningful occupations, gender, nationality, and culture. Gia's experiences highlight the situatedness of occupations and their power to create meaningful moments.

Keywords: Meaning in everyday occupations; over time; metaphor; self-discovery; personal and fluid meaning

Grütter Anna Lena

(October 2023)

Let's play on Playgrounds – Family Perspectives on Facilitators and Barriers of Play of Children with ADHD

Introduction: Inclusive play on playgrounds gained importance. After having focused on playground design, several studies recommend investigating social factors for inclusion on playgrounds. This is at risk for children with ADHD due to challenges related to environment and social skills. Thus, the aim of this study was to investigate facilitators and barriers of play on playgrounds for children with ADHD from family member's perspective.

Method: For this qualitative descriptive study, photo elicitation interviews were conducted with one family with a seven-year-old child with ADHD in Switzerland. Interview transcripts were analysed with thematic analysis resulting in three themes.

Results: The first theme was "He really is all in". The second theme was "We have to learn how to handle" with the subthemes "Don't say no, it will get sad" and "They don't understand us". "More places to climb were nice" was the third theme. Participants described various facilitators and barriers within social skills, environment and characteristics of the child.

Conclusion: Play for all should be supported, where the social environment plays a major role. To prevent social exclusion, awareness must be raised among society highlighting the unconditional right for play for all. Not the changes on individual and communal level should be in focus, but rather policies that support occupational justice on playgrounds.

Keywords: Playground, children with ADHD, inclusive play, facilitators, barriers, family perspective

Orain Clémence (October 2023)

*Empowering children's voices for occupational justice around school playgrounds.
Children with disabilities' play participation in mainstream elementary school playgrounds*

Background: Play is essential during childhood facilitating engagement, choice-making, and meaningful goal achievement. However, the recognition of children's right to play is often overlooked and children with disabilities' wishes are often misunderstood, resulting in inappropriate provisions of school playgrounds impacting inclusion. There is a need for inclusive design approaches, considering children's perspectives and involving them in decision-making processes. This study explores and brings a better understanding of children with disabilities' play participation in mainstream elementary school playgrounds.

Methods: Walking and talking tours were conducted with thirteen children with different disabilities involving six mainstream schools in western France. Discussions were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim and analysed following thematic analysis principles.

Findings: Three themes emerged from participants' experiences: (1) 'I cannot play': Children's Environmental Challenges and Limited Play Opportunities in School Playgrounds; (2) 'I have an idea': Reimagining Play at School to Foster Playful and Inclusive Playgrounds; (3) 'Learn to hear me out': Empowering Children's Voices to Redesign the School Playground.

Conclusion: This study reveals occupational deprivation for children with disabilities around mainstream elementary school playgrounds. Children with disabilities raised practical issues such as physical challenges, the need for teachers' and peers' awareness and the importance of considering their voices. Active listening and collaboration between stakeholders may be key to improving play participation and therefore implementing children's rights. Findings show practical recommendations for occupational science, inclusive education, and school-based occupational therapy. Implications for future research are considered.

Keywords: Occupational therapy; School playground; Play participation; Occupational deprivation; Children voices; Inclusive education

Wildhaber-Phillips Chantal Eirllys (October 2023)

The Mini Activity Approach: strengthen your resilience!

Exploring and prioritising ideas to develop the Mini Activity Approach, a resilience building approach for occupational therapists: an exploratory mixed-methods study using nominal group technique

Background: Long-term negative stress increases risk of mental and physical illness. Occupational Therapists (OTs) are in a good position to coach their clients in developing skills to manage the stressors of daily life. The Mini Activity Approach (MAA) provides a resilience-building protocol for therapists but needs to be developed further.

Method: This study aimed to explore and prioritise ideas to develop the MAA using the nominal group technique (NGT) in a single online meeting with a group of five occupational therapists. Participants generated ten ideas for developing the MAA and ranked them by order of relevance.

Results: The four highest-ranking ideas were 1) create an instruction manual 2) create a keyring set 3) visualise mini activities with illustrations, and 4) create an information sheet for clients. The content analysis of the data revealed that there is a need to revise the mini activities, develop new working materials and improve accessibility to the approach.

Conclusion: This study highlights certain aspects of the approach that should be developed to provide better benefits to therapists and clients alike. These developments have the potential to make the MAA more accessible to OTs and therefore more widely used.

Keywords: negative stress, Mini Activity Approach, resilience

Zwijgers Miranda (October 2023)

How Acquired Deafblindness is Changing Someone's Life.

The Experiences of Three Adults in Occupational Transitions with Usher Syndrome Type II in the Netherlands; a Qualitative Study with the Use of Body Mapping StoryTelling Methodology.

Background: This study aims to explore the experiences of adults with Usher Syndrome Type II (USH2) in the Netherlands regarding their occupational transitions.

Method: In a qualitative study following the Body Mapping StoryTelling Methodology, three women with USH2 have created Body Maps (BMs), aged 45–70 years. An inductive thematic analysis was done on the verbatim transcripts of the testimonio, the conversation in the meetings, and an explanation of the key elements of the BMs.

Findings: Four themes emerged from the analysis, showing that it costs a lot of energy to keep up with everyone else and that they are always being 'on' to miss nothing. They must stay 'on' because all sensory information completes the picture. In the end, they have more possibilities in occupations with the support of others.

Conclusion: Keeping up with everyone else and always being on to miss nothing can undermine someone's long-term balance in occupational participation and overall health. Individuals with USH2 emphasize the significance of visual and auditory information next to information from their remaining intact senses for occupational participation. A new finding is the use of mental images and how they help to understand the surrounding. Further, adapting to evolving circumstances lead to unplanned occupational transitions. However, they learned to modify or find new occupations to regain a good balance in their occupational participation and as a result their health and well-being

Keywords: Body Mapping StoryTelling, Usher Syndrome, occupations, participation, occupational transitions, deafblindnes