

Abstracts

(in alphabetical order of last names)

Please note that not for all the following theses there will be a presentation at the seminar

Berger Michelle

The socio-cultural shaping of mothers' doing, being, becoming and belonging after returning to work

Background and aim: The literature within occupational science has provided an individualistic focus on motherhood that often neglects the complex and multifaceted societal influence on mothers. Therefore, this study aims to examine the influence of socio-cultural ideologies on mothers' doing, being, becoming, and belonging after returning to work within the first 18 months after giving birth.

Method: A narrative approach with an analysis of narrative was used to collect and analyse data from seven mothers who have returned to work.

Findings: The framework of Hitch et al. (2014a, 2014b) was employed to interpret how socio-cultural ideologies shape working mothers' doing, being, becoming, and belonging. The findings are presented through themes that illustrate women's negotiations while becoming a working mother. Three themes are presented: Balancing being a mother and work: The aspect of doing; "I don't want to be seen as 'the mother only'": the aspect of being a mother and belonging at work; and "As a mother you get criticised a lot": the aspect of doing and belonging to society.

Conclusion: This study enriches current understandings of how socio-cultural ideologies pervade the context in which occupations are performed and how working mothers are influenced by them in their doing, being, becoming, and belonging.

Keywords: working mothers, socio-cultural ideologies, doing, being, becoming and belonging

Blichfeldt (Marchner) Melanie

Occupational Performance and Prioritised Everyday Occupations for People Living at Home with Advanced Cancer. Living Alone versus Living with Someone

Introduction: People living at home with advanced cancer wish to maintain and preserve domestic life, but they experience several barriers in their occupational performance. There is little knowledge of the barriers experienced by people living alone versus people living with someone.

Objective: To investigate differences in self-perceived occupational performance and prioritisation of problematic everyday occupations among people living at home with advanced cancer, taking living status into consideration.

Method: A cross-sectional study through secondary analysis was undertaken with a sample of 174 participants, who live at home with advanced cancer. The Individually Prioritised Problem Assessment (IPPA) was conducted in the home setting and the reported everyday occupations were categorised according to the IPPA.

Results: In total, 731 problematic everyday occupations were reported, mainly related to the categories of housework, self-care and leisure. Cleaning the floor was reported most frequently by both groups, followed by doing laundry for people living alone and gardening for people living with someone.

Conclusion: People with advanced cancer living alone and living with someone did not seem to differ greatly. People living alone perceived more difficulties in showering/bathing and doing laundry than people living with someone. Moreover, doing laundry was more frequently prioritised by people living alone, whereas home maintenance and social interaction were prioritised more frequently by people living with someone.

Keywords: advanced cancer, living at home, everyday occupation, occupational performance, living alone, living with someone

Dreyer Leanne

An occupational justice analysis of England's play policy

Background: Play is a human right and central occupation of childhood. England's The Play Strategy (2008) aimed to improve children's equality in play; however, it was abandoned after two years. While policy seeks to remedy injustices, the language within policies can introduce discourse and shape occupational justice, participation, and inclusion. Therefore, this study explored how The Play Strategy (2008) is understood from an occupational justice perspective?

Method: The Play Strategy (2008) was analysed using the six questions of the "What's the Problem Represented to Be?" (Bacchi, 2009) policy-as-discourse methodology in combination with the 2010 Participatory Occupational Justice Framework (Whiteford & Townsend, 2011).

Findings: The Play Strategy (2008) found representations of some occupational injustices in child play in England. Discourse in The Play Strategy (2008) appeared to reflect adult perspectives on childhood and play predominantly valuing it for its developmental outcomes essential for children to become productive adults. A consciousness of the need for greater inclusion within play was strong in the strategy; however, diverse representation of participation, disability, capacity and play spaces was not. Specific play-spaces were promoted as the place for ideal play.

Conclusion: The Play Strategy (2008) was found to raise the consciousness of play in England and to reflect adult perspectives on the form, function and meaning of play. The discourse has the potential to shape the possibilities for play, inclusion, and occupational justice by shaping how adults and general society value and create play opportunities and play-environments for children.

Keywords: Play, children, occupational justice, inclusion

Frey Sara

Occupational performance and the use of coping strategies among people with chronic musculoskeletal pain

A quantitative analysis of the relationship between self-rated and observed occupational performance and the use of coping strategies in people living with chronic musculoskeletal pain

Background: People living with chronic musculoskeletal pain face occupational performance problems in all categories of activities of daily living (ADL). The use of coping strategies has proven to be enhancing individuals' occupational performance after pain rehabilitation. But the underlying relationship was not addressed by the time and therefore is described in the current paper.

Methods: The correlational study was a secondary data analysis, accessing data from the chronic pain registry of the Department of Rheumatology, Immunology and Allergology of the University Hospital of Bern. With a sample of 330 participants, four Spearman's rank correlations were performed. Occupational performance was assessed by the Canadian Occupational Performance Measure (evaluating self-rated occupational performance and corresponding satisfaction with) and the Assessment of Motor and Process Skills (evaluating observed ADL motor and process abilities), and the use of coping strategies by the Coping Strategies Questionnaire (German version).

Results: Results showed that occupational performance is mostly negatively or not related to the use of coping strategies, whereof only the negative relationship between ADL motor abilities and the use of coping strategies was found to be significant, representing a weak to moderate relation.

Conclusion: Findings revealed an opposite and new perspective on the underlying relation between occupational performance and the use of coping strategies. More research is needed investigating this complex relationship, addressing potential factors such as pain acceptance that may interfere with the relation between occupational performance and the use of coping strategies in people with chronic musculoskeletal pain.

Keywords: Chronic pain, occupational therapy, Assessment of Motor and Process Skills, Canadian Occupational Performance Measure, Coping Strategies Questionnaire

Heim Romana

“Standing alone” – understanding the self-management of family caregivers of stroke survivors at the time of acute care

Background: Family caregivers play a vital role in the care of stroke survivors but are currently receiving inadequate support. Self-management reflects the idea of supporting patients but also family caregivers after a disease. Previous research concerning self-management of family caregivers of stroke survivors has focused on the time of rehabilitation or after discharged home. However, research has revealed that family caregivers need help developing self-management skills earlier poststroke. Therefore, this research aims to identify and describe how family caregivers of stroke survivors perceive acute care and their development of self-management.

Methods: Eleven family caregivers of stroke survivors participated in individual interviews. Transcripts were analysed using thematic analysis.

Findings: Four themes emerged from the data: (1) being in survival mode, (2) feeling backed up by family and friends, (3) feeling left alone by the treatment team and (4) insisting on information.

Conclusions: This study provides knowledge of family caregivers’ development of self-management skills at the time of acute care. Information-sharing, foundational for developing self-management, is essential and should be supported proactively by health professionals from the beginning. However, during acute care family caregivers are often in survival mode, which may limit their capacity to take in information. Family caregivers’ reduced health and well-being caused by role changes and imbalance of activities begins in acute care. Therefore, occupational therapists with their broad knowledge about this topic should raise awareness among family caregivers from the start to prevent negative influences on health.

Keywords: family caregivers, stroke, self-management, acute care, thematic analysis

Hoedemakers Céline

*Defining Challenges for Establishing a Client-Centered Working Environment:
a Participatory Action Research. Talking the talk is easier than walking the walk*

Background: Key features of client-centered practice in rehabilitation are the involvement of the client in goal setting and the multidisciplinary collaboration among healthcare professionals. Research has shown that the working environment of healthcare professionals can impede client-centered practice. Obstacles can be various, and no clear solution on how to improve a working environment to be more client-centered can be found in literature. Prior to this study, the stakeholders experienced challenges for implementing a client-centered practice. Their shared willingness for a change was recognized by the researcher, which led up to the initiation of this study.

Methods: This study is based on the participatory action research method. Two occupational therapists and four physical therapists participated in three focus group meetings. Together with the researcher they constitute 'the core team' for this study. The project manager and project lead of the broader visionary project 'Fokus 21', which also includes this study, participated in three advisory board meetings. Data was collected and analyzed by the constant comparative method.

Findings: The first finding comprises the process of creating awareness of client-centered practice among the participants. This is followed by the second finding of how this increased awareness has influenced their current understanding of goal setting. Finally, the core team formulated several vision points for optimizing client-centered practice in their current working environment.

Conclusion: A permissive client-centered working environment which supports multidisciplinary exchanges can increase the awareness of client-centered practice among healthcare professionals. Furthermore, it emerged that multidisciplinary goal setting improves a client-centered practice but needs a client-centered working environment.

Keywords: client-centered practice, client-centered working environment, goal setting, participatory action research, rehabilitation

Hofstra Marloes

Psychometric evaluation of the 'Return To Work Questionnaire' (RTWQ) amongst patients surgically treated for Trigger Finger, Dupuytren's contracture, and CMC-1 Osteoarthritis

Background: Work is an essential part of our lives, an occupational therapist (OT) needs to be able to objectively measure a patient's return to work after hand surgery. For this, an evidence-based questionnaire is required as an appropriate instrument to guide OT. This study aimed to explore the psychometric properties of the RTWQ among patients after hand surgery for Dupuytren's contracture, Trigger Fingers, or CMC-1 osteoarthritis by addressing the internal consistency and construct validity.

Methods: The RTWQ was sent to patients of Xpert Clinic who underwent surgical treatment and occupational therapy for Dupuytren's disease, Trigger Fingers, or CMC-1 Osteoarthritis. The internal consistency was statistically analysed by using Cronbach's Alpha. For construct validity, hypotheses were analysed by using Pearson's r, Spearman's r, one-way t-test, and ANOVA. In this study, the Michigan Hand outcomes Questionnaire (MHQ) item 'work' was used as the golden standard.

Results: The Cronbach Alpha of the RTWQ does not score higher than a questionable interpretation, in some diagnostic groups, even poor. All seven hypotheses were partially or fully conformed.

Conclusion: As it stands, the RTWQ should not be used in OT practice, if the questionnaire is revised and re-examined for validity and the other four psychometric property domains are researched and validated, only then the RTWQ can supplement the existing validated questionnaires and support the re-entry phase in patients who have undergone a TFR, Weilby procedure, or a PF.

Keywords: Hand injuries, Employment, Return To Work Questionnaire (RTWQ), psychometric study

Hovhannisyan Gayane

Effects of “Noomee” mobile application on development of self-care activities of children with autism spectrum disorder

Objective: To investigate the impact of "Noomee" mobile application on development of self-care activities of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Method: Quantitative research was completed with pre-test and post-test design to better understand and determine effects resulting from the intervention. Participants of the study are: children with autism spectrum disorder (n=42) and their parents (n=42). Parents were interviewed via the Canadian Occupational Performance Measure to assess their child's perceived ability and independence to perform various self-care activities. The children were observed for the level of assistance needed to participate in self-care activities. These were assessed before and after the intervention with the Canadian Occupational Performance Measure. The period of using the “Noomee” mobile application was one month.

Results: The study showed that using the “Noomee” mobile application had a positive effect on participation in self-care activities. Children with higher functioning had a greater impact on participation, than children with lower functioning.

Conclusion: Using the mobile application as a therapeutic tool for children with autism spectrum has a positive effect. Occupational therapists could potentially improve the quality of life of children and their parents, by continuing the therapists' work at home with the help of new technologies.

Keywords: Autism Spectrum disorder /ASD/, activities of daily living /ADL/, mobile application & education, participation, self-care.

This thesis will not be presented the thesis presentation seminar

Kammerer Marly

Occupational engagement, occupational performance, and occupational wellbeing in Value-Based Health Care. A scoping review on how occupation is addressed in Value-Based Health Care

Introduction: In the Netherlands, there is a continuous growth of healthcare costs. One of the causes of the rising costs, is the increase in non-communicable diseases, impacting people's well-being. In occupational science, occupation is core to wellbeing. The current Dutch healthcare system aims to focus on prevention and wellbeing, and also changes to a new healthcare system, called Value-Based Health Care (VBHC). Therefore, the aim of this study is to investigate how occupation is addressed in VBHC to consider if VBHC could support the Dutch healthcare system to increase prevention and wellbeing.

Method: This scoping review selected sixteen articles. A deductive thematic analysis was conducted on how occupational engagement, occupational performance and occupational wellbeing are addressed in VBHC.

Findings: Twelve articles outlining the theoretical concept of VBHC and four describing the Dutch integration of VBHC. Occupational performance, occupational engagement, and occupational well-being appear to be addressed in the theoretical background of VBHC, however this seems to not be as strong in the reported implementation of VBHC in the Netherlands. VBHC may encourage to have a positive lifestyle, as well as support increasing engagement in treatment, and investigates what is relevant for the patient.

Conclusion: Although there is no strong evidence, the findings may indicate that VBHC could support to focus on prevention and wellbeing. Further research could investigate how VBHC may support within (Dutch) primary care for prevention of non-communicable diseases.

Keywords: Value-Based Health Care, occupational engagement, occupational performance, occupational wellbeing, healthcare transition

Longrée Anna

No strings attached. The occupation of travelling in retirement

In the context of demographic change, the needs of the older population must be taken into account in order to maintain their health and well-being for as long as possible. Previously, travelling as an activity with proven positive effects has not been the major focus of occupational therapists and scientists.

In this post-intentional phenomenological study the phenomenon of travelling for older adults who recently retired in Germany or Switzerland was explored.

The results show that travelling is experienced intensified by positive emotions and through the reduction of the obligation work more time can be available and used for travelling. If and how retirees can benefit from these advantages in terms of travel depends on their personal context. Restrictive factors, which mainly come from the social environment, and personal concerns occur also in retirement and lead to the need of adapting travel plans or even prevent travelling.

This means that travelling as a meaningful occupation has the potential to promote an active lifestyle and maintain quality of life, a social network, physical and cognitive functions and well-being, which maintenance should be supported.

Keywords: Leisure Occupations, Travelling, Retirement, Active Ageing, Demographic Change

Morgenthaler Thomas

Environmental Adjustment Needs of Children with Special Educational Needs in Austrian Mainstream Schools. The Child and Teacher Perspective

Objective: Children with disabilities included in Austrian mainstream schools are provided with special educational support, which aim to create learning environments, that meet the child on an individual level. Little is known about what adjustments children with special educational needs (SEN) in mainstream school classes require in order to promote participation in school occupations. This is the first study in Austria exploring the student-environment fit from self-perceived children's perspective comparing to observed teachers' perspective by using the School Setting Interview.

Method: Twenty-five children (mean age 12.5 ± 1.4) with SEN and twenty-one teachers from six Austrian secondary schools participated in this cross-sectional matched pair study. Participants' ratings were analysed descriptively and statistically. Deductive content analysis used occupational, social and physical environmental dimensions from the Model of Human Occupation to describe reported adjustments from both perspectives.

Results: The perceived student-environment fit differs from school activity to school activity as well as between children and teachers. Three out of 16 school activities showed a statistically significant difference between children and teacher groups. Most adjustments are reported in the occupational environment dimension.

Conclusion: Both children's and teacher's perspectives provide valuable information and should be considered. Children at this age are able to identify needs for adjustments and describe solutions. In order to increase participation in school occupations, children need to be included in decision making when it comes to individual adjustments. The School Setting Interview in its client-centred nature can be used to identify needs for adjustments in the school context.

Key words: participation, environment, special educational needs, children perspective, teacher perspective, mainstream school

Nogueira Joana

Portuguese Occupational Therapists and research. A cross-sectional study about their perceptions, attitudes, intentions and engagement

Background: EBP is a process that includes systematic search and critical appraisal of the most relevant evidence, combining one's own clinical expertise with clients' values. Research utilization is a very important concept when adopting an EBP approach. Thus, exists a huge gap between research and practice. To better understand the reasons behind this gap, the aim of the study is to explore Portuguese OT's perceptions and attitudes towards research activities, as well as present engagement and future plans within research.

Method: A quantitative cross-sectional design was undertaken to answer the research question, and a questionnaire originally created by Eckerling, Bergaman and Bart-al (1988) was used as data collection method.

Results: Portuguese OT's have a positive perspective and attitude in relation to the use of research activities in a daily practice. The activity that OT's showed to have more difficulty in engaging and consequently they least liked was "initiate research". High workload, lack of time and lack of incentive from the employer were the most mentioned barriers for participation in research activities.

Conclusion: OT's have positive attitudes towards research-related activities and recognized the importance and need of research for the development of the profession, despite identified barriers. From these results emerge the need for small changes to be made so that research in Portugal increases and becomes more valued.

Keywords: occupational therapy, evidence-based practice, research utilization, research activities, attitudes, perceptions

Pinlac-Abad Brenda

***Emigrating overseas and no longer working in your profession: The lived experience of some Filipino occupational therapists.
An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)***

Introduction: The global shortage of healthcare professionals necessitated the need to import from other countries. The Philippines, being a job-scarce environment, motivates occupational therapists to seek employment overseas even if it means moving to a foreign place or securing a job lower than what they previously held, a phenomenon called “underemployment.” Studies, specifically on lived experiences of underemployed Occupational therapist in the United Kingdom, were non-existent hence arriving at the research question: How do Filipino OTs who have emigrated overseas but are not working in their profession make sense of their migration experiences.

Method: The sampling method used was purposive sampling which garnered 5 participants that met the inclusion criteria. Data collection was done in four sessions through Phone Interviews. Data gathered were analyzed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis.

Findings: Upon Data Analysis, a total of five themes were identified: 1. Aspirations for Greener Pasture, 2. Underemployment & Underutilization, 3. Devalued & Disappointment, 4. Well-being, 5. The value of coping and resilience

Conclusion: Five themes were found significant and similar to all the participants that greatly affected them as an individual and how they function within society. Aside from that, Occupational Injustice and deprivation is evident and existing conversion programs are of little help in attaining profession-specific roles.

Keywords: Occupation, Occupational Science, Occupational Justice, Underemployment, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)

ten Rouwelaar Bianca

Stress among young professionals in occupational therapy: Change your mindset! A grounded theory study

Background: In health care professions, young professionals in the age of 25 to 35 experience major stress and burnout. Stress reduction has not been completely investigated and are often seen as individual based. The aim of this study is to identify insights about how young professionals in occupational therapy handle stress experience in their everyday life.

Method: in this thesis the qualitative method grounded theory is used. Eight semi-structured interviews were held with young professionals in occupational therapy. All participants are between the age from 25 till 35, working as occupational therapist and experience stress which influences their daily life.

Results: The core category 'change your mindset' is identified. Change your mindset is divided into three categories: create awareness of stress, balancing out the possibilities and keeping the positive flow. Participants state that creating awareness is about recognition of body signals and finding causes of the stress experience. After this awareness the participants were able to balance out their possibilities by making the right choices and create overview. Lastly, the positive flow will maintain this balance and the experience of stress reduces back to a no stress experience.

Conclusion: Young professionals in occupational therapy can handle their experience of stress by changing their mindset. Their mindset can be changed by being aware of stress, balancing out the possibilities and keeping the positive flow. This ongoing process will eventually lead to a balance in the everyday life of young professionals in occupational therapy.

Keywords: Stress, young professional, occupational therapy, mindset, awareness

Saunders Elaine

'What is the consensus of opinion among Occupational Therapists working in Perinatal Mental Health, about what assessments and interventions should be the focus of occupational therapy in this practice area?: working towards best practice'

Perinatal Mental Health Occupational Therapy an Emerging Area of Clinical Practice

Aim: This study sought to gain a consensus of opinion among occupational therapists working in perinatal mental health on what assessments and interventions should be the focus of occupational therapy.

Method: A quantitative survey design utilising the Delphi Survey Technique was undertaken to answer the research question. The Delphi Survey Technique is described by McKenna (1994) as a multi-staged survey which attempts to achieve a consensus of opinion on an important issue.

Results: The results of this study conclude that consensus of opinion among occupational therapists working in perinatal mental health, there are no standardised assessments that capture the needs of mother and baby during the perinatal period. Occupational focused interventions focusing on activities of daily living/baby care, co-occupations, supporting mothers to develop skills to enhance their baby's emotional and physical development as well as motivation for occupation and establishing effective routines.

Conclusion: Further research is needed to establish evidenced based practice in perinatal mental health occupational therapy, in order to demonstrate the value occupational therapy can contribute to enable women to fulfil their mother role, which enhances outcomes for their babies.

Keywords: Perinatal mental health; occupational therapy; interventions

Schwab Elisabeth

Unemployment and its influence on occupational engagement for people with Multiple Sclerosis

Background: Unemployment as an occupational issue has been arousing little awareness within occupational science among people with Multiple Sclerosis (MS). This study, therefore, investigates the lived experiences of unemployment and their influences on engagement in everyday occupation among people with MS.

Method and Findings: The Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was chosen to explore, investigate and interpret people with MS's experiences of unemployment. The data was gathered from semi-structured interviews with six unemployed persons diagnosed with MS in Austria. Data analysis revealed three themes: unemployment as an enabler; maintaining occupational engagement within unemployment; unemployment as a step-down. The findings outline unemployment as a potential enabler for occupational engagement while concurrently recognising challenges of unemployment among people with MS.

Conclusion: This study indicates that unemployment and its possibilities of having positive and negative influences have been underestimated in health sciences in the past. Occupational therapists and allied health professionals should recognise unemployment with its multifaceted impacts on occupational engagement in everyday life while implementing client-centred approaches to empower people with MS or other diagnoses.

Keywords: unemployment, Multiple Sclerosis, occupational engagement, interpretative phenomenological analysis

Schweizer Tarah

The transition of first-time father's occupations and roles Experiences from Switzerland

Introduction. For a man, a firstborn is one of the most profound and major developmental changes in life, and it requires a change in his roles within the family and the societal context. From an occupational perspective, a transition is exposed to various effects, including the social and societal context, as well as each individual's expectations. As a consequence of these transitions, roles and occupations are changing; however, little is known about factors that influence the experiences of a first-time father. Therefore, this research aims to explore first-time father's experiences in their occupational and role changes.

Method. The data was collected through six semi-structured interviews with first-time fathers living in Switzerland who had one child aged between seven and 39 months. Data analyses were conducted using a paradigmatic analysis of narrative.

Findings. Four themes emerged from the data: (1) Flexibility before having a child compared to the structured day after having a child, (2) mirroring the different influences, (3) changes of occupations and their meaning since having a child, and (4) compatibility of family and work.

Conclusion. Analyses of the study results suggest that a suitable environment for first-time fathers enables them to perform their occupations as they wish and thus to fulfil their different occupational roles. However, this is highly dependent on rule-bound restrictions and society's structures, such as what a father is supposed or expected to do. In this respect, and with the existing resources and knowledge, occupational therapists could advocate a health-promotion role.

Keywords. Occupation, role, transition, first-time father, Switzerland

This thesis will not be presented the thesis presentation seminar

Stobbe Tara

The impact of applying an immobilising orthosis on activities of daily living in people with De Quervain's Disease. An explorative quantitative study, using a one-group pretest-posttest design

Background: For people with De Quervain's Disease (DQD), an immobilising orthosis is often used for treatment. Background research shows no empirical evidence on the impact of applying an orthosis on performance of activities of daily living (ADL). Linkages between performance of ADL, quality of life and independence are described. Therefore, the aim of this study is to identify the impact of applying an immobilising thumb-spica orthosis on the performance of ADL in people with DQD, with considerations for quality of life and independence.

Method: In a one-group pretest-posttest design, the Patient-Rated Wrist/Hand Evaluation (PRWHE) and World Health Organization Quality of Life Questionnaire (WHOQOL) are used. The PRWHE is used before and after application of the orthosis by clients with DQD in a private practise in the Netherlands.

Results: The Wilcoxon signed-rank test showed no significant difference in performance of ADL before and after the application of the orthosis, $T = 112.50$, $p = .178$, $r = -.18$. However, pain scores did show a significant difference, $T = 23.50$, $p = <.001$, $r = -.55$. A negative correlation was found between pain and quality of life, $r = -.50$, $p = .006$.

Conclusion: This study shows a significant decrease in pain and no major impact on performance of ADL after application of an immobilising orthosis in people with DQD. A negative correlation was found between pain and quality of life. Occupational therapists could use these results to predict and educate their clients on the impact of applying an orthosis for DQD.

Keywords: De Quervain Disease, Orthotic Devices, Activities of Daily Living, Quality of Life, Independence