

Using Ikiugu's Eclectic Framework for Combining Theoretical Conceptual Practice Models as a Guide for Theory-Based Clinical Decision-Making in Occupational Therapy

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Background/Rationale: Use of theory to guide practice is what differentiates professionals from lay people. One of the ways to encourage occupational therapy practitioners to use theory in their every-day practice is by providing them with an eclectic method of systematically and logically combining intervention strategies from multiple theoretical conceptual practice models in their clinical decision making. The first author developed such a framework.

Objectives: To investigate: 1) Effectiveness of the eclectic method in helping occupational therapy practitioners in South Africa improve skills in use of theory to guide clinical decision-making; and 2) How confident the occupational therapy practitioners felt about their ability to apply theory to guide clinical decision-making after instruction in use of the eclectic method?

Methods: This was a mixed methods research study with experimental-type repeated measures and naturalistic-type phenomenological designs. There were nine participants in the study (4 clinicians in physical rehab and mental health hospitals, one clinician who is also a clinical instructor, and 5 faculty members at a University in Cape Town, South Africa).

Results: Competence in combining intervention strategies from two or more theoretical conceptual practice models to guide clinical decision-making significantly improved after instruction in use of the eclectic framework. These quantitative findings were corroborated by qualitative data.

Conclusion and Recommendations: Use of the eclectic framework for combining theoretical conceptual practice models in clinical decision-making may be an effective way of encouraging and improving competence in use of theory to guide clinical decision-making in occupational therapy.