THE USE OF ‘OCCUPATION AS A MEANS’ WITHIN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE

MELANDRI VAN JAARSVELD, BSc OT, HOPE STUDIO, JOHANNESBURG
GHODEEJAH ALEXANDER, BSc OT, INDEPENDENT PRACTICE, CAPE TOWN
TASHA-LEIGH WILLIAMS, BSc OT, DIE STERREWEG, PLETTERNBERG BAY
SPHUMLE OUKANI, BSc OT, MTHATHA REGIONAL HOSPITAL, EASTERN CAPE
REBECCA WEBSTER, BSc OT, EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT, PLAY SENSE, CAPE TOWN
LIESL PETERS, LECTURER, DIVISION OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY, UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
• Socially transformative scholarship and practice emphasized as important in addressing occupational injustices e.g. Occupation-based Community Development Framework (Galvaan & Peters, 2013)

• Growth of need for understanding community development approaches as health services are directed outside of health institutions

• Community development approaches that utilize the transformational power of occupations need to be researched
STUDY PURPOSE

• To develop an understanding of how occupational therapists working in community development practice in South Africa use occupation as a means within the design of their interventions

• To contribute to the ongoing theoretical development regarding occupational therapy approaches to practice within community development
Varied ways occupation as means is used within OT settings

Few studies exploring community-development practice

None emphasising how occupation as a means should be used within intervention

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<th>Traditional use of occupation as a means</th>
<th>Non-traditional use of occupation as a means</th>
<th>Reference</th>
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• To describe the ways in which South African occupational therapists working in community development use occupation as a means within the interventions they design
RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

• To identify how these occupational therapists have used occupation within the past interventions they have designed
• To identify the factors that have influenced the use of occupation as a means within these interventions
METHODOLOGY

• Qualitative descriptive research design (Bricki & Green, 2007).

• Four participants were elicited
  • Experienced in working in community development
  • Few matching criteria

• Narrative interviewing (Bauer, 1996)
  • Two interviews were conducted
  • 60-90 minutes
• Thematic inductive analysis  
  (Braun & Clarke, 2006)

• Trustworthiness  
  (Krefting, 1991)

• Ethics approval
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zoe</td>
<td>NGO Management position</td>
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<td>Esther</td>
<td>NGO for persons with disabilities, Active OT position</td>
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<td>Sarah</td>
<td>Private OT, Voluntary community development</td>
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<td>Giselle</td>
<td>Programme director, Little involvement in intervention</td>
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• Varied definitions and understanding and use of occupation
  "...anything that you do that has meaning and purpose..." -Esther

  "...can be comprised of different aspects that can be used for the positive
  benefit in an intervention." -Zoe

• Use of programmes as a consistent method of intervention implementation
• Community-centered focus

“...I think our model is different because when we go into a community we participate with the community, we don’t go and tell a community how to be.” - Giselle

• Participatory approaches that facilitates collective doing

“...they actually prioritized what their needs were, so every group had a different occupation that they were engaging in but the actual engagement of it happen at a community level...” - Esther
Limiting factors
- Funding
- Material resources
- Organisational roles
- Contrasting understandings between colleagues

Skillful techniques in overcoming barriers

“...and if we don’t change to start applying for grants and to being successful and grant proposals, we actually not going to make a difference…” - Sarah
Different but evolving processes

Takes place over a period of time

THEME:
“USING OCCUPATION AS A PROCESS OF ‘DOING WITH’ THAT CREATES A WAY FOR A PROCESS TO HAPPEN”
• Simultaneous

• Not overt in appearance

• Designed to achieve the community development outcomes

• Takes into consideration where the community is at and what the next step in the intervention would be.

• Timespans of outcomes cannot be limited - self-sustaining community.
DISCUSSION

• Collective doing through occupation is central for the success of community development approaches

• The relationship between the context and the occupation is critical in the design process within community development
• 'doing' - important for human connection and occupational engagement and 'doing' as culturally, temporally and ecologically contextualized (Ramugondo and Kronenberg, 2015)

• Collective doing as a key strategy for the construction of identities, belonging and autonomy (Guajardo, Kronenberg & Ramugondo, 2015)

• Occupational reconstruction (Frank & Muriithi, 2015)
• Definition of occupation non-transferable
  • Ramugondo and Kronenberg (2015)
• The context is always part of the process of action (Cutchin and Dickie, 2013)
  • Context influences occupation
• Context influencing occupation as critical (Ramugondo, Galvaan, & Duncan, 2015)
CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

• Occupation as a means used to overcome injustice
• Sustainability - building capacities and potentiality
• Understanding of occupation shaped by context
• Collective as an integral part of "doing"
REFERENCES


