A Survey of Occupational Therapists’ Involvement in Facilitating Self-employment for People with Disabilities (PWDs)

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Background

Problem

- High rates of unemployment
- People with disabilities (PWDs) affected the most
  - 8/10 (80%) PWDs are unemployed in SA
- Patient seen by OTs included
- Post injury → Low rates of RTW → resort to disability grant

Solution

- SA government encourages self-employment (SE) → ↓ unemployment
- OTs should play a role in SE:
  - Philosophy is occupation based
  - Nature of their training
  - ↓ literature on OT in relation to SE
1. The **attitude** of occupational therapists towards facilitating self-employment amongst PWDs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>90% - in support of SE</th>
<th>10% - Not in support of SE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reasons provided</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Lack of opportunities in corporate for PWDs</td>
<td>• PWDs’ dependency on government’s disability grants</td>
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<td>• Potential to empower PWDs, their family and/or community - limiting the effect of disability, such as a relapse</td>
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<td>• Disability awareness in communities</td>
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2. The awareness of occupational therapists of resources that PWDs can access for entrepreneurial endeavours in starting their own businesses

- 74% were aware of resources and 26% were not aware

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retail</th>
<th>Services &amp; Skills</th>
<th>Manufacturing/Production</th>
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</table>
| • Spaza shops (selling of. airtime, cigarettes etc.)  
• Second hand clothing  
• Vendors (outside schools, street pavements, at taxi ranks, etc.) | • Hair salon  
• Recycling  
• Tutoring  
• After school care services  
• Car wash | Hand work such as:  
• Metal work  
• Plastic weaved mats  
• Dog biscuits |

EXAMPLES
3. If occupational therapists are participating in facilitating self-employment amongst PWDs.

> 53% reported no experience; Lack of exposure; 69% - not sufficiently skilled; SE facilitation - given advice on SE, ran income generation projects.
4. What occupational therapists perceive their role to be in facilitating self-employment amongst PWDs?

• SE is not unique to OT
• Further OT training and experience is NB
• 10% were indifferent
• 20% - OTs are sufficiently skilled in SE from undergraduate training
• 75% indicated their patients would consider SE
Conclusion
• Positive attitude - SE
• Awareness of available SE resources
• ↓ literature - SE

Recommendation
SE – potential to transform the profession
• More OT research - SE
• ↑ Document & Disseminate

Limitations
• Small sample
• Only sampled OTs affiliated to OTASA and RuReSa

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Key Reference List


KEA LEOGA