



Holistic Approaches to Mealtime Occupations with Older Adults

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INTRODUCTION

- Current OS/OT literature: pediatric populations, medical conditions, and distinct performance pattern/skills interventions
- Exploring OTPF¹ as a tool within the OT community of practice³, interest developed around holistic clinical approaches related to mealtime occupations with older adults

Research Questions

- 1) How do occupational therapist's implement holistic evaluation of and intervention for mealtime occupations with older adults to achieve therapeutic outcomes and enhance quality of life?
- 2) How do occupational therapists perceive their role in older adults' healthcare related to mealtime occupations?

METHODS

Participants: 3 occupational therapists practicing with older adults in retirement communities in the Chapel Hill area

Data Collection: Observation of a therapy session focused on mealtime occupations
Interview about holistic practice and perceptions of occupational therapy

Qualitative multiple-case study design

Thematic Analysis: In vivo and process coding;
Observational notes references for quotes, vignettes, and contextual information

Member-checking: 2 participants provided feedback on initial findings of the project

DISCUSSION

- Using a holistic approach, OTs were able to **make sense of the complexity of the human experience** and prioritize intervention according to the individual's needs and goals.
- According to OTs this approach **increased effectiveness of interventions** and had a greater impact quality of life.
- When OTs have to situate themselves in the mealtime occupations of a client, **TUOS skills were enhanced by a holistic understanding of the client** — improving the therapeutic relationship and process.
- **Importance:** Examines professional competencies as outlined by the OTPF¹

RESULTS

Understanding the complex individual

Valuing the occupation

Social --- Universality --- Health

Advocating the professional perspective

CONCLUSIONS & IMPLICATIONS

Themes connect theory and framework to clinical practice

Lays the groundwork for research projects in this area

Future Research: Quantitative measures about effectiveness and sustainability related to holistic mealtime occupation interventions as well as improvement to quality of life

Practice: Inform students and other healthcare professionals
Allow current practitioners to reflect on holistic practice

REFERENCES

- 1) American Occupational Therapy Association. (2014). Occupational therapy practice framework: Domain and process (3rd ed.). *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 68(Suppl. 1), S1- S48.
- 2) Pizzi, M. A., & Richards, L. G. (2017). Guest Editorial—Promoting health, well-being, and quality of life in occupational therapy: A commitment to a paradigm shift for the next 100 years. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 71(4), 7104170010p1-p5.
- 3) Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Figure 2. Environment–Health–Occupation–Well-Being (E–HOW) Model²

