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## Exploration of Occupational Therapy's Role Within the LGBTQ+ Population

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# Exploration of Occupational Therapy's Role Within the LGBTQ+ Population

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## BACKGROUND

LGBTQ+ are terms used to describe a person's sexual orientation or gender identity. There are an estimated 11 million individuals in the United States (US) who identify as LGBTQ+ and this number is steadily increasing (Rosendale et al., 2019).

Individuals in the LGBTQ+ population typically face: Insensitivity from providers, a lack of knowledge and comfort about LGBTQ+ health care issues, decreased access to care (Copti et al., 2016). However, the greatest risk for people who identify as LGBTQ+ is the avoidance of healthcare (Utamsinah et al., 2015).

## PROBLEM

There is a gap in the literature supporting occupational therapist cultural competence to integrate occupational roles of the LGBTQ+ population into their evaluation and intervention.

## PURPOSE

To analyze the evaluation and intervention strategies occupational therapists can use to better serve the LGBTQ+ population.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWOK

Framework of Occupational Justice

## METHODS

This research-based capstone project used a quantitative research design.

### Participants

- CommunOT & Network for LGBTQIA+ Concerns in Occupational Therapy
- Snowball sampling method
- 50 participants anonymously completed the 11-question survey → 1 participant partook in the interview
- 47/50 participants were OT's vs 3 being OTA's
- 40% of the participants identified as LGBTQ+

### Instrumentation

- Google Forms
- Zoom

### Learning Objectives

- Identify ways to create all-inclusive environments and reduce the fear of unethical healthcare for those who identify as LGBTQ+.
- Advocating for understanding of the LGBTQ+ population as it relates to social injustice and prejudice.

### Project Objectives

- Create a survey to give to OT's to explore potential strategies to better serve the LGBTQ+ population
- Collect data and evaluate results of surveys completed by participating OT's

## RESULTS

Figure One

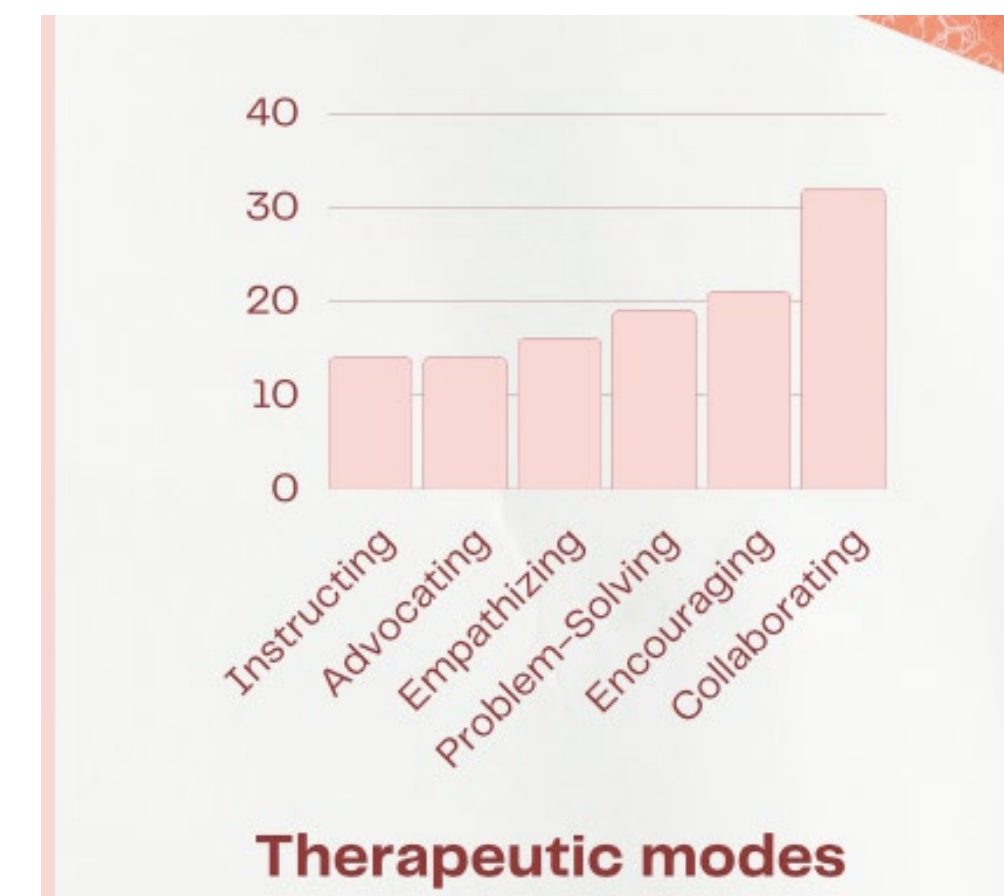


Figure Two

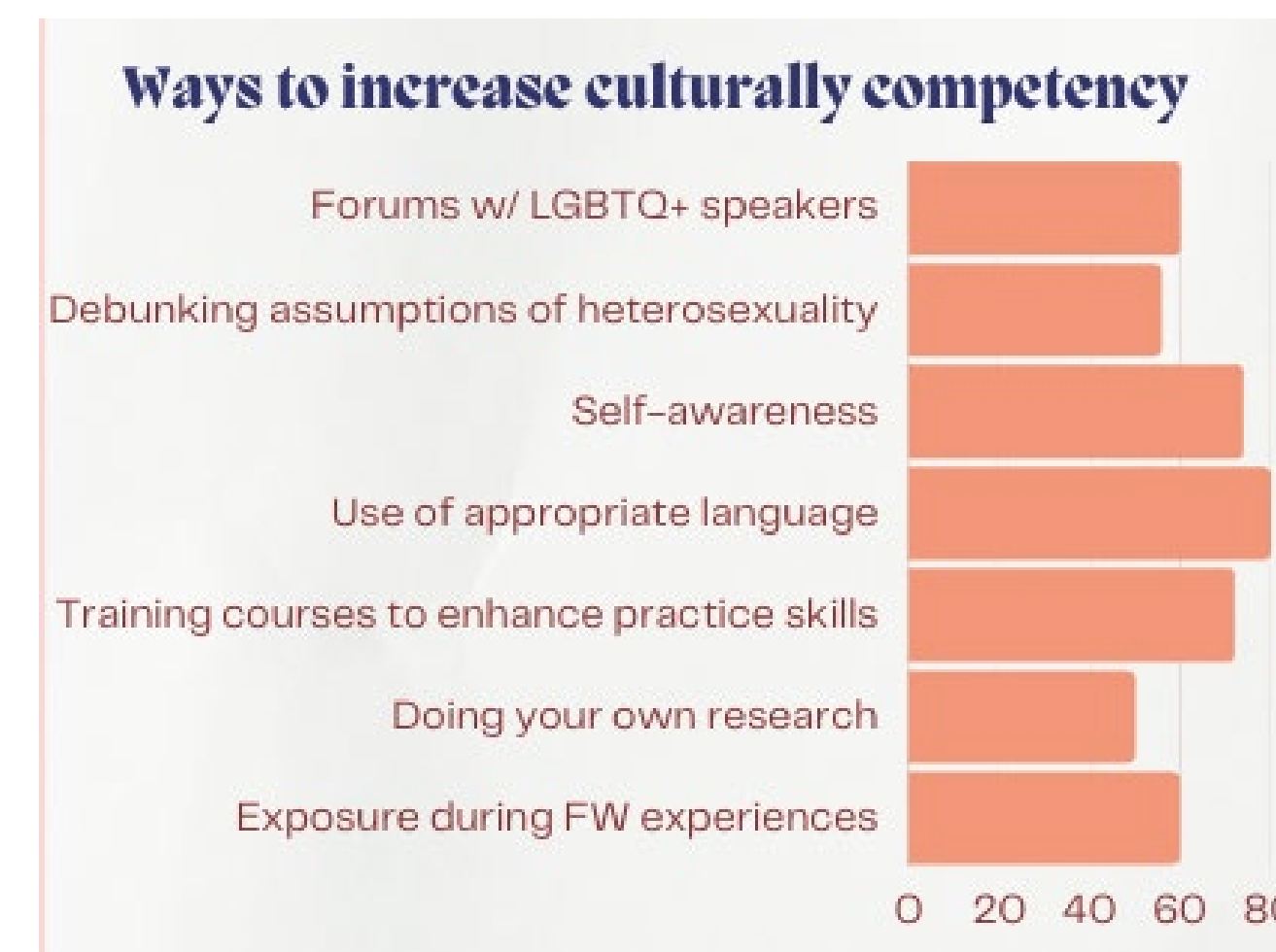


Figure Three



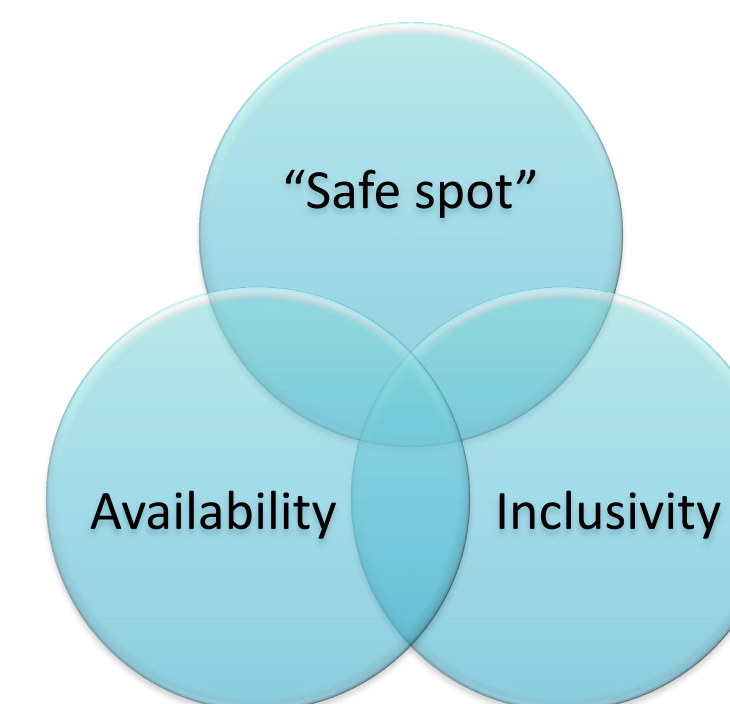
Figure Four

### Evaluation Strategies

- Create a safe environment– 90%
- Approaching interviews showing empathy, open-mindedness & without judgment – 84%
- Assessment forms with more inclusive choices for answers to questions- 82%

### Intervention Strategies

- Maximizing individuals' strengths and resources - 90%
- Preventing loss of engagement in meaningful occupations - 86%
- Promoting safety & self-affirmation - 80%



### References:

- Copti, N., Shahriari, R., Wanek, L., & Fitzsimmons, A. (2016). Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Inclusion in Physical Therapy: Advocating for Cultural Competency in Physical Therapist Education Across the United States. *Journal of Physical Therapy Education, 30*(4), 11–16. <https://doi.org/10.1097/00001416-201630040-00003>
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- Utamsingh, P. D., Richman, L. S., Martin, J. L., Lattanner, M. R., & Chaikind, J. R. (2015). Heteronormativity and practitioner–patient interaction. *Health Communication, 31*(5), 566–574. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10410236.2014.979975>