

Occupational science and its relationship to occupational therapy

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Occupational scientists study doing.

Occupational therapists enable doing.

Together we make the world do better.

(Wilcock, 1998)

Occupation

- the various everyday activities people do as individuals, in families and with communities to occupy time and bring meaning and purpose to life
- includes things people need to, want to and are expected to

(ISOS, 2007)

Occupational science

- the study of occupation and the influences that shape occupation

Occupational therapy

- a profession concerned with promoting health and well being through occupation
- its primary goal is to assist people to participate in the activities of everyday life
- occupational therapists enable people to do things that will enhance their ability to participate or by modify the environment to better support their participation

(WFOT, 2007)

Occupational science

- science
- discipline
- nature of occupation
form, function, meaning, context
- research
- from various
backgrounds

Occupational therapy

- practice
- profession
- engagement in
occupation
- client-centred therapy
- trained as occupational
therapists

(Forwell, 2008)

Relationship between occupational science & occupational therapy

- occupational science:
 - provides foundational knowledge
 - articulates an occupational framework
 - focuses on the profession's domain of concern

(Kumas-Tan & Townsend, 2003)

- Occupation is the construct.
- Occupational science is the study of occupation.
- Occupational therapy is the practice of maximizing occupational potential.

(Forwell, 2008)

Effects of occupational science on occupational therapy practice

- sharpens our occupational lens
- expands our thinking:
 - from biophysical to occupational
 - from therapeutic use of activity to enabling occupation

(Kumas-Tan & Townsend, 2003)

Scope of occupational science

- relationships between occupation and development
- how occupation changes over the life course
- how people organize daily occupations
- personal and socio-cultural meanings of occupation
- individual and societal functions of occupation
- relationships between occupation and people's contexts

Scope of occupational science cont.

- how people experience the things they do
- how occupations influence and are influenced by health and well being
- the impact of economics, environmental issues and government policies on people's occupational opportunities and choices..
- effects of disruption to occupation, occupational injustices, occupational deprivation and occupational apartheid

What type of science ?

- Basic - investigating a subject to increase knowledge and understanding about it
- Applied - investigating ways of applying scientific knowledge to practical problems
- Translational = basic + applied
 - identify problem
 - perform needs assessment
 - develop intervention
 - test intervention (Clark & Lawlor, 2009)

References

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