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The impact of Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD) on the occupational profile of young adults

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ABSTRACT

Developmental coordination disorder (DCD) is a severe impairment in the development of motor coordination that significantly interferes with academic achievement and / or activities of daily living that is not solely explicable in terms of

a co-existing medical or congenital condition, or general intellectual retardation (APA,2000). Current literature shows that 6-15% of children aged 5-11 suffer from the condition, however there is very little information regarding the presence of DCD among adolescents, and young adults.

The aim of the study was to compare the writing abilities, organization skills and self perceptions of young adults with DCD with their normal developing peers.

The initial sample of the study included 2300 young adults aged 19-25 years. Two hundred (9%) of the participants were revealed as having DCD. A control group of 200 subjects was selected of individuals without DCD.

Each participant completed the Adolescents & Adults Coordination Questionnaire - AAC-Q (Tal-Saban & Parush, 2004), the Functional Writing, Self Perception, and the Planning Strategies and Time Management Questionnaires which were prepared for the study (Tal-Saban & Parush, 2005).

The results of the study indicated significant differences between the group of individuals with DCD and the control in response to the questionnaires. The DCD group reported poorer writing legibility, lower self-perception, and inefficient use of organization and strategy use when compared with the control group.

This study demonstrates the impact of coordination disorders on the occupational profile of young adults with the condition. While little attention has been given to this population in the occupational therapy community, the results of the study indicates the impact of DCD on occupational performance beyond the childhood years. The outcomes of the study open avenues of intervention for occupational therapist in providing treatment for the young adult community who display difficulties in terms of coordination and organization skills.