

Dutch Children's Perspectives on the Constructs of the Child Occupational Self Assessment (COSA): A Qualitative Exploration

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Introduction: The Model of Human Occupation (MOHO) promotes self-assessments to incorporate client-centeredness in assessment procedures. Based on MOHO, the Child Occupational Self Assessment (COSA) measures a child's sense of competence for performing everyday life occupations and the importance the child attributes to these occupations. The COSA has been translated into Dutch. No information is available about how children interpret the COSA-items, and whether the COSA measures what it is meant to measure from the child's perspective. Quantitative methodology does not clarify respondents' interpretation of self-report items. Qualitative methods can test questionnaires to ensure they meet their purpose (Willis 2005). **Objectives:** This study aimed to reveal the children's interpretation of the COSA-items. The research-question encompassed two elements: whether the answers fitted with the COSA's intended meaning, and how children reflected on their daily occupations and social participation. **Methods:** A cognitive interviewing approach, the Three-Step-Test-Interview, was used to explore the children's interpretation of each item. Participants were six Dutch children with special needs from 8-12 years. Video-observations were taken. The constant comparative method (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007) guided the analysis. **Results:** The research discovered variations in how the children understood the COSA-items. Secondly, the research revealed how children managed daily occupations and their struggle with time-aspects in relation to social participation and everyday-life. The research also revealed translation-inaccuracies in the Dutch COSA-version. **Conclusion:** Self-assessments benefit from cognitive interviewing and pretesting by respondents during assessment development. Dutch children report that the COSA enabled them to share what they find important. When adopting other language questionnaires, clinical practice will benefit by applying standard translation procedures and paying attention to cultural aspects. **Contribution to the practice:** In the COSA-dialogue, cognitive interviewing proves worthwhile for eliciting children's reasoning and decision-making. This study indicates the importance while using the COSA of having a dialogue with the children about what they find important and how they perceive themselves while performing daily occupations.

References:

Bogdan, R. C. and S. K. Biklen (2007). *Qualitative Research for Education. An Introduction to Theories and Methods*, Pearson International Edition.

Willis, G. (2005). *Cognitive Interviewing: A Tool for Improving Questionnaire Design*, Sage Publications, Inc.