

## Evaluation of Four Community-Based Rehabilitation Programs Using the "Most Significant Change Technique"

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### Introduction

The Most Significant Change(MSC) technique is a qualitative and participatory form of monitoring and evaluation based on the collection and systematic selection of stories of reported changes from development activities. According to Dart Davis(2003), the MSC technique is a dialogical, story-based technique. A summative evaluation can be achieved by the MSC through its process and outputs.

Due to the complex nature of community-based rehabilitation(CBR) programs and the community development approach, quantitative monitoring may not be sufficient to capture the changes that happen in CBR programs. MSC was used to evaluate four Chinese CBR programs for a qualitative evaluation of program outcomes.

### Objectives

The aim of this study was to identify and describe the successful outcomes in the four Chinese CBR programs. The objectives were (1)to determine and describe the most significant changes for participants in four CBR programs using MSC; and (2)to explore the most commonly rated successful outcomes in the four best practice programs.

### Methods

A qualitative research design was used with an emphasis on participatory methods with different stakeholders in the CBR Programs. Data collection followed the procedures of the MSC over a period of five months. Four best practice CBR programs in Hong Kong and Mainland China were recruited. Content analysis with thematic coding was used to detect the common significant changes in the winning stories, the top-rated stories and in the whole pool of stories.

### Results

A total of 110 stories were collected in the two rounds of story collection from the four programs. The four programs demonstrated different emphasis as shown by the major themes in the winning stories. The most significant changes among these four programs were the "psychosocial dimension" and "involvement of families of people with disabilities". The most common theme of the top-rated stories was also "psychosocial dimension".

### Conclusion

MSC was found to be feasible and appropriate in the evaluation of CBR programs in the Chinese CBR context.

### Contribution

Its feasibility, application in the CBR context and implications for Occupational Therapy practice was explored. Community Occupational Therapy practice encompasses a wide spectrum and the use of MSC enables an appropriate evaluation and documentation of those measurable and non-measurable outcomes.