

Psychosocial issues of work-related musculoskeletal injuries and adaptation: A phenomenological study

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INTRODUCTION:

Incurring disabling injuries, workers face participation restriction in work activities and roles and occupational limitations. Inability to perform expected duties and roles at work and home created workers' experience of psychosocial issues.

OBJECTIVES:

The objective was to determine the psychosocial issues associated with work-related musculoskeletal injuries and adaptation to injury.

METHODS:

Design: The phenomenological approach of qualitative research was used to develop understanding of the experience of OTs and OTAs with WRMIs. Interview technique was used to reconstruct the participants' experiences.

Participants: A purposeful sampling technique with criterion sampling strategy to recruit participants was used. The participants were three OTs and seven OTAs with WRMIs and were selected from a pool of participants from a related study.

Instrument: The interview questions were adapted from the Adaptation Interview Guide by Spencer and Chan, which was a semistructured with prompted open-ended questions.

FINDINGS:

Two themes emerged: 1) progression of the psychosocial impact and 2) Adaptation: "change your life." The progression of the psychosocial impact theme included three subthemes that took place after the injury; 1) anger and depression, 2) losing valued occupations and life roles, and 3) loss of independence and financial security.

Participants' definition of adaptation revolved around making changes and adjustments in their contexts. Unexpected adaptive response was change of work setting to avoid patient handling. In addition, participants develop adaptive responses in the home environment including modifying home management activities. Also, participant made adaptive responses at the personal level including engaging in strengthening exercises and acquiring knowledge about patient handling.

CONCLUSION:

Beside physical intervention, psychosocial interventions should be provided to injured practitioners to limit the psychosocial problems.