

Ontología de la Ocupación Humana. Pasos hacia un nuevo Paradigma

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The following study is a literature review of the main principles and theories that have supported the practice and research in Occupational Therapy and Occupational Science throughout its history. This review considers Human Occupation for what it is and for what it means for our discipline.

The purpose of this research is to identify the different ontological perspectives that consider Human Occupation in Occupational Therapy and Occupational Science.

The methodology is based on Qualitative and Complexity Paradigms. It intends to be a non-experimental research of a descriptive transactional type. A diverse qualitative non-probabilistic sample was developed.

The unit of analysis selected was seven groups of theories of Occupational Therapy and Occupational Science considering a chronological perspective, which were collected from a documentary analysis. For the analysis of data a matrix of five categories was elaborated by the authors, based on ontological issues of relevance for the investigation.

The results show five historical moments throughout the existence of the discipline. In every one of them a variety of ontological descriptions that respond to five variables can be observed: role of the occupational therapist, definition of human being, satisfactory occupational status, occupational problem, definition of occupation and description of the environment.

As a conclusion the existence of a new paradigm of Occupational Therapy Intervention can be established. A second conclusion refers to the generation of knowledge in Occupational Science. This knowledge includes Occupation as a social phenomenon and not only as individual events, which is called the Social Paradigm of the Occupation. It considers Occupation in several dimensions: systemic, complex, economical, political, sanitary and cultural, consistent with justice and the welfare of the communities around the world.

This ontological analysis contributes to the development of the professional identity of both scientists and occupational therapists and benefits academic, clinical, scientific and philosophical progress. It generates new theoretical postulates, allowing the definition of research and action fields that strengthen knowledge and finally, enhance the value of science in our discipline.