

The Kawa Model; Transcending Cultural Frontiers in Occupational Therapy

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Since its introduction, The Kawa Model (Iwama 2006) has continued to gain recognition internationally as a simple yet culturally relevant and powerful model of occupational therapy. The first substantial OT model developed by clinicians outside of the Western world, the model is gaining traction across OT practice contexts in 6 continents. Hailed as a novel development in OT, the Kawa Model also illuminates the cultural nature of OT theory and epistemology. The model supports and demonstrates the need for alternative models that can guide and explain occupational therapy for an increasingly diverse and global world.

This in-congress workshop brings international OTs together with their Latino colleagues to critically consider culture's influences on contemporary OT theory, knowledge and practice. The introductory workshop uses a comparative critique approach to illuminate the hidden cultural nature of occupational therapy and what can potentially occur when cultural norms embedded in theoretical material such as models and instruments are transferred across cultural boundaries of meaning. Basic concepts and principles of the Kawa Model are presented along with strategies concerning how the model can be applied to cases across the full lifespan. The workshop also aims to empower occupational therapists to understand and adapt the Kawa Model for use in their diverse practice arenas.

Learning Objectives:

By the conclusion of the workshop participants will;

- understand the cultural nature of contemporary occupational therapy,
- illuminate culture as a hidden feature in occupational therapy theory and epistemology,
- explain the basic concepts and principles of the Kawa Model,
- understand the power structure (involving clients and therapists) of theory application,
- critically consider 'client-centred' practice in occupational therapy.
- describe possible adaptations and applications of the Kawa Model.

Length of Time: 1.5 hours

Description of Teaching Methods

Short presentations by international workshop leaders followed by questions and facilitated discussion. Practical sessions, such as participant drawings and interpretations of the Kawa Model across represented cultural contexts will occur.

Maximum Number of participants: 150