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Job satisfaction of occupational therapists

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Job satisfaction is a multidimensional concept featuring personality traits and environmental factors. A proportion of up to 45% of the variance in job satisfaction has been accounted for by personality. The relationship between work aspects and job satisfaction is important for occupational health practice, because working conditions can be managed. Job dissatisfaction has been related to mental health problems such as burnout. It is therefore important to interview employees on how they feel about their work and if necessary give them counseling. Workers who are satisfied with their jobs are more productive and show more responsibility than those who are not. In Iceland occupational therapists' job satisfaction has never been explored, neither have factors that facilitate nor those that restrain job satisfaction. If these factors are known there is a possibility to improve the environment of occupational therapists for their well being and satisfaction at work.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore factors that facilitate and restrain job satisfaction of occupational therapists in Iceland.

Interviews were conducted with 12 occupational therapists working in diverse areas of practice, having work experience of one to 30 years. The interviews were transcribed and analyzed applying a grounded theory approach.

The preliminary findings indicate that professional image, professional development, environment and self concept influenced job satisfaction for the better and for the worse.

Work environment and personal traits had vast influence on job satisfaction. But which factors were of importance to the occupational therapist depended to some degree on the years of experience and in what professional development stage the therapist was. These results can be used to better understand factors influencing experienced and inexperienced occupational therapists and to improve their working environment.