

Exploring the Occupation of Mothering from Diverse Angles

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Mothering is a primary occupation for women throughout adult years. Literature related to this occupation is increasing, yet lacks the depth needed to truly inform occupational therapists who desire to be effective in family-centered care. It is an essential area of study, since occupational therapists strive to provide optimal care for children in family context. The purpose of this study was to illuminate the mothering experience from an occupational perspective. Results from a study that revealed the perceptions of mothers from varying backgrounds regarding their occupational roles will be presented.

Objectives:

Understand current mothering literature

Identify varying mothering cultural experiences

Explore an antenarratological approach for understanding mothering experiences

A series of qualitative interviews were conducted with four groups of mothers over a decade. Data reduction and analysis utilizing a code development structure revealed themes consisting of a. range of emotions b. social-cultural influences c. occupational challenges and rewards, among others. An application of Boje's antenarratological approach by Dunbar (2015) was added to the process for gaining more depth. This included exploration cultural contexts, in addition to content analysis of an online blog. This latter approach proved to be more effective in capturing the more meaningful narrative of mothering.

Implications/Conclusion: Understanding mothering experiences enables the occupational therapist to treat families in a more holistic and meaningful manner. Integrating activities to understand the mothers' narratives is essential for optimal family-centered care.

Dunbar, S.B. (2015). Yolanda's story: An antenarratological approach to understanding mothering work. *Work*, 50, 451-456. DOI 10.3233/WOR-151997