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"Doing" creative activities influence everyday life -An action research study in mental health

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Introduction: Traditionally occupational therapists have engaged the individual through the use of creative medias. While there is awareness in the public that creative activities are a way of preventing stress and enhance quality of life, the use of creative activities in occupational therapy within mental health has declined. Studies of using creative activities has indicated an increase self-confidence, coping ability, occupational identity and recovery.

Objectives: The aim of the study was to test the use of creative activities as an intervention method in occupational therapy rehabilitation within mental health, focusing on the influence on wellbeing, value of occupation and self rated occupational performance and satisfaction with performance.

Method: Data was collected from 33 informants at baseline and follow-up two to three weeks later. The COPM interview, the OVal-9 and WHO-5 questionnaires were used. Furthermore semi-structured interviews were performed. Statistical analysis was done using SPSS and the semi structured interviews were analyzed using a qualitative content analysis.

Results: The study showed that there was a highly significant change ($p < 0.0001$) in WHO-5, COPM performance and satisfaction with performance. There were no significant correlations between the measures, including age and gender, used. The results of the content analysis confirmed this.

Conclusion: The use of creative activities is an important method in the rehabilitation processes, strengthening wellbeing and everyday life. The study consolidates that the use of creative activities in occupational therapy rehabilitation is still warranted. Therefore we need to rethink the direction that occupational therapy has taken and incorporate creative activities into the rehabilitation.