

Diversity Potential of the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework

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Introduction: Academic success of students in higher education is not a new field of research. Various factors influencing and even predicting academic success have been reported on, very often in isolation from other factors. However, no study has placed the phenomenon of academic success within the theoretical practice of Occupational Therapy.

Objective: The study focused on a holistic view of occupational therapy students and possible factors that influence their academic success and a description of those factors by means of the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework.

Method: A descriptive study with a qualitative research approach was conducted in order to understand the challenges that Occupational Therapy students face regarding academic success. Eighteen first year students were randomly selected for the study. Documentation data and Nominal Group Technique discussions were used to gather data. Data obtained was categorized according to the five domains of the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework (OTPF). By making use of the OTPF the researcher was able to describe the interrelated character of factors influencing academic success in higher education.

Findings: The findings suggest that not only academic factors but also social-, cultural-, physical-, cognitive- and psychological factors can influence academic success of first year occupational therapy students. In conclusion, the alternative use of the OTPF with a student population in higher education adds to the diverse application potential of this framework.