

A profile of assessment instruments used by South African occupational therapists in paediatric practice

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Introduction: In paediatric practice, occupational therapists have access to numerous assessment instruments to direct treatment. However, little is known about what, why and how paediatric occupational therapists in the private and public sector select and use assessment instruments in South Africa.

Objectives: The study aimed to determine which assessments are used by paediatric occupational therapists in South Africa (SA), and to describe and compare public and private sector occupational therapists' use of assessment instruments.

Methods: A quantitative descriptive study design with cross-sectional components, using a self-compiled online survey as data collection tool was conducted. Non-randomized, convenience sampling was used by requesting occupational therapists registered with the Occupational Therapy Association of South Africa (OTASA) to complete the online survey. Questions investigated which assessment instruments are used, how frequently they are used, the characteristics of instruments preferred by occupational therapists as well as the perceived relevance of instruments for the South African population.

Practice Implications: This study provides a preliminary profile of paediatric assessment instrument use by occupational therapists in South Africa. Such a profile can potentially affirm good practices and or ask occupational therapists to reconsider current practices. It may also reaffirm the need to develop, and guide the development of assessment instruments that are relevant for the South African population.

Conclusion: A closer look at the use of paediatric assessment instruments could contribute to paediatric occupational therapy assessment practices in South Africa.