

Parents' facilitation of occupational engagement in children with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder: A qualitative descriptive study in a rural community in South Africa

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Introduction/Rationale: South Africa has the highest reported prevalence of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) worldwide. High prevalence is aggravated by limited remedial and rehabilitative services in the rural Northern Cape, specifically the Pixleykaseme District. Parents requested guidance to facilitate the development of their children and this study is important to unpack how parents facilitate occupational engagement of their children with FASD as well as the challenges they face.

Objectives: To describe how parents facilitate the occupational engagement of their children with FASD in an under resourced district in a rural community in South Africa

Method: The study uses a qualitative descriptive design whereby parents of the children with FASD; were purposefully selected. The parents engaged in semi structured interviews that revealed the 'turning points' Olson (2009) identified for children with FAS. Interviews were transcribed verbatim and inductively analysed. Data generated and analysed thus far will be presented.

Practice Implications: Findings of this study could contribute to influence occupational therapy practice in the area of FASD by empowering parents as change agents and reaching children with FASD in under resourced areas. Greater understanding of parents' needs and strengths can tailor intervention programmes to create the stable environments children with FASD require for optimal life outcomes.

Conclusion: With limited resources and high rates of FASD in rural South Africa, intervention programmes must be informed both by the literature on effective management of FASD as well as the contextual experiences of people living with FASD and their families.