Listening to the Voices on Disability Issues in Namibia: Evidence for Entrenching Occupational Justice in Disability Policy Formulation

Presenter:

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Key assumption

- The policy environment <u>is perfectly designed to create the problems</u> that people experience in their daily lives
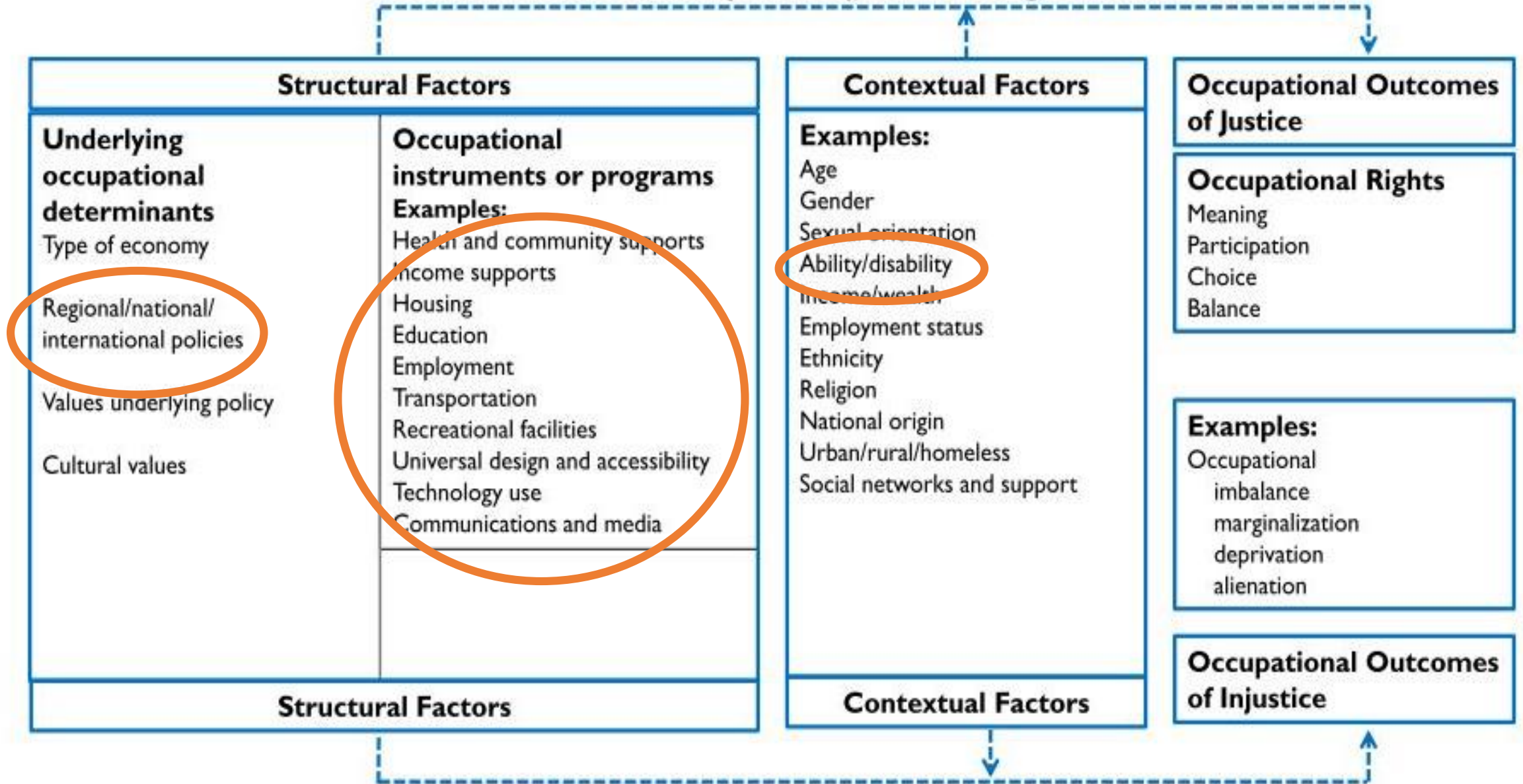
(McColl & Schaub, 2010).

Background

- National Policy on Disability 1997
- Complains by persons with disabilities
- Government's intention to review the disability policy

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- The link between occupational justice and disability policy

Conditions of occupational justice leading to

Structural Factors

Underlying occupational determinants

Type of economy

Regional/national/international policies

Values underlying policy

Cultural values

Occupational instruments or programs

Examples:
Health and community supports
Income supports
Housing
Education
Employment
Transportation
Recreational facilities
Universal design and accessibility
Technology use
Communications and media

Structural Factors

Contextual Factors

Examples:
Age
Gender
Sexual orientation
Ability/disability
Income/wealth
Employment status
Ethnicity
Religion
National origin
Urban/rural/homeless
Social networks and support

Contextual Factors

Occupational Outcomes of Justice

Occupational Rights
Meaning
Participation
Choice
Balance

Examples:
Occupational
    imbalance
    marginalization
    deprivation
    alienation

Occupational Outcomes of Injustice

Conditions of occupational injustice leading to

Objectives

Perspectives of:

    i.   Persons with disabilities;

    ii.   Disability policy decision makers;

    iii.   Occupational therapists

Research process

- An exploratory, analytical, qualitative approach
- Theoretical framework: Critical Disability Theory
- Conceptual framework: Occupational Justice Framework

- Ethical approval

- Data collection
  - Persons with disabilities
  - Occupational therapists
  - Policy decision makers

- Data analysis: NVivo 11 Pro version

Findings

- Lived experiences of persons with disabilities in Namibia

Sub-Themes (Child Nodes):

- The new mall is a joke

- The policy is a paper thing

- We are also citizens

- Barriers to occupational participation

- Barriers to accessing services

Theme(Parent Node):

The struggle is real

'The hardest moments for me were not when people challenged what I said, but when I felt my voice was not heard..' **[CIT4]**

Sub-themes (Child Nodes):

- Persons with disabilities are self-limiting
- Luke-warm fluidic policy environment
- No ownership of current disability policy

Theme(Parent Node):

It's not too bad- perspectives from positions of power

'My view is that lives of persons with disabilities in Namibia is not too bad, for me it's a better situation. We see more people with disabilities employed, I may not have the data to substantiate this but we see more people getting employed.' **[KI5]**

- Perspectives of occupational therapists on the lives of persons with disabilities

Sub-themes (Child Nodes):

- Need for a voice from persons with disabilities themselves.
- Occupational therapists as change agents for occupational justice.

Theme (Parent Node):

Persons with disabilities: a constituency in need

'I will tell the policy makers to take one child with disability in a wheelchair and spend the whole day with that child moving around the city using taxis, getting an appropriate school for the child, feeding the child and doing everything. So that they can address the needs for such children in the policy'. **[IFG6]**

Embedded forms of occupational injustice

- Occupational marginalization

- Occupational deprivation

- Occupational alienation

- Occupational inconsideration

- Occupational participation barriers identified .... **attitudinal, access, physical, expertise and systemic.**

Suggested disability policy reforms

- Persons with disabilities -- 10 suggestions

- Occupational Therapists— 13 suggestions

- Decision makers– 8 suggestions

- 4 suggestions were consistently mentioned by all participant groups:

  - Awareness raising on rights of persons with disabilities

  - Access to information for general community development

  - Accessible education infrastructure

  - Inclusive vocational skills training

My time is up!
Thank you for yours

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