
Abstracts from Hebrew

Source: *IJOT: The Israeli Journal of Occupational Therapy* / כתב עת ישראלי לריפוי
כרך, מאי 2010, כעיסוק, 19, חוברת, 2 (מאי 2010), pp. E53-E55

Published by: Israeli Society of Occupational Therapy / העמותה ישראלית לריפוי בעיסוק

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23469902>

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Neuro-Occupation: A Glimpse into the Brain and Human Occupation

Key Words: Occupational therapy, neuro-occupation, occupation

This article is based upon a lecture presented at the 16th Conference of the Israeli Society of Occupational Therapy. It presents an overview of the historical development of occupational therapy (OT) as a profession, and reflects upon paradigmatic changes that have transpired over the years; starting with the founding of OT, the adoption of the medical model, the development of occupational science, and the full-circle revisiting of 'occupation' as the center of practice. The article specifically traces the emergence of 'neuro-occupation' which advocates the link between body and soul, and underlines the reciprocal interaction between occupation and the central nervous system (CNS). This interaction facilitates occupational therapists' efforts to explain the therapeutic use of occupation through brain research. Several examples of applying occupational therapy intervention are cited, highlighting the connections between the field of neuro-occupation and the neuro-physiological and neuropsychological research conducted in other disciplines.

Occupational therapy has long discerned the beneficial impact of occupation on human health. Occupational therapists are obligated to appreciate and study the mutual links between occupation and the CNS. Moreover, it is essential to integrate the perspective of neuro-occupation in OT academic curricula and practice, which will serve to enhance inter-disciplinary collaboration on the subject as well.

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Executive Functions in Standard "Paper-and-Pencil" Tests and in Everyday Life Tasks: Implications for Patients with Traumatic Brain Injury

Key words: Ecological validity, paper-and-pencil tests, functional tasks

Executive functions (EF) are defined as cognitive self-regulating and control functions that direct and organize human behavior. Over the last two decades, their importance for successful adaptive behavior has been increasingly recognized. Though many individuals with traumatic brain injury (TBI) demonstrate deficient EF in the performance of both everyday life functions and neuropsychological and cognitive tests, some only demonstrate EF deficiency in one or the other. The goal of the present research was to explore the relationship between EF as evaluated through standard paper-and-pencil tests and through their analogous behaviors in everyday life situations. The elaboration of this relationship may improve both the validity of assessments and the efficiency of cognitive intervention programs for individuals with TBI participating in rehabilitation programs.

Method: Two paper-and-pencil EF tests and two parallel everyday life tasks were presented to a group of 15 healthy subjects and to a group of 15 subjects with TBI attending a rehabilitation day center.

Results: No significant correlation was found between the EF scores of individuals with TBI in standard paper-and-pencil tests, and in their EF as revealed in daily functional activities.

Conclusion: The EF of individuals with TBI during their rehabilitation process cannot be fully predicted by the standard paper-and-pencil tests used in this study. The use of functional tasks and/or observation of daily activities seem to be necessary for improving the ecological validity of EF assessment in individuals with TBI and in order to create more appropriate rehabilitation programs.

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This paper is based on Anat Levit's Master's thesis in occupational therapy, at Tel Aviv University, under the guidance of Dr. Noami Hadas Lidor and Professor Alex Kozulin.

The Israeli Journal of Occupational Therapy, May 2010, 19 (2)

The Occupational Therapy Intervention Process for a Fracture of the Proximal Humerus: A Case Study

Key words: Proximal humerus fracture, occupational therapy, intervention, elderly, upper extremity rehabilitation

The rate of proximal humerus fractures increases with a person's age, and often results in prolonged and severe disability. Currently, research regarding rehabilitation outcomes for neuromuscular body functions and occupational performance is lacking (Guix, Pedros & Serrano, 2009; Hodgson, 2006). In addition, occupational therapists are not credited as professionals who treat this condition, despite their vast degree of clinical experience in this area of therapy (Court-Brown, McQueen & Garg, 2000). Thus, the purpose of this case study is to describe the occupational therapy intervention and treatment of an 83 year-old woman who underwent rehabilitation for an oblique fracture of her left humerus at the "Bet Rivka" Geriatric Rehabilitation Center following a fall.

Prior to rehabilitation, the subject had undergone open reduction, internal fixation (ORIF) of the humerus, in which a locking plate was used. This article will present a description of her condition upon acceptance and at discharge from the rehabilitation program, in addition to the instructions given by the orthopedic surgeon. Furthermore, this paper will describe the occupational therapy intervention that was provided, which was based on the standard protocol used for such fractures, and reflects an integration of the biomechanical and task-oriented therapy approaches. Finally, a synopsis of the progress of her functional rehabilitation will be included.

After a six-week intervention period the occurrence of pain significantly decreased, full passive range of motion (PROM) was achieved in supine for forward flexion, however, only 10-20° of active motion was present while seated. Nevertheless, as a result of the therapy she received her ability to perform self-care returned to the level accessible to her prior to her injury.

The results of this occupational therapy intervention process suggest that a combination of strategies designed to promote "restoration" and "remediation" of Body Functions, in addition to "rehabilitation, adaptation, and compensation" provide effective functional results for humerus fracture injuries.

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This article was based on final paper of practical training, fourth year, with the guidance of Orit Segev-Jacobovski.

The Israeli Journal of Occupational Therapy, May 2010, 19 (2)