

## Spring 2009 Research

April 2009  
Research Abstracts

### **Gleason, S., Gross, H., Lettich, C., & Neff, J. (2009). Altruistic activities with a resident of limited mobility living in a long term care facility: A case study.**

**Research Chairs:** Joseph Cipriani, EdD OTR/L and Ellen McLaughlin, Ed. D OTR/L

**Reader:** Gwen Bartolacci OTD, OTR/L

Elderly individuals with limited mobility provide a set of unique challenges to health care professionals in long term care (LTC) facilities. A case study framed with a phenomenological approach was used to explore the needs of an elderly resident with limited mobility in a LTC facility. The participant, referred to as Ethel, was a ninety-eight year old female who met the inclusion criteria set forth by the researchers. The need and desire for Ethel to participate in an altruistic activity was assessed through interviews and active engagement in an altruistic task. Altruistic expression involves actions that: "(1) are performed for the benefit of others and for the participants as ends in themselves, (2) emitted voluntarily, and (3) usually done for good of some sort" (Cipriani, Faig, Ayer, Brown, & Johnson, 2006, p.47). Throughout the study, four themes emerged based upon Ethel's perceived experience, reactions, and feelings related to the activity. These themes were: past associations, privacy, degree of initiative, and competence. We found the advanced age and limited mobility of an individual influences engagement in altruistic activity as opposed to those that are more active.

### **Barnes, A., Doolittle, K., Moon, A., & Popalis (2009). Eligibility and Discharge Criteria for School Based Practice under IDEA**

**Research Chair:** Lalit J. Shah, Ed.D., OTR/L

**Reader:** Jennifer Washko, MS, OTR/L

This study sought to identify eligibility and discharge criteria used by occupational therapists within the school system and to determine if these criteria were clear and effective. The research was completed following a pilot study based on interviews of ten school based occupational therapists regarding inclusion and discontinuation criteria. An in-depth literature review was completed as well as a nationally mailed questionnaire. Seventy-eight out of five hundred school based occupational therapists completed the questionnaire and the information provided was used to identify emerging themes. This study found that the criteria for eligibility and discharge were ambiguous and often left to interpretation by the practicing therapist or multidisciplinary team. The information provided by the respondents varied as to what could be done to create clearer guidelines.

### **Coolbaugh, K., Ebbecke, K., & Tassone, A. (2009). Student perspectives on the advantages and disadvantages of occupational therapy post professional distance education programs.**

**Research Chair:** Gwen Bartolacci OTD, OTR/L

**Readers:** Grace Fisher, EdD, OTR/L and Beth Pfeiffer Ph.D., OTR/L, BCP

**Objective:** The objectives of this study were to: (a) identify perceived advantages and disadvantages of distance education, (b) identify the preferred methods of instruction, and (c) identify factors that facilitate a successful distance educational experience for students.

**Method:** This study involved the use of qualitative methodologies. The researchers used a questionnaire with open ended questions, as well as interviews to identify the student perspective regarding distance education programs.

**Results:** One hundred and twenty questionnaires were sent via e-mail and regular mail. Thirty seven questionnaires were returned and six telephone interviews were conducted. Two themes were identified: a) the flexibility of the online program which allowed the participants to work full time while completing their degree and b) the instructor's skill.

**Conclusion:** Perceived advantages included flexibility and the opportunity to work full-time. The lack of face-to face interaction was identified as a disadvantage to distance education. Overall, the majority of the participants in the study would recommend an online post professional program to individuals who want to further their education. Professors and course designers can use the information found in this study to maximize the success of a post professional occupational therapy distance education program.

**Cabral, J., Kelly, T., Pirtskhalaichvili, A. & Wardlaw, T. (2009). Parental perceptions of video game use.**

**Research Chair:** Ellen McLaughlin, Ed.D., OTR/L

**Reader:** Dawn Evans, MS, OTR/L

Parental perceptions about their children's video game use were analyzed from 1,154 survey respondents. "Exploring Children's Video Game Use from an Occupational Perspective" a parental survey by Hamersley et al. (2007), was used as the instrument to collect data. Eighty-three percent of the respondents were mothers, 13% fathers, and 4% were other caregivers. Children portrayed in this study had a mean age of 9 years, 6 months, ranging from age seven through twelve. Gender representation was 46.6% male and 53.3% female. Six prominent themes concerning video game play emerged from the data: positive and negative influences of video game use and four parental strategies used to balance those influences. Parents identified positive attributes of video games (increased cognitive skills, social skills, physical activity, eye-hand coordination, and stress relief), as well as concerns regarding the negative influence of video games (childhood obesity, poor academic performance, decreased social skills, and negative psychological effects). Four main parental strategies to monitor their children's video game use were defined as moderation & balance, time limits, content limits, and mediation strategies.

**Burgio, L., Oliveira, K., Reightler, H., Sysko, E. (2009).The Allure of Video Game Playing**

**Research Chair:** Ellen McLaughlin, Ed.D, OTR/L

**Reader:** Dawn Evans, MS, OTR/L

This qualitative phenomenological study investigated what motivates children to make the occupational choice to play video games. The increase in video game playing in children is an important concern for occupational therapists who are dedicated to helping children achieve a healthy balance among the occupational areas of social participation, education, play, and leisure. The data was gathered using a sample of seven boys and one girl ages nine to thirteen. A series of observations and interviews was conducted with each participant. The sessions were transcribed and analyzed using initial conceptual codes. Four themes of fun, competition, interests, and mood were identified. Relevance of these themes to past research, and the application of them to both typical and excessive video game users are discussed. This research will provide a broader base of knowledge on the intrinsic factors that encourage children to choose to play video games.

**Czuba, A., Powers, C., & Saucedo, B. (2009). The Occupational Understanding of the Challenges of Chronic Pain : Questionnaire 2 – A Content Validity Survey**

**Research Chair:** Grace Fisher, EdD,OTR/L

**Reader:** Dawn Evans, MS, OTR/L

**Objective:** To determine the face and content validity of the Occupational Understanding of the Challenges of Chronic Pain Questionnaire 2 (OUCH CPQ-2), a newly-developed pain assessment instrument, from the standpoint of a nationwide sample of occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants.

**Method:** The occupational therapy practitioners determined if the OUCH-CPQ 2 had face and content validity. The names and addresses of survey recipients were obtained from the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) membership Physical Disabilities Special Interest Section membership database. The cover letter, survey form, OUCH –CPQ 2 assessment, and return pre-addressed and stamped envelope and were mailed to 500 occupational therapists and certified occupational therapy assistants across the U.S.

**Results:** Eighty-four surveys out of 500 were returned resulting in a response rate of 16.8 %. The 84 respondents represented all regions in the US. When asked how many of the respondents worked with individuals who have chronic pain, 94% of the respondents said they did while the remaining 6% did not. Ninety-five point two percent of the respondents were practicing registered occupational therapists (OTRs)while 4.8% were certified occupational therapy assistants (COTAs). Of the 29 assessments mentioned on the survey, only 8 were used by 10% or more of the respondents. The respondents were asked to rate seven areas of occupation in terms of priority when working with clients who have chronic pain; activities of daily living (ADL) received the highest priority rating. Respondents also identified strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations for changing the assessment.

**Conclusion:** The study confirmed the efficacy of the OUCH-CPQ 2 as a tool for occupational therapy practitioners who work with chronic pain patients. Respondent ratings and comments were positive concerning the face and content validity of the OUCH- CPQ 2 instrument. Although the respondents had recommendations for improving the instrument, the majority of their comments and feedback was favorable. Continued instrument development research to improve the OUCH-CPQ 2 is recommended.

**Levens, P.E., Prince, J. A., Smith, R. L. (2009). A Field Test of the Occupational Understanding of the Challenges of Chronic Pain Questionnaire 2 (OUCH-CPQ 2)**

**Research Chairperson:** Grace Fisher, Ed.D., OTR/L

**Reader:** Gwen Bartolacci, OTD. OTR/L

**Purpose.** To conduct a field test to validate the usefulness of the Occupational Understanding of the Challenges of Chronic Pain Questionnaire 2 (OUCH-CPQ 2).

**Method.** The OUCH-CPQ 2 instrument was used to assess six participants' pain experiences and help them develop self determined goal plans for dealing with the problems pain has brought to their lives. After the completion of the initial assessment, four weekly phone calls, during which the participants received encouragement, preceded a final follow up survey to determine the participants' reactions to the assessment process. Results. Results revealed favorable responses to participating in the OUCH-CPQ 2 process. The findings also highlighted the importance of motivation and personal investment to enhance the drive to create self-determined goals and participate in meaningful occupations. Participants also gave recommendations for continued evolution of the OUCH-CPQ 2 instrument.

**Conclusion.** The OUCH-CPQ 2 is a potentially effective instrument for assessing the occupational performance of individuals who have chronic pain, and for promoting their active involvement in goal planning to achieve more meaningful lifestyle.

**Hassick, K., Jayne, A., & Lahr, B. (2009) Traditional Versus Alphabetical Navigation Bars on Web Sites**

**Research Chair:** Lalit Shah, Ed.D, OTR/L

**Reader:** Denis Anson, MS, OTR/L

When accessing a web site a person relies on the navigation bar to find their desired information. A web page's design may be set-up in a way that is logical to the designers; however, the logic may not be apparent to the visitors to the site and it may be difficult to find desired information. This study compared two different arrangements of links on navigation bars, an alphabetized organization and a traditional navigation design. These navigation bars were compared for speed, accuracy, ease of use, the degree of pleasantness, and a users' likeliness to return to the web site. 40 able-bodied participants were asked to locate specific information on one of two web sites that differed only in the design of the navigation bar. Results indicated that the two navigation bars were equivalent in speed, accuracy, and degree of pleasantness; however, ease of use and likeliness of return was found to significantly favor the alphabetized navigation bar. The results in this study support the need for web designers to consider the universal design principles when designing web sites, in particular navigation bars.