Occupational Therapy For A Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC): Needs Assessment Using Photovoice

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Background
Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs)
- A recent federal initiative to deliver innovative, well-coordinated, and evidence-based mental health and substance abuse treatment
- Occupational therapists (OTs) are listed among CCBHC staffing criteria

Academic-Provider Partnership
- OT faculty and students conducted a needs assessment study to assist a local healthcare provider in developing a CCBHC.
- Study findings will be used to develop OT services at the CCBHC

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY
To assess occupational needs of community-dwelling adults who utilize behavioral health services

RESEARCH QUESTION
What were the facilitating and hindering factors of engaging in meaningful activities for behavioral health service users?

Methods
RESEARCH DESIGN: Photovoice
- A community-based participatory research (CBPR) approach
- Emphasis on empowerment and collaboration
- Give cameras to research participants to investigate issues in the community through lenses of participants

RECRUITMENT CRITERIA
- Having utilized inpatient or outpatient behavioral health services in the six months prior to the study
- Age between 18 and 66
- Capable of operating a digital camera
- Willing to commit to compete photo assignments and attend group meetings and participate in group discussions

RESEARCH INSTRUMENT: SHOWN group discussion guide
- What do we SEE here?
- What is HAPPENING?
- How does the story relate to OUR lives?
- HOW does the problem/asset exist?
- How can we become EMPOWERED with our new understanding?
- What can we DO about these problems/assets in our lives?

DATA ANALYSIS
- NVivo 10.0, open coding, axial coding and selective coding

HINDERING FACTORS OF OCCUPATIONAL ENGAGEMENT
- Mental Illness
- Depression or a lack of motivation
- Anxiety or unable to make decisions
- Stigma/Not being accepted or understood by others
- It’s overwhelming, stuff own feelings and emotions
- Pretend and act normal
- Lack of knowledge about mental illness and medications
- It took a long time to figure out, including communicating with psychiatrists
- Self-taught, discover on your own

FACILITATING FACTORS OF OCCUPATIONAL ENGAGEMENT
- Sense of responsibility, meaning and/or purpose. Feeling needed
- Pets, Family & friends; Volunteering/Helping others
- Activities with distraction effects
- Activities that allow participants to hyper-focus, or feel centered
- Hobbies or interests. i.e., painting, skateboarding
- Activities with relaxing
- Nature. Foods (smells & oral stimulations), herbal teas, sensual oils, music
- Reframing. A mental and/or physical effort of positive coping
- Change perspective about own experience
- Lead to a learned insight (e.g. a personal strength)

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS (N=6)

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Discussion
- Evident impact of mental illness on occupational engagement for community-dwelling individuals
- Mental health benefits of occupations
  - Healthy distractions from symptoms of mental disorders
  - Flow
  - Sensory modulation from stress management
  - Health literacy as a powerful tool of empowerment for the recovery of mental illness
  - Sense of coherence
  - Manageability, Comprehensibility, Meaningfulness

Conclusion
- OT programs for the CCBHC may include:
  - Health literacy/psychoeducation on mental illness and related medications
  - Leisure exploration and participation
  - Stress management/relaxation techniques/sensory modulation
  - Self- and peer-advocacy
  - Community integration (engaging in the community as a contributing member)
- Occupational therapists have a lot to offer in CCBHCs
- To better address occupational needs for CCBHC clients, OTs need to incorporate and stay current in the contemporary framework of reference such as CBPR and strength-based approaches, besides providing traditional group and activity-based interventions.
- This needs assessment study serves as the first step of the academic-provider partnership that aims to establish research evidence of adequacy for occupational therapy interventions in CCBHs.

Key References