

## A Phenomenological Study of Clients with Hand Injury: An Occupational Adaptation Perspective

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## Problem Statement

- Most of our daily activities involve the use of hand:
  - Dressing, Feeding, Bathing, Showering, ...
- Hands offer us competence, independence, and Autonomy
- Injury to the hand causes:
  - Dysfunction in daily activities.
  - Disability.
  - Psychosocial problems.
  - Diminished quality of life.

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## Background

- Occupational Adaptation
  - Adaptation process starts with experiencing an occupational challenge that facilitates an internal motivation to participate in meaningful occupations.
  - The client generates and acts out an adaptive response to meet the occupational challenge, improve relative mastery and lead to better occupational functioning (Schkade & Schultz, 1992).

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## Background (Cont)

- Acknowledges the unique role of the occupational environment and its interaction with the person through participating in occupation that leads to adaptation.
- Difficulty in performing occupation is mainly due to poor adaptation.

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## Background (Cont)

- OA (a guide to OT intervention process):
  - “A perspective that promotes a holistic practice”.
  - Skilled-based activity VS meaningful occupations:
    - Therapeutic exercises and techniques (ONLY AS NECESSARY).
    - Should be followed by purposeful and meaningful activity (occupations).
    - Over reliance on techniques departs us from our identity.
    - Purposeful and meaningful occupations are our

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## Purpose of the Study

- Using the Occupational Adaptation Model as a template, the goals of this study were to:
  - Explore and understand the adaptation process of clients with hand injuries.
  - Develop an adaptive response model that can be used in practice with a variety of client populations regardless of their diagnoses.

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## Methodology

- A phenomenological approach.
  - Gain deeper understanding about a phenomenon (Patton, 2002).
  - Understand the lived experience (adaptation process) of the clients with hand injury living in Kuwait.

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## Sample

- 10 clients living in Kuwait with hand injury participated in the study.
- Inclusion Criteria
  - Hand injury within 1-3 months.
  - 18 + years.
- Exclusion Criteria
  - Any concurrent physical injury compounding the hand injury.

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## Data Collection Procedure

- Participants were recruited from hand clinic at Alrazi orthopedic Hospital.
- Semi-structured interview.
- Open ended questions.
- Prompts were used as necessary
- The interview questions aim to:
  - Elicit the patients' perceptions about their lived experience.
  - Understand how they adapted with it.

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## Data Analysis

- The interview was transcribed verbatim.
- Multiple reading of transcripts were performed.
- Redundancy was reached.
  - Member Checking (Authentication of findings)
- Codes were developed.
- Cluster of themes emerged.
  - Examination peer Review (Experienced Researchers).

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## Results

- Ten clients acted as key informants and were face to face interviewed.
- The transcribed semi-structured interviews were thematically analyzed.

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## Results (Themes)

- Occupational challenges and limitations.
- Psychosocial manifestations.
- Adaptive responses.
- Facilitators of adaptive responses:
  - Environmental support.
  - Increased faith.
  - Hope.

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## Results (Utility of OA)

- Concepts, principles, and experiences were relevant:
- Person systems (sensorimotor & Psychosocial)
- Environment contexts (Clinic, Work & Home)
- Occupational challenge (Inability to engage in desired occupations)
- Adaptive response (Internally motivated, therapeutic exercise, meaningful occupations, therapeutic relationship and social support)

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## Discussion

- Supporting the use of the OA model as a theoretical base model with clients suffering from hand injuries:
- Promotes a core belief of our profession that "Theory guides practice".

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## Study Limitations

- Data gathering was taken from one hand unit.
- Findings can not be generalized to a larger population.
- Author's limited experience in conducting qualitative research studies:
- Lacking of thorough thematic analysis.

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## Conclusions and Implications

- The use of mixed research designs to understand the lived experience of different client populations is desirable:
  - Enrich the data.
  - Provide further significant details.

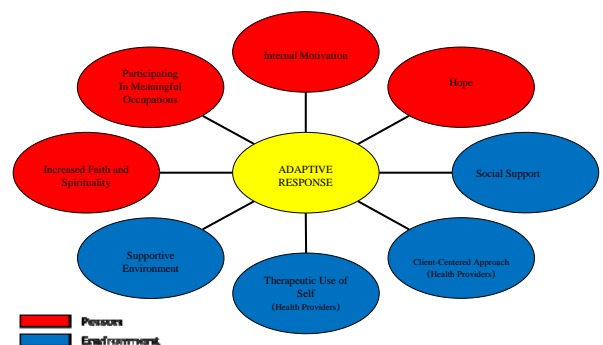
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## Directions for Future Research

- The use of the OA framework as an adaptation based therapeutic guide is encouraged:
  - The Biomechanical Model is widely used in hand therapy clinics
  - By introducing the OA model to OTs in Kuwait, a new perspective of the adaptive process will be gained.
  - The adaptive response model can be used with different occupational therapy clients regardless of their diagnoses.

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## Positive Dimensions Contributing to the Clients' Adaptive Response



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