

Perceptions Of Evidence-Based Practice: A Survey Of Australian Occupational Therapists

Posted on October 14, 2019

The following paper analyzes different aspects along with methodological implications, ethical framework, and key factors of a research paper titled "*Perception of Evidence-Based Practice: A Survey of Australian Occupational Therapists.*" Evidence-based Practice (EBP) can be defined as a technique that assists the process of decision-making in overall areas of healthcare. The underlying concept was originally generated in medicine but has impacted the vast scope of different healthcare-related professions. EBP signifies the need of the cooperation of clinicians to examine, evaluate, and process the literature for research purposes with their subject clinical practices and through the perspectives of patients. Recently, the research-based information about the reaction of occupational therapists regarding Evidence-based Practices is little known. Moreover, researchers are still finding the occupational therapists' perceptions on the subject because the innovative approaches question their educational needs. [1]

Therefore, to collect some relevant data on the proposition; a research method is devised to gather data through a questionnaire. The subject questionnaires were dispatched to a sample of 1491 members who were selected randomly from the National professional [occupational therapy](#) association, OT Australia. However, not all the participants partook in the process, and only 44% or say 649 people completed the questionnaire. About ninety-six percent of occupational therapists affirm the efficacy of EBP. However, about fifty-six percent of participants employed the research for clinical-based decisions and about ninety-six percent of them asserted reliance on clinical experiences. 82 percent underline the significance of information from continuing education and eighty percent rely on peers and colleagues. [1]

According to the participants, the lack of time frame and insufficient skills in the relevant fields are identified as the major hurdles in the implications of EBP. Further, about fifty-two percent demonstrated substantial interest in EBP-related training and skill acquiring process on the other hand; eighty percent preferred the brief excerpts of relevant evidence. And as conclusion, it becomes indispensable to incorporate specific educational initiatives and integration of systems and resources to support and sustain EBP in the field of occupational therapy. [1]

The Key Research Concepts

The subject research report elaborates a few key factors regarding Evidence-base practices and the efficacy of its implementation in different fields of healthcare. The research is conducted by numerous

researchers from Department of Occupational Therapy including Dr. Sally Bennett. The main reason behind conducting this research was to evaluate the importance of Evidence-based practices for clinical purposes because it is a modern concept and therefore the research literature is not abundantly available on the subject. The data regarding the practice and its underlying matters and other aspects could only be acquired through occupational therapists and medical associates because they are experiencing such practices on regular basis and could provide profound insight. [1]

This research is an interconnected chain of a series of other qualitative research studies on a similar topic. A few studies are conducted through the methodology of semi-structured interviews in different premises and various practice-based settings. The interviews were developed and designed to identify and comprehend the professionals' perceptions regarding EBP. However, most of the research studies elaborate that therapists argue the relevance and practicality of EBP in the field of occupational therapy. On the contrary, such therapists largely advocated the experiences and mentoring attained from peers and colleagues and proposed that clients are more imperative to clinical specialists as sources of evidence. [1]

Through the generation of research literature experts also find out several obstacles which hinder the efficacy of EBP in the medical field. Such impediments include a substantial lack of expertise in research areas and expected alterations to traditional practice that would be caused by evidence-based practices. The subject research intended to play a crucial part in developing understanding and identifying perceptions of professionals in this regard to pave the path for future examination. And for this reason, it can be said that the major audiences for the research report are the occupational therapists as well as the prospect researchers which can take the lead from the findings of the study and can expand the span of other interrelated aspects. Evidently, the research studies help in creating tactics and strategies to cope with the time restraints and adding strength to the healthcare relevance, and incorporating skills and training to acquire knowledge in EBP. [1]

Methodical Quality

Aim Of Study

The primary aim of the subject research report is to present and validate the factors which help to identify the efficiency and effectiveness of EBP to occupational therapists. Moreover, it comprehends the restraints and other aspects regarding the impeding of EBP's implementation in the healthcare sector. [1]

Research Design

The research data was collected through questionnaires, which were developed by utilizing key factors influencing the implementation and effectiveness of EBP and understanding the perception of

occupational therapists in this regard. The research design undertakes the opinion of participants who are randomly selected from Occupational Therapy, Australia. The pool of participants was refined to increase the professional opinion of occupational therapists. The questionnaire features different sections which highlight different techniques, including Likert scales and open-ended questions, to attain better insight and recommendations. Initially, five OT occupational therapists were piloted to evaluate the practicality and validity of the developed questionnaire. Consequently, based on the acquired feedback, a few modifications were infused to enhance the validity, precision, and reliability of the questionnaire. [1]

Data Analysis

SPSS for Windows was employed to process the analysis of gathered questionnaires. And to perform descriptive and univariate analyses the researchers used Chi-square and ANOVA. Moreover, to make the outcomes simplified some underlying categories of responses were merged. Take the instance of the category which depicts “disagree” which formulated from different categories which were “strongly disagree” and “disagree.” On the other hand, several responses were presented on the basis of dichotomy. For instance, the questions regarding the obstruct and hurdles and the efficacy of training patterns were merged as the category “not at all” or “a little” and “quite” or “very” or “extremely” etcetera. [1]

Validity

Validity is a significant attribute of research studies, which can be defined as the accuracy and correctness of an examination. Such accuracy is assessed in the context of end results whether the research measured what was initially intended to find or not. Sometimes, even a reliable research examination does not offer a valid measure. Contrarily, a valid test is always reliable as well. For the subject research, all the participants were asked to rate a provided list of activities and skills to depict their confidence in fulfilling subject activities. Accordingly the categories of “quite” “very” and “extremely” were amalgamated. Most of the participants did not respond to the questionnaire at all, but the participants who partook demonstrated that about 60.7% of them felt confident in searching the literature. Moreover, 50.2% showed that they have low confidence in concerning research findings to make decisions that are clinically significant. 38.1% portrayed shaky confidence in even formulating study design. 37.6% had validity issues, while 15.5% showed a tendency toward utilizing the Cochrane Library as an electronic database resource. [1]

Reliability

Reliability is another characteristic of research methodology and can be referred to as the extent to which evaluation is persistent and consistent. Reliability is just like electric appliances or, say, automobiles, and for them, it is imperative to get started whenever they need to. Take another

example of the kitchen scale; if an individual weighs 1 kg of onions in the morning and the scale gives reliable measures, then it is necessary that the same scale gives the same weighting measures of the same product even after one hour or many hours. It is obvious from the above-mentioned content analysis that the subject research case employed a questionnaire based on the correlations as well. The correlation will always tell the similar results that evidence-based practices within the field of medical sciences and occupational therapy necessitate a handsome amount of time and specific skills and training in the EBP are also required. [1]

These findings are accurate and reliable, but here are some limitations. The limitations of the research study explicate that the participants all belonged to OT Australia and, therefore, did not provide a vast scope of sampling. On the other hand, only 44% of the randomly selected sample responded to the questionnaire, and it asserts that it might be possible that these people are interested in the subject of EBP, and therefore, their response cannot be taken as a universal opinion. Moreover, it was a self-administered sort of questionnaire, and for this reason, a probability exists that responses regarding the practice are biased and deviated from actual practice standards. For all these reasons, there is a tinge of uncertainty about the reliability of the research study findings, and it needs more delving to unearth the actual propositions. [1]

Ethical Aspects

Researchers employ questionnaires and interviews to conduct qualitative research and surveys etcetera. Such devices gather data and information regarding particular attitudes, perceptions, thoughts, and demeanours to evaluate the correlation between two or more aspects of variables. In the subject study, researchers used a carefully developed questionnaire because it is a convenient mode and can collect data of a rather large populace in minimum time. However, meeting the ethical standards in conducting such studies is crucial and affirms the good faith and integrity of the project. For this purpose field of research implicates a few conditions to comply with the determined standards of ethics in due course. [1]

First of all, the questionnaire design should be clear and precise, with a clear intention to have unambiguous information with the utter consent of the participants. Furthermore, all the participants should be aware of the purpose, scope, and implications of the questionnaire they are asked to fill out. Along with consent, confidence is also important, all participants are subject to be assured that their questionnaire and data will not use anywhere else for any other purpose. Privacy, confidence, and consent, as well as preciseness, are the major attributes of ethical standards. Under the influence of such a standardized framework, researchers are prohibited from sharing the acquired information, even among the participants, without getting specific approval.

Reference

S, B., L, T., K, M., S, R., J, S., J, Z., S, M. & L, G. 2003, "*Perceptions of evidence-based practice: A survey of Australian occupational therapists*", Australian Occupational Therapy Journal, vol. 50, no. 1, pp. 13-22.