Occupational Transitions in Young Transgender Adults

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Knowledge gap

- 2 existing research articles in OS/OT about transgender identity (Beagan et al., 2012, 2013)
- Beagan et al. (2012) presented examples of occupations which may indicate occupational transitions during different stages of transgender individuals’ lives
- The relations between transgender identity and occupations are largely unstudied
Theoretical background

- Transgender adults → Transsexuality (ICD-10 F64.0) (WHO, 2010)

- Gender identity has an impact on the occupational development and consequently on the occupational repertoire (Davis & Polatajko, 2010; Polatajko et al., 2007)

- Transgender identity and occupational transitions → micro-, meso-, and macro-level (Polatajko et al., 2007)
Research question

How have young transgender adults between the ages of 18 to 25 experienced changes in their occupations during the process of developing their gender identity from early childhood to early adulthood?
Methodology

- Narrative multiple case study
  - Narrative approach (Polkinghorne, 1995a/b; Riessman, 1993, 2008)
- Narrative data analyses (Molineux & Rickard, 2003), based on Polkinghorne (1995a)
Sampling & Participants

- Purposeful sampling method (Luborsky & Rubinstein, 1995)

- Five main ethical standards (Reichel et al., 2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>RLE</th>
<th>Hormonal Treatment</th>
<th>SRS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dean</td>
<td>25 years old</td>
<td>Transgender man</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>∼</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chrissy</td>
<td>19 years old</td>
<td>Transgender woman</td>
<td>~</td>
<td>~</td>
<td>~</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim</td>
<td>24 years old</td>
<td>Transgender woman</td>
<td>~</td>
<td>~</td>
<td>~</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michaela</td>
<td>21 years old</td>
<td>Transgender woman</td>
<td>~</td>
<td>~</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Jens Schneider; Occupational Therapist Bc. (NL), EU-M.Sc. | 20th ENOTHE Annual Meeting | Nijmegen, 2014
Participants’ stories

- **Dean’s story**: Getting my driver’s license to be a man
- **Chrissy’s story**: Going my way in the right body
- **Kim’s story**: Jumps towards being a woman
- **Michaela’s story**: Performing like a girl as one of the most natural things in the world
Participants’ stories

- All participants described how their occupations and the meaning of these occupations changed

- These included changes in several areas of occupation on different levels (micro-, meso-, and macro-) (Polatajko et al., 2007)
Discussion / Conclusion

- Occupational transitions started in the earliest childhood
  Participants acted like members of the opposite sex

- During transgender development
  the occupations changed to specific occupations of gender transition
  and resulted in the occupational life of their felt gender
### Strengths & limitations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Limitations</th>
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<tr>
<td>Completely performed from an occupational perspective</td>
<td>Narratives dealt mostly with key occupations &amp; major occupational transitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trained in this kind of data gathering &amp; in analysis methods</td>
<td>Serious diseases of two participants influenced their occupations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflexive diary &amp; field notes were used</td>
<td>Did not have any working experiences in transgender clients &amp; had no personal contact</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independent Review &amp; Peer Review</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Translation was verified by a native speaker</td>
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Implications for OT interventions

- No specific methods or concepts for OT interventions exist to date
- Several main areas of occupational performance problems have been identified
- Effective intervention strategies could be based on three pillars: advocating, coordinating, and coaching (c.f. Townsend et al., 2007)

⇒ The aim is to empower transgender individuals
  ✓ occupational participation
  ✓ social inclusion
  ✓ social justice
  ✓ well-being
Implications for OT education

- Including the following topics in OT education:
  - gender & gender identity from an OS perspective
  - reflecting on the impact of gender on occupation
  - integrating issues of transgender individuals
  - inviting transgender individuals for training in skills labs
  - performing community based intervention projects with transgender individuals

Preparing OT students in working with marginalized populations like transgender individuals!!!
Literature


Literature

Literature

Thank you for your attention!!!
Do you have any questions???
Contact details

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