Research Proposal Presentation

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Does an understanding of play and flow lead to greater understanding of creativity and leisure in Occupational Therapy?
Objectives:

• Author perspective
• Relevance of the research topic to OT
• A definition of relevant terms
• An overview of the literature
• Defining the research question
• Future developments
Author perspective:
Relevance to Occupational Therapy:

• Creativity and play are often used as approaches without a common definition

• Leisure - ambiguous definition
  Productivity, creativity, play or relaxation?

• Flow - a suggested resolution between the dichotomies of leisure and play (Parham, 1996); similarities with OT theory despite limited use
Definitions of Play:

• Evolves into playfulness during adolescence

• A medium for intervention

• A paradox, due to associations of fun facilitating a lack of seriousness by the OT profession

(Vandenburg & Keilhofner, 1982; Bundy, 1993)
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*Table 1
Components of Playfulness in Children According to Different Authors*

*Terms Used by Different Authors to Describe Playfulness*

*Components of Playfulness* refers to various attributes that contribute to the experience of playfulness in children. The table lists different terms used by various authors to describe these components. Each component is associated with specific terms that authors have used in their research.

<sup>a</sup>A term may be repeated within a particular column if deemed equivalent to more than one term with other authors.

<sup>b</sup>For Henriot, the particular mimic that appears attributable to joy and pleasure is a manifestation of playfulness.
Flow is a subjective psychological experience that occurs during total absorption in activities (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975)

- Voluntary
- Autotelic activity
- Concentration
- Clear goals
- Control
- Loss of ego
- Timelessness
- Meaningful outcome
- Immediate feedback

Resulting in:
- Exploration
- Discovery
- Problem-solving

Comparable to the stages of change necessary for adaptation during OT:
- Exploration
- Competency
- Achievement

(Keilhofner, 2002)
The Flow Channel (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002)
Creativity is complex and indistinct: ‘a continuum for conscious to unconscious, simulated to natural and from real to symbolic…contain[ing] elements that are unstructured, ambiguous and allow for self-expression’ (Mosey, 1987; p179)
Schmid (2004) investigated meanings of creativity with OT practitioners

Findings showed:

• Multi-faceted perceptions
• Difficulties to define, which suggest greater difficulties for service-users
• Links to crafts/expressive activities
• Choice was associated with OT skill over client selection
Literature Review

Play and Flow

Persson’s (1996) case study of creative occupations with chronic pain patients was the only study identified to investigate both play and flow

- Simultaneous consideration of play/flow restricted understanding of the relative importance of play and flow, supporting need for independent investigation

- Credibility for flow was reduced due to a lack of autotelic activities: the researcher planned the workshops without declared participant input
Components of playfulness in adults and their relationships (Guitard, Ferland & Dutil, 2005)
Flow

- Evidence of flow as a qualitative primary research topic was limited. Findings referenced to flow were associated with intrinsic motivation and the just-right-challenge, supporting relevance to OT (Dickerson, 2000; Fieldhouse, 2003; Scheerer, Cahill, Kirby & Lane, 2004)

- Quantitative studies of flow supported integrity of the flow channel, with art/hobbies most likely to engender flow (Massimini, Csikszentmihalyi & Carli, 1987)

- However, a further study with healthy adults found flow occurred most frequently during work, attributed to many leisure activities requiring low-level skills and challenges, which suggested flow occurrence may differ according to health status (Csikszentmihalyi & Le Fevre, 1989)
Creativity

• A majority of studies regarding creativity were linked to textile and craft activity participation, of which repetitive and structured methods were comparable to routine activities of daily living

• **Intellectual** and **kinaesthetic** forms of creativity were identified

• References to **flow** included feelings of control, timelessness and pleasure

• Association with **playfulness** was through problem-solving (intellectual creativity), spontaneity and continual reference to creativity

Justification & Aims

- To **independently** consider the meanings of the concepts and components of **flow and playfulness** (creativity, curiosity and spontaneity)
- To **validate** the existence of subjective **flow** experiences.
- To identify **self-perceived creative occupations**
- To identify any **relationships** between **play and flow**
The research proposal question
What are the meanings of creativity, curiosity and spontaneity during leisure activities? – An investigation to improve an understanding of playfulness and identify a relationship to flow, towards developing OT creative intervention

Key:
- Identified Relationship
- Seeking Relationship
- Potential Relationship
Future Developments

- A proposed Model for Creative Intervention to facilitate engagement and improve client-centred practice
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References


