The Occupational Impact of Mass Shootings

Ashley Ellsworth
University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences, a.ellswoth@usa.edu

Susan MacDermott
University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences, smacdermott@usa.edu

Becki Cohill
University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences, bcohill@usa.edu

Karen Park
University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences, kpark@usa.edu

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What is the Occupational Impact of Mass Shootings on Exposed Individuals in the United States?

**BACKGROUND**

Mass shootings continue to persist in the United States. Due to their violent, often unexpected nature, mass shootings can be physically and mentally traumatizing events.

**METHODS**

This qualitative research study employed unobtrusive methods of data collection.

**RESULTS**

Of the 227 written and audiovisual records that were collected and analyzed, 88 were coded using Dedoose. These records contained stories from over 220 victims of 35 mass shooting events.

**PURPOSE**

To determine whether victims of mass shootings experience changes in occupational participation, performance, and fulfillment of meaningful performance patterns after the incident.

**INCLUSION CRITERIA:**

- Publicly accessible written or audiovisual records
- Published by various sources between 2016 and April 2021
- Containing stories from victims of mass shootings in the United States

Each record was coded according to the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework (AOTA, 2020) using deductive reasoning.

**Code Alignment with the OTPF:**

- All performance patterns and broader occupational categories were addressed by at least one participant
- 10 areas of occupation were not mentioned

**CONCLUSION**

Victims of mass shootings in the United States experience changes in the occupational performance, participation, and fulfillment of meaningful performance patterns, including roles, routines, habits, and rituals. Increasing practitioner awareness of the occupation-based changes victims of mass shootings may experience can ensure their receipt of appropriate care. This study increases the body of knowledge of the occupational impact victims of mass shootings experience and contributes to the need for future research on occupational therapy practitioners’ role in working with this population.

**DISCUSSION**

- Results reinforce Cacciatore & Kurker’s (2020) and Schildkraut et al.’s (2020) direct research with victims of the Sandy Hook and Columbine school shootings
- Limitations of using unobtrusive methods
- Victims of mass shootings may benefit from occupational therapy services based in education, intervention, or advocacy

**SCAN FOR REFERENCES:**

- Shi! in! Life! Narratives
- I’m not no victim, I’m a survivor. That’s what I’m going with. I’m a survivor. (P. #323)