Exploration of Occupational Therapy’s Role Within the LGBTQ+ Population

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Exploration of Occupational Therapy’s Role Within the LGBTQ+ Population

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BACKGROUND

LGBTQ+ are terms used to describe a person’s sexual orientation or gender identity. There are an estimated 11 million individuals in the United States (US) who identify as LGBTQ+ and this number is steadily increasing (Rosendale et al., 2019). Individuals in the LGBTQ+ population typically face: Insensitivity from providers, a lack of knowledge and comfort about LGBTQ+ health care issues, decreased access to care (Copti et al., 2016). However, the greatest risk for people who identify as LGBTQ+ is the avoidance of healthcare (Utamsinah et al., 2015).

METHODS

This research-based capstone project used a quantitative research design.

Participants
- CommunOT & Network for LGBTQIA+ Concerns in Occupational Therapy
- Snowball sampling method
- 50 participants anonymously completed the 11-question survey → 1 participant partook in the interview
- 47/50 participants were OT’s vs 3 being OTA’s
- 40% of the participants identified as LGBTQ+

Instrumentation
- Google Forms
- Zoom

Learning Objectives
- Identify ways to create all-inclusive environments and reduce the fear of unethical healthcare for those who identify as LGBTQ+.
- Advocating for understanding of the LGBTQ+ population as it relates to social injustice and prejudice.

Project Objectives
- Create a survey to give to OT’s to explore potential strategies to better serve the LGBTQ+ population.
- Collect data and evaluate results of surveys completed by participating OT’s.

RESULTS

Evaluation Strategies
- Create a safe environment – 90%
- Approaching interviews showing empathy, open-mindedness & without judgment – 84%
- Assessment forms with more inclusive choices for answers to questions - 82%

Intervention Strategies
- Maximizing individuals' strengths and resources - 90%
- Preventing loss of engagement in meaningful occupations - 86%
- Promoting safety & self-affirmation - 80%

REFERENCES: