

Occupational Justice: Educational choices of black male college students

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Introduction

- Occupational justice promotes fairness and equity to enable opportunities for participation³.
- Occupations emerge within the transaction of socio-cultural, historical, personal and relational contexts¹
- Occupational choices are shaped by these contextual elements.
- There are disparities when regarding academic achievement and participation of black males in comparison to other racial/ethnic groups², but there is a lack of occupational research exploring this specific population.

Research Aim

How are occupational choices of black males shaped in their education?

Method

- Qualitative; Phenomenological approach
- Sampling: Purposive sampling
- Participants: Four black males, currently enrolled in an undergraduate program at a four-year college/university
- Data Collection: One focus group
- Data Analysis: Thematic analysis; descriptive coding

OCCUPATIONAL PARTICIPATION

SUPPORT & RESOURCES

"I have three other black dudes in my class, and that's a lot, so I'm excited. I got their numbers, we like contact each other, like if we got homework problems.."

ENVIRONMENT

"Honestly, that could end up in them [black males] staying at home a lot of the time [...] instead of being on campus and being in these new buildings and congregating and things of that matter."

Occupational
Choice

PERCEPTIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES

"For us [black males], we can potentially lose our lives, so it's like you have to think about the costs and benefits, and the benefits always outweigh the costs."

Discussion

- Family support and financial resources, both afforded and restricted educational choices
- There was a difference in the experience at a HBCU compared to a PWI, and this emerged in the context of the social and physical environments
- Perceptions of their inherent responsibilities and how they thought others viewed them emerged in their roles as students and shaped educational choices
- Results supported current literature on contextual influences on occupational choice

Implications for OT

Contextual elements shape occupational choices and participation. As an evidence-based practice it is imperative that we continue to explore various cultural groups uniquely participate in meaningful occupations, as to not contribute to, and perpetuate situations of occupational injustice.

References

1. Galvaan, R. (2015). The contextually situated nature of occupational choice: marginalised young adolescents' experiences in South Africa. *Journal of Occupational Science* 22(1), 39-53.
2. Oakes, J. (1985). *Keeping track: How schools structure inequality*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
3. Stadnyk, R., Townsend, E., & Wilcock, A. (2010). Occupational Justice. In C.H. Christiansen & E.A. Townsend (Eds.), *Introduction to occupation: The art and science of living* (2nd ed., 329-358). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.