

CO-SLEEPING AS A FAMILY OCCUPATION: PERSPECTIVES OF AN AMERICAN FAMILY

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Background

- Co-sleeping: Bed sharing of family members with children
- Preferred practice in several cultures³
- Increasing trend in the US, despite regulations from the AAP¹
- Dearth of literature in OS/OT

Research Questions: Why do families co-sleep despite warnings from the medical community? What is their experience?

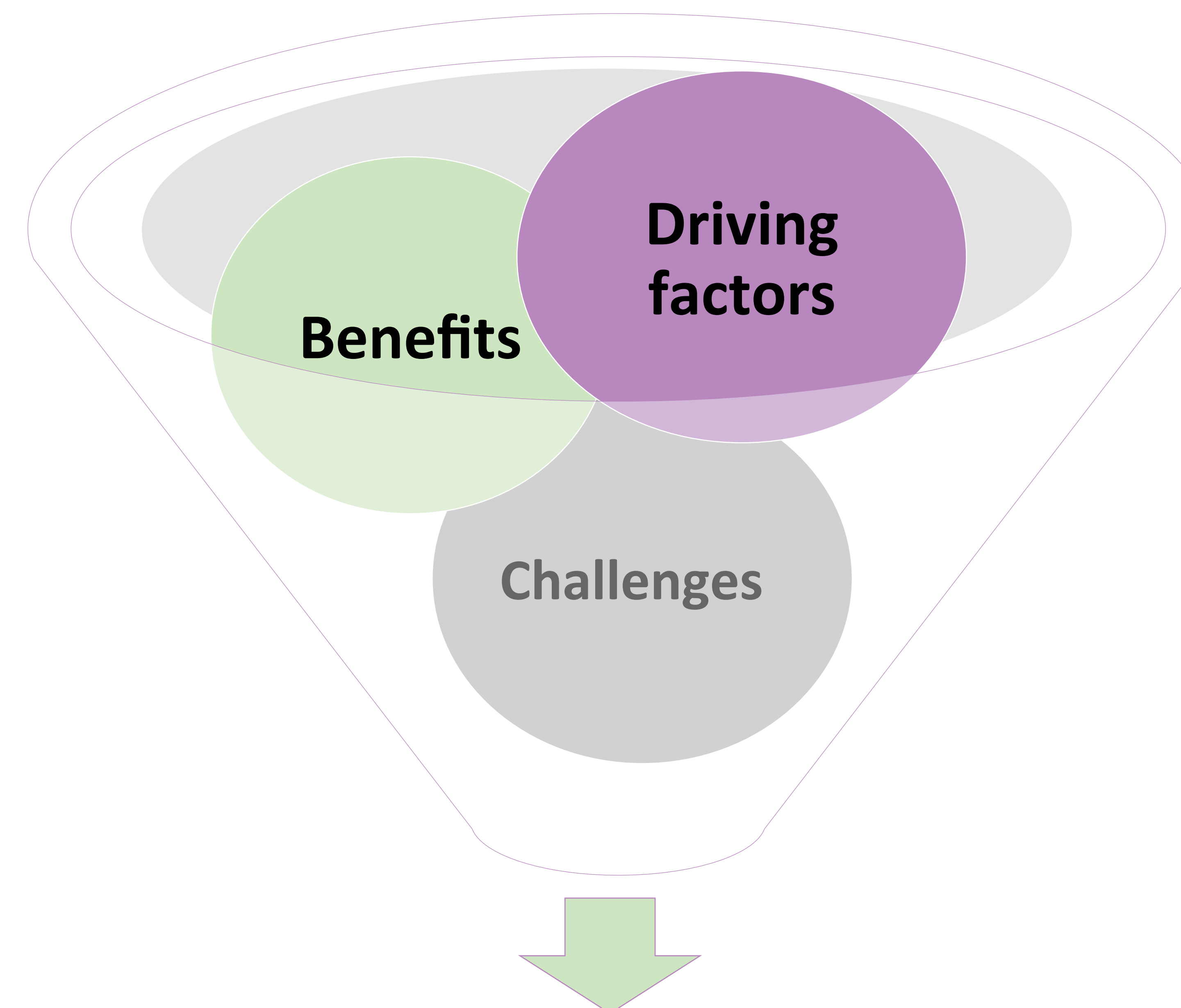
Methods

- Qualitative study
- Single case study design
- Convenience sampling
- Caucasian family of four
- Two semi-structured interviews
- 5-step thematic coding

Results

Mom: “I mean this baby grows in you for 9 months, and then you just put him away by himself”

Dad: “I think it helps our relationship. We are very very close. There will come a day when he doesn’t want us around”



EXPERIENCE OF CO-SLEEPING

Discussion

- Better sleep² not the main factor
- Natural: being together; bonding
- Gender differences in experience
- Medicalized view vs. humanities

Implications for OS/OT

- Challenges assumptions about best practices for sleep
- Sleep as a social occupation
- Families have unique values
- Further research → gender differences

References

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2. Ward, T.C.S. (2014) Reasons for mother-infant bed-sharing: A systematic narrative synthesis of the literature and implications for future research. *Maternal and child health journal* 19: 675-690.
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