

CONTENT VALIDITY OF THE EXPERIENCE OF FAMILY OCCUPATION MEASURE

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Background: The most influential factor in child development is the family, specifically how a family engages in everyday life (Newland, Lawler, Giger, Roh, & Carr, 2015; Rafferty, Griffin, & Robokos, 2010, Smith et al., 2017). Research to date on how families create day to day life is limited (Fiese, 2002, Spagnola & Fiese, 2007, Cprek et al., 2015, Ausderau et al., 2019). The creation of family life, specifically the engagement in meaningful daily activities that a family needs, wants, and is expected to do together as a family, is considered family occupational engagement (DeGrace, 2004, DeGrace et al., 2014, Smith et al., 2017, Yaroslawitz et al., 2015). This construct of family occupation has been informed by qualitative research and as such no known tool exists to measure family occupational engagement. This project developed a preliminary measure of family occupational engagement titled the “Engagement in Family Occupation Measure” (EFOM) which highlights eight domains of family occupation.

Purpose: Validation of an objective measurement tool for evaluating engagement in family occupations must begin with a baseline understanding of typical family life. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to contribute to the body of knowledge of family occupation, specifically to explore the content validity of the EFOM tool that measures family occupational engagement, the EFOM.

Methods: To address the aims of this research, we will examine the EFOM, to ensure it validly represents the breadth and scope of meaningful family occupations. The first step to determine tool content validity is to address face validity or the degree to which the measurement tool is an appropriate representation of the construct under investigation. The second step of content validity is to ensure the measurement tools includes items that are meaningful to the target population. This is done by discerning item importance through interviews of experts in the field of occupational therapy, as well as experts of the experience; families raising children. First, we will ask both groups of experts to rate the level of importance each item holds in contributing to family occupational engagement. Importance will be evaluated on a 10-point scale (i.e., 1 = not important at all, 10 = extremely important to the family). We will analyze data collected from the “Importance Scale” using summary descriptive statistics (i.e., mean and standard deviations). We will consider items ranking in an eight or more among 80% of the responses valid. The research team will then interview both groups of experts to understand the appropriateness of the tool for measuring family occupational engagement and to verbalize the mental process entailed in providing such an answer. The interview will consist of the following three questions: 1) Do you think the EFOM covered all aspects of family occupational engagement? 2) What would improve the EFOM’s measure of family occupational engagement? and 3) How difficult or easy was it to complete the EFOM? The information gleaned from the interviews may result in further refinement of the tool, by dropping items for lack of importance or modifying item wording for clarity.

Results: We will analyze the data collected from the “Importance Scale,” on the EFOM using descriptive statistics, seeking 80% agreement of all experts with a score of eight or higher. This score will indicate that all measure items appropriately reflect the breadth and scope of meaningful family occupations, and contribute to the tools content validity. Furthermore, the interviews will provide qualitative data which will further validate the quantitative results produced by the “Importance Scale.” We hypothesize that the breadth and scope of meaningful family occupations will be accurately identified by this validated measure. Eighty percent of experts will agree each item reflects the lived experience of family occupational engagement.

Conclusion: Together these expected outcomes will establish content validity of the EFOM which will then be subject to next steps in tool development.

Relevance to Allied Health: The results will align with the vision of the College of Allied Health to “empower life,” as understanding how families create everyday life situates professionals in a therapeutic position to maximize child and family potential.