

# CHALLENGES FACED BY OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST IN CBR SETTINGS. SCOPE OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY IN COMMUNITY BASED REHABILITATION.

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## Abstract

*Aim-* Since Occupational Therapist can work with client's motor as well as psychological problem, we can be the best mediators with clients from communities facing problems due to natural disasters or psychological and physical trauma due to migration like people from Syria. As the affected community is large in numbers, facilities provided by the government fall short particularly regarding medical field.

*Scope-* Occupational Therapist can work as Evaluators regarding physical and psychological problems, Curators, and Rehabilitators, as the main principle in Occupational Therapy is holistic approach.

*Conclusion-* Occupational Therapist's core skills of problem solving and lateral thinking can be used for as an enabling agent in situations where a small as well as large community is involved. . It will be very challenging particularly with the people suffered from natural calamity (8) (eg. Nepal earthquake victims, tsunami affected victims from Japan) who may have multiple physical as well as psychological problems. The people who had to leave behind everything and who had to migrate to the new state ( victims from Syria, Afghanistan) will have multiple problems due to adjustment to the new place. . The skill of Occupational Therapist will be a tremendous help for the local government to rehabilitate the affected victims in small as well as large in numbers.

## I. INTRODUCTION

I was working as Occupational Therapist in Kalyan( India) and surrounding area for more than 15 years., where general population is below poverty line. Their means of earning was farming or in loom industry, or fishery or honey collection or selling local fruits. The villages have basic amenities like water, and electricity, but the problem of load shedding and scarcity of water is enormous. Not all these areas are well connected with roads. Many villages do not have primary health centres nearby and many had to travel for a long distance without any vehicle. (1)

**Challenges for Occupational Therapist-**



Earthquake In Nepal



Earthquake In Nepal



Tsunami In Japan



**MIGRANTS FROM SYRIA**



**MIGRANTS FROM SYRIA**



**Earthquake In Nepal**



### **Tsunami In Japan**



**MIGRANTS FROM SYRIA**

Dealing with the people in communities who are living in villages where even primary health facilities are in scarce, needs different approach for rehabilitation.

1. *Affordability*- Since many people are living below poverty line, they are reluctant to spend money and tend to manage the condition at home
2. *Negligence*- Regarding the conditions like HIV, diabetes, mal nutrition ect, where people are not aware of the disease or such conditions, when neglected can give rise to deadly complications.(2) People suffering from psychogenic disorders and children suffering from Mental Retardation, Vitamin deficiency can lead to multiple neurologic and orthopaedic problems. They need special care to deal with such problems.(3)
3. *Taboo/stigma*- The conditions like HIV, Leprosy, psychosis carry a social stigma, and it multiplies, if the sufferer is a woman. The migrated people, or the people who have lost everything in natural calamities suffer tremendously psychologically. The Occupational Therapist serves as a caring, consistent guide in patient's efforts to find meaning to life.(4) Rather than receiving treatment and rehabilitation care, they tend to be neglected in the country they have migrated.
4. *Awareness*- If proper hygiene is not available, then conditions like malaria, leptospirosis may lead to complications. In some areas, the people are not even aware of such diseases.
5. *Commuting Problems*- Long distance to the cities, low frequency of public transport make the people neglect the problem or find out local solution, which ultimately can result in more complications.(5)
6. *Lack of equipments problem*- Many times there may not be even bed or simple shade available to give treatment.
7. *Rigid values problem*- Some communities have rigid values regarding their culture and social status. Many times women and children are neglected for rehabilitation aids and treatment.(6)

8. *Psychological acceptance problem*- Many times the patient may not accept the condition and may refuse the treatment, particularly regarding children's conditions.

## II. SCOPE OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

### A. 1 OT as a Evaluator-

If the community is large who need medical care, usually the availability of the Doctors or the hospital is low. The Occupational Therapist can evaluate physical disability as well as psychological problems and associated complications.

### B. 2. OT as a curator-

Occupational Therapist are trained to do multi disciplinary tasks such as Physiotherapy, Speech therapy, Special education, psychologists when such care is not available. Occupational Therapist can find out the problem of the client and refer him/her to the concerned specialists. OTst can evaluate regarding ADL and even do job evaluation. Percentage of disability also can be evaluated and treated by OTst.

3 *OT as a Rehabilitator*- Occupational Therapist's main aim is make the client complete independent in Activities of daily living and in his job. When suggesting adaptations, we have to study their life style, cultural beliefs, religious values and their current status.(7) We have to use local material or available material for splints and support. It will be very challenging particularly with the people suffered from natural calamity (8) (eg. Nepal earthquake victims, tsunami affected victims from Japan) who may have multiple physical as well as psychological problems. The people who had to leave behind everything and who had to migrate to the new state ( victims from Syria, Afghanistan) will have multiple problems to adjust to the new place, environment and & gain acceptance by the local people, and manage their own survival .(9) Occupational Therapist can understand these problems very well and can suggest the adaptations.

4 *OT as a vocational Trainer*- Occupational therapist can do job evaluation as well as Disability evaluation. **This skill will be a tremendous help for the local government to rehabilitate the affected victims in small as well as large in numbers.**

## III. CONCLUSION

Occupational Therapist's core skills of problem solving and lateral thinking can be used for as an enabling agent in situations where a small as well as large community is involved.(10) A collaborative project focused on assisting clinicians to develop localised solutions, supporting community-built solutions to multilayered and complex issues.(11)This is potentially an area where Occupational Therapists have much to offer because throughout the rehabilitation process, OTsts are assessing individuals performing different occupations, often in different situations, and enabling them to develop strategies to use in their everyday lives.(12) As the challenges are changing with the modern developments, so is the scope of Occupational Therapy increasing.

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