



Title The Implementation of a Website for Collaboration between Occupational Therapy and Educators

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Introduction

- Background:** In the United States, it is estimated that 18.8% of all occupational therapy practitioners provide services in a school-based setting (AOTA, 2020). Collaboration between occupational therapy practitioners (OTP) and educators is essential to implementing best practices, which have been identified as best practices and positively affect student outcomes (Corley et al., 2021). Common barriers between school-based OTPs and educators that hinder collaboration include time, knowledge, and resources (Edick et al.,2023).
- Theory:** Multitiered systems of support (MTSS) is a tiered system of support that implements a proactive intervention at tiered levels. These levels include level 1-district and schoolwide intervention, level 2-group intervention, and level 3 individual intervention. There is a need for school-based OTPs to improve intervention at level 1 (Hintz et al., 2024).
- Problem Statement:** School-based OTPs must develop an organized structure to implement MTSS intervention and collaboration in order to promote OTP's role in the school system and effectively implement tiered intervention strategies (Hintz et al., 2024). There is a lack of systems that exist to develop effective collaboration between OTPs and educators in the school system.
- Purpose:** This capstone project aims to develop a website based on educators' needs and determine the utility of a website for collaboration between OTPs and elementary educators. The focus areas identified for this project are program development and quality improvement. This project aims to increase collaboration through a tier 1 approach between rural elementary educators in kindergarten grades first and second through the modality of a website.

Methods

Project Design:

- Phase 1: The pre-survey needs gathering from educators through an anonymous survey
- Phase 2: website building post-survey quality improvement.
- Phase 3: Post-survey quality improvement
- The pre-survey and post-survey process consisted of sending an electronic Qualtrics survey through email to elementary educators in the determined school district. The website was built through wix.
- The pre-survey resulted in 27 respondents. The post-survey yielded 23 respondents.

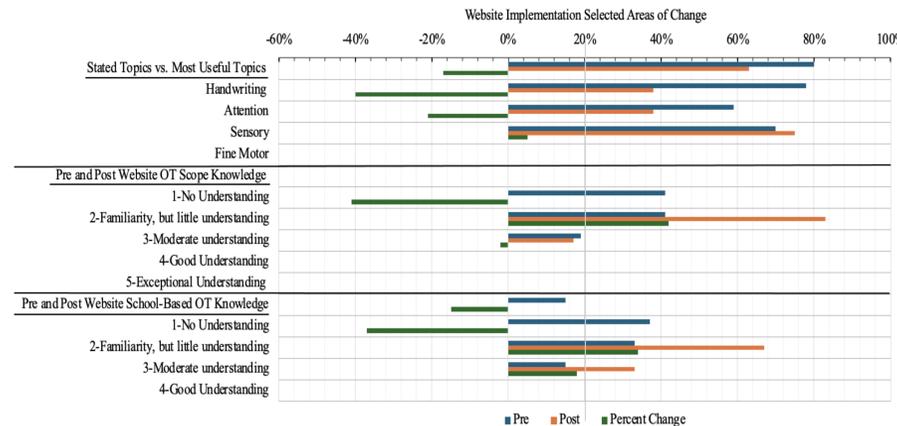
Survey

- The pre-survey yielded information on educator knowledge of occupational therapy in a school-based setting, collaboration with occupational therapy, barriers to collaboration, use of web-based sources in the classroom, topics of need for collaboration with OT. This information was then used to build a website based on educator responses.
- The post-survey consisted of information regarding basic demographics, educator knowledge of school-based occupational therapy, information on website utilization, the likelihood of website utility for future use, and quality improvement.

Website

- The website was built using wix and included information developed based on the pre-survey responses.

Results



- Overall, educators utilized more fine motor resources than anticipated in the pre-survey compared to the post-survey.
- The results from the project revealed that educators utilized and valued information regarding OT scope of practice and school-based OT scope of practice. The group's perceived knowledge of both school-based and general scope of OT knowledge increased.

Discussion

Knowledge of Occupational Therapy Scope

- The pre and post-survey indicated that a website was a beneficial source in education on and school-based occupational therapy scope. Group averages of educators self-rated perceived knowledge of the scope of OT and the scope of school-based OT increased in the number of respondents in the categories of “ moderate understanding” and “good understanding.”

Collaborative Topics

- Educators indicated topics of importance on the pre-survey of Handwriting, Attention, Sensory, and fine motor based on qualitative pre-survey results. 80% of educators who participated in the presurvey selected handwriting as important to be included on the website. This was followed by 78% selection of attention, 70% selection of fine motor, and 59% selection of sensory. When compared with post-survey, where respondents were asked which topics were the most useful, 75% selected fine motor as the most utilized. This was followed by 63% selected handwriting, and 38% selected both sensory and attention.

Discussion continued

Implications

- Websites should be used to educate on the scope and role of OTPs in the school-based setting.
- Fine motor, handwriting, attention, and sensory are areas of collaboration in which educators value collaboration with OTPs.

Limitations

- Small sample size
- Limited time frame for website use (2 weeks)

Future Research

- The results of this study support the need for further research in the area of collaboration through web-based sources, specifically websites as a resource for collaboration between OTPs and educators. Additional research has the potential to provide valuable information regarding the utility of a website as a source of collaboration between OTPs and educators. Future research should track individual educator utility and implement a specific learning element within the source.

Conclusion

- Findings indicated that a website for collaboration between OTPs and educators impacted perceived understanding of OT and school-based OTPs' role within the school system. Additionally, this project yielded valuable information regarding the topics of collaboration that are useful to elementary educators in collaboration with school-based OTPs.

References

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