

Evaluating & Addressing Executive Dysfunction in School-Based Practice

Executive function is an essential aspect of higher cognitive processes and the need for organized, purposeful, and goal-directed behavior. Executive function allows individuals to plan, organize, make decisions, self-regulate, shift between situations or thoughts, and control emotions. This study was designed to examine occupational therapists' perceptions of how executive dysfunction is assessed and addressed within school-based occupational therapy. This research aimed to determine if occupational therapists in the United States are routinely considering executive dysfunction using evidence-based assessments and addressing deficits found using evidence-based intervention methods in school-based practice.

To collect data, an online survey was distributed to 106 licensed school-based occupational therapists in the United States. A 10-15 minutes long questionnaire was distributed to participants via email, Facebook groups and AOTA CommunOT discussion boards. To analyze collected data, the study used a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet to undergo statistical analysis: frequencies and percentages. The Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA tests was used to compare two or more independent categories. The obtained results helped identify assessments and intervention methods school-based occupational therapists are familiar with and if these tools are used to assess and target executive dysfunction. The results of the study helped to understand if school-based OTs are best identifying and addressing executive dysfunction through the use of evidence-based tools.