

Occupational Imbalance: A time use of Australian mothers of school aged children with a disability



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Purpose



1. Describe the time use of Australian mothers of school aged children with a disability
2. Compare the time use of mothers of children
 - with vs. without a disability
 - with physical vs. cognitive/behavioural limitations
 - with a disability, aged 5 – 11 vs. 12– 18 years



Participants

Mother

- Biological or adoptive mother

Child with a disability

- 5 – 18 years
- Attending a formal education program
- Assistance in 2 or more of:
 - Mobility/transfers
 - Eating
 - Playing (indoors/outdoors)
 - Dressing
 - Toileting
 - Communication



Demographic questionnaire

Information about mother & family

- Mother's birth factors
 - Age & culture
- Social status
 - Education, occupation & family income
- Role factors
 - Employment, marital status, dependent children/adults
- Ecological factors
 - Rural vs. urban location

Information about the Child

- Age
- Areas and type of assistance

Participants



Response rate = 73%

Care predominantly required

- Physical limitations = 20
- Cognitive/behavioural limitations = 21

Age of child with a disability

- 5 – 11 years = 26
- 12 – 18 years = 15

Description of participants

Average child's age	10.4 yrs (SD 3.8)
Areas of assistance	6.1 (SD 1.3)
2 children with disability	10%
Child <4yrs	20%
Number of children	2.1 (SD 0.7)
Biological mother	98%
Live in relationship	85%
Post secondary education	69%
Paid work	54% (ave 21.6 hrs)
Income over \$50,000	56%
Metropolitan	58%
Significant cultural influence	10%

Time use diary

Sunday 5 am – 6.40 am

What was your main activity? (Please record all activities, even if they only lasted a few minutes)	Who did you do this for? (eg. self, family, work, friend, charity, the community)	What else were you doing at the same time? (eg. childcare, watching TV, listening to the radio)	Where were you? (eg. at work, home, on a bus, driving the car)	Who was with you? (eg. no one, family, friends, daughter)	Is your child under your care right now? (Yes or No)
5.00 <i>Toileted Sally</i>	<i>Daughter</i>	<i>Talking to Sally</i>	<i>Home</i>	<i>Daughter</i>	Y
5.05 <i>Put Sally in bed</i>	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
5.10 <i>Kettle on</i>	<i>Self</i>	<i>Listening for Sally</i>	↓	<i>No one</i>	↓
5.15 <i>Read paper</i>	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓

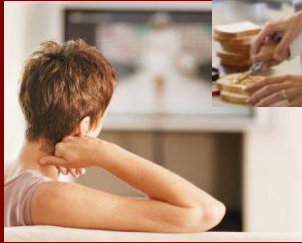


Significant results 1

Occupation	Mothers of children with a disability (min/day)	Mothers of typically developing children * (min/day)	p^{**}
Child related activities	342 (SD 129)	120	< 0.001
Personal care	94 (SD 35)	136	< 0.001
Sleeping	452 (SD 62)	500	< 0.001
Purchasing	28 (SD 27)	60	< 0.001
Leisure	112 (SD 60)	195	< 0.001

* ABS. (1998). *4153.0 How Australians use their time, 1997*. Canberra: ABS.

** p derived by a series of one sample two-tailed t-tests



Significant results 2

Occupation	Physical (n = 20)	Cognitive/behavioural (n = 21)	<i>p</i> *
Child related	396 (SD 105)	291 (SD 130)	.004
Leisure	92 (SD 49)	131 (SD 63)	.020
Passive leisure	72 (SD 47)	109 (SD 48)	.020

* *p* derived derived by two-tailed Mann-Whitney U test



Significant results 3

Mothers of children with a disability spend

- More time in child related activities
- Less time in personal care, sleep, purchasing & leisure

Mothers providing care for

- Physical limitations: more time in child care
- Cognitive/behavioural limitations: more passive leisure

Mothers of different aged children

- No significant difference in time use
- Time use pattern is ongoing

Implications 1



To maintain mother's health and well-being

- Restore occupational balance
 - Reduce time in child care
 - Functional interventions
 - Flexible services
 - Minimise travel and waiting time
 - Communication between health professionals
 - Respite and home services



Implications 2

To maintain mother's health and well-being

- Restore occupational balance
 - Increase time/quality of other occupations
 - Services for parents independent of the child
 - Child friendly environments in the community
 - Domestic assistance
 - Health services

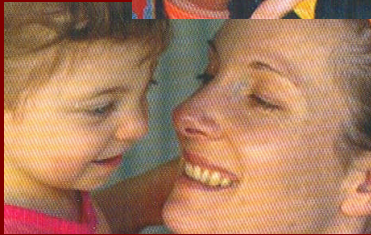


Future research

- Further time use study
 - Increased participant numbers
 - More defined sub category coding system
- Time use study in association with
 - Subjective questionnaire on balance;
 - Health and well-being questionnaire
- Qualitative studies of experiences and balance perceptions
- Effects of the mother's time use and health on the child
- Other groups of caregivers



Time use methodology



Advantages

- Descriptive
- Objective
- Good reliability

Limitations

- No subjective component
- Time consuming for participants

Acknowledgement



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