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#228 - The Everyday Activities and Well-being of Asian mothers of children with disabilities: An occupational perspective

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Objectives/aims

High stress, mental health symptoms and multiple challenges are experienced by many mothers of children with disabilities. Literature has documented the compromised quality of life of mothers of children with disabilities in East Asian countries, yet neither their everyday activities nor the factors influencing their activities and well-being are understood. This study aims to explore the occupations (everyday activities and roles) of Chinese mothers of children with disabilities, and factors that influence their occupations and well-being.

Methods

An exploratory sequential mixed methods study was conducted in three phases. Phase 1 was a scoping review which screened peer-reviewed articles on East Asian mothers of children with disabilities to map out all literature related to the occupations of mothers. Concepts that relate to occupations were analysed and extracted and used to guide the qualitative data collection in Phase 2. Phase 2 used a grounded theory approach to interview eleven Australian immigrant mothers of children with disabilities with East Asian cultural backgrounds in their preferred location and language. The audio-taped data was transcribed verbatim and translated ($n=3$). The results then informed Phase 3, which utilised a cross-sectional online survey, targeting Chinese mothers of children with disabilities living in Australia ($n=80$), Singapore ($n=95$) and Taiwan ($n=86$). The English and Chinese version of the e-survey included questions on demography, caregiving occupations, measures of participation in health promoting activities, mental and personal well-being, psychological distress, perceived social support and stigma, self-esteem and post-traumatic growth. Data ($N=261$) was analysed using SPSS. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to compare groups. Inter-correlations were calculated to identify relationships between variables. Standard regression analysis was used to identify predictors of participation in health promoting activities, mental and personal well-being, and psychological distress.



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Main findings

2350 articles were screened, and 32 articles fulfilled the inclusion and exclusion criteria, from which themes of occupations were extracted. The qualitative findings revealed a positive transformation process amongst the immigrant mothers, supports that enabled their occupations, and their empowerment in occupational engagement. The survey results showed no differences between the three groups of mothers in their participation in health promoting activities, mental and personal well-being, psychological distress, perceived support and perceived stigma, except for self-esteem and post-traumatic growth. The frequency of participation in health promoting activities was a predictor of mental well-being ($\beta = .21, p = .001$). Perceived support was the strongest predictor of participation in health promoting activities ($\beta = .25, p = .005$), mental well-being ($\beta = .39, p < .001$) and personal well-being ($\beta = .45, p < .001$). Perceived stigma predicted psychological distress ($\beta = .32, p < .001$) and mental well-being ($\beta = -.29, p < .001$).

Conclusions

This study highlights the Chinese cultural influence on Chinese mothers' occupations and the importance of sufficient cultural understanding in designing programs to meet the occupational needs of mothers and to promote their well-being. It also revealed the role of perceived support and the negative effects of stigma on the well-being of the participants. This research also provides the foundation for developing an evidence-based, culturally-tailored and occupation-based programs for mothers of children with disabilities who are from Chinese backgrounds.