

# Occupational Performance History Interview

## Psychometric Properties of the Second Version of the Occupational Performance History Interview (OPHI-II)

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**Key Words:** adaptive behavior • evaluation process, occupational therapy • occupational history

**Objective.** This study examined the validity of the Occupational Identity, Occupational Competency, and Occupational Behavior Settings scales of the second version of the Occupational Performance History Interview (OPHI-II). The study also asked whether the scales' items were targeted to and could effectively discriminate between persons at different levels of adaptation.

**Method.** Data were collected from 151 raters on 249 subjects from eight countries and in six languages. Many-faceted Rasch analysis was used to analyze the data.

**Results.** The items of each scale worked effectively to measure the underlying construct for which they were designed. All three scales validly measured more than 90% of the subjects, who varied by nationality, culture, age, and diagnostic status. Each scale's items were appropriately targeted to the subjects, and all three scales distinguished subjects into approximately three different levels. More than 90% of the raters used the three scales validly and had approximately the same degree of severity or leniency. The scales were valid across subjects with physical dysfunction and psychiatric conditions as well as subjects with no active diagnosed condition.

**Conclusion.** The three scales of the OPHI-II are valid across age, diagnosis, culture, and language and effectively measure a wide range of persons. Raters can readily use the OPHI-II validly without formal training.

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In 1985, the American Occupational Therapy Association and the American Occupational Therapy Foundation jointly funded research to develop a generic historical interview to be used in occupational therapy evaluation. The resulting Occupational Performance History Interview (OPHI) provided both quantitative and qualitative information about clients' occupational adaptation (Kielhofner, Henry, & Walens, 1989). It included a semistructured interview, a scale, and a life history narrative. The OPHI included 10 items that were rated twice, denoting both past and present occupational adaptation. The life history narrative characterized the person's life pattern and the factors influencing adaptation over time.

Despite its being widely used and described as useful for clients with physical and psychiatric disabilities (Bridle, Lynch, & Quesenberry, 1990; Fossey, 1996; Neistadt, 1995), psychometric properties of the OPHI have been less than desirable. This article traces the research underlying the development of the OPHI and reports findings from a psychometric study of a revised version of the instrument.

**Occupational Performance History Interview (OPHI)** is a structured qualitative assessment tool that helps occupational therapists gather comprehensive information about an individual's occupational performance history. This interview method provides valuable insights into the client's past and present occupational performance, facilitating a deeper understanding of their needs, goals, and the impact of occupational engagement on their lives. In this article, we will explore the OPHI in detail, discussing its purpose, structure, implementation, and significance in occupational therapy practice.

## Understanding the Occupational Performance

# History Interview

The OPHI is designed to capture a holistic view of an individual's engagement in daily activities and roles. It is grounded in the framework of occupational therapy, which recognizes that meaningful engagement in occupations is essential for health and well-being. The OPHI aims to evaluate how past and present experiences influence a person's occupational performance.

## Purpose of the OPHI

The primary objectives of the OPHI include:

1. **Comprehensive Assessment:** To gather detailed information about a client's occupational history, including significant life events, roles, and routines.
2. **Identifying Patterns:** To recognize patterns in occupational performance that may influence the client's current situation.
3. **Goal Setting:** To assist in defining realistic and meaningful therapy goals based on the client's occupational narrative.
4. **Therapy Planning:** To inform the development of tailored intervention strategies that promote engagement in meaningful activities.

## Components of the OPHI

The OPHI comprises several key components that structure the interview process:

1. **Occupational History:** This section explores the client's past and present occupations, including significant life experiences and transitions.
2. **Lifestyle Routines:** It examines the client's daily routines and how they have changed over time.
3. **Impact of Context:** The OPHI takes into account the physical, social, and cultural contexts that have influenced the client's occupational performance.
4. **Client's Perception:** It emphasizes the client's perspective, allowing them to express their thoughts and feelings regarding their occupational experiences.

## Implementing the OPHI

The successful implementation of the OPHI requires a structured approach. Here is a step-by-step guide to conducting the Occupational Performance History Interview.

### 1. Preparation

Before conducting the interview, the occupational therapist should:

- Review relevant background information on the client.
- Create a comfortable and private environment conducive to open communication.
- Familiarize themselves with the OPHI structure and questions.

## **2. Building Rapport**

Establishing a trusting relationship with the client is crucial. The therapist should:

- Introduce themselves and explain the purpose of the interview.
- Use active listening skills to demonstrate empathy and understanding.
- Encourage the client to share their story without judgment.

## **3. Conducting the Interview**

The interview typically follows a semi-structured format, allowing flexibility while ensuring that key topics are covered. The therapist should:

- Use open-ended questions to facilitate discussion about the client's occupational history.
- Probe for details about significant life events, transitions, and changes in occupational engagement.
- Listen actively and take notes to capture essential information.

## **4. Analyzing the Data**

After the interview, the therapist should:

- Review the notes and identify themes and patterns in the client's occupational history.
- Assess how the information gathered relates to the client's current challenges and goals.
- Consider the impact of contextual factors on the client's occupational performance.

## **5. Developing an Intervention Plan**

The insights gained from the OPHI can guide the development of an individualized intervention plan. This plan should:

- Address the client's identified needs and priorities.
- Set achievable and meaningful goals in collaboration with the client.
- Outline strategies and activities that promote engagement in desired occupations.

# Benefits of the OPHI

The Occupational Performance History Interview offers numerous advantages in the context of occupational therapy:

## 1. Client-Centered Approach

The OPHI emphasizes the client's narrative and lived experiences, promoting a client-centered approach. This perspective enhances the therapeutic alliance and empowers clients to take an active role in their care.

## 2. Holistic Assessment

By examining various aspects of a client's life, including personal history, lifestyle routines, and contextual factors, the OPHI provides a holistic understanding of occupational performance. This comprehensive view allows therapists to address the multifaceted nature of occupational challenges.

## 3. Improved Outcomes

Research suggests that using the OPHI can lead to improved therapy outcomes. By understanding a client's unique story, therapists can develop more effective, tailored interventions that resonate with the client's personal goals and values.

# Challenges and Considerations

While the OPHI can be a powerful tool, it is not without its challenges. Occupational therapists should consider the following:

## 1. Time Constraints

Conducting a thorough OPHI can be time-consuming, particularly with clients who have extensive occupational histories. Therapists may need to balance the depth of the interview with the time available for assessment.

## 2. Sensitivity of Topics

The OPHI may touch on sensitive topics, such as trauma or loss. Therapists should

approach these subjects with care and sensitivity, allowing clients to share only what they are comfortable discussing.

### **3. Training and Competence**

Effective implementation of the OPHI requires training and practice. Occupational therapists should seek opportunities for professional development to enhance their competence in conducting these interviews.

## **Conclusion**

The Occupational Performance History Interview is a vital tool in occupational therapy that provides valuable insights into a client's past and present occupational experiences. By focusing on the client's narrative and context, the OPHI supports a client-centered approach to assessment and intervention. While there are challenges associated with its implementation, the benefits of using the OPHI in practice can lead to improved therapeutic outcomes and a deeper understanding of clients' needs. As occupational therapists continue to refine their skills in conducting the OPHI, they will be better equipped to help clients achieve meaningful engagement in their daily lives.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is the purpose of an Occupational Performance History Interview (OPHI)?**

The OPHI is designed to gather comprehensive information about an individual's occupational performance over time, helping to identify strengths, challenges, and patterns in their daily activities.

### **Who typically conducts an Occupational Performance History Interview?**

Occupational therapists or other trained professionals typically conduct the OPHI to assess clients' occupational engagement and history.

### **What types of questions are asked during an OPHI?**

Questions may include inquiries about past job experiences, hobbies, daily routines, significant life events, and how these factors have influenced the individual's occupational performance.

### **How does the OPHI contribute to goal setting in**

## **therapy?**

The OPHI provides valuable insights into a client's occupational history, which therapists use to collaboratively set personalized and meaningful goals for intervention.

## **What is the significance of the 'Life History' aspect in the OPHI?**

The 'Life History' aspect captures the client's narrative and personal experiences, which helps therapists understand contextual factors affecting their current occupational performance.

## **Can the OPHI be used with diverse populations?**

Yes, the OPHI can be adapted for various populations and cultural backgrounds, ensuring relevance and sensitivity in understanding each client's unique occupational history.

## **How does the information from an OPHI influence treatment planning?**

Information gathered from the OPHI allows therapists to tailor interventions to address specific occupational needs, preferences, and goals, making treatment more effective.

## **What are some common challenges faced during an OPHI?**

Common challenges include clients' difficulty recalling past experiences, feelings of discomfort discussing personal history, or cultural barriers that may affect openness during the interview.

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