

## **An Occupational Therapy Approach to Addressing the Needs of Postpartum Women: A Systematic Review**

### **Introduction**

Researchers have identified that there is a lack of occupational therapy (OT) literature during the postpartum period. The plan is to show that OTs can play an important role for postpartum women by looking at the struggles of physical changes & role changes to find OT interventions using the Person-Environment-Occupation-Performance (PEOP) model. Role changes include the role of mother & partner. Physical changes include breastfeeding & other bodily changes.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this study is to look deeper into how postpartum women can benefit physically & in their role changes from receiving OT services as compared to not receiving them.

### **Methods**

The search strategy selected was to use databases such as AJOT, Google Scholar, and the TSU Library using key words like “postpartum,” “occupational therapy,” “interventions,” “role changes,” “breastfeeding,” “sleep,” & “transition.” Inclusion criteria are articles written in English, full-text available, qualitative and mixed-method designs, RCTs, cohort studies, and original articles focused on postpartum women and helpful interventions. The exclusion criteria are mothers who didn’t physically give birth. Risk of bias will be assessed using the Cochrane RoB2 tool & AOTA critical appraisals. The CASP checklists will be used to critically appraise the articles. Using selected articles, synthesis will involve extracting data following the PEOP model while looking at the problem areas postpartum women face so researchers can pair interventions with those areas. The research team will discuss similarities & differences amongst the reviewers to come to a consensus.

### **Anticipated Findings**

Through the article search, it was noticed that many women during this stage are experiencing difficulty with the physical changes & role changes that come with being a new mother. The hope is to find that using an OT model to examine these difficulties, researchers can align OT interventions to help this population.

### **Contribution to Discipline**

With this systematic review, the intentions are to fill the gap in the research of OT during the postpartum period. The hope is that this research will bring awareness to the needs of postpartum women & encourage further research on the efficacy of OT treatments with this population.