

Clinical Leadership in Occupational Therapy

Background and context

- Little is known about occupational therapists' views of clinical leadership.
- Heard (2014) warned that the limited volume of leadership studies presents serious concerns for the profession.

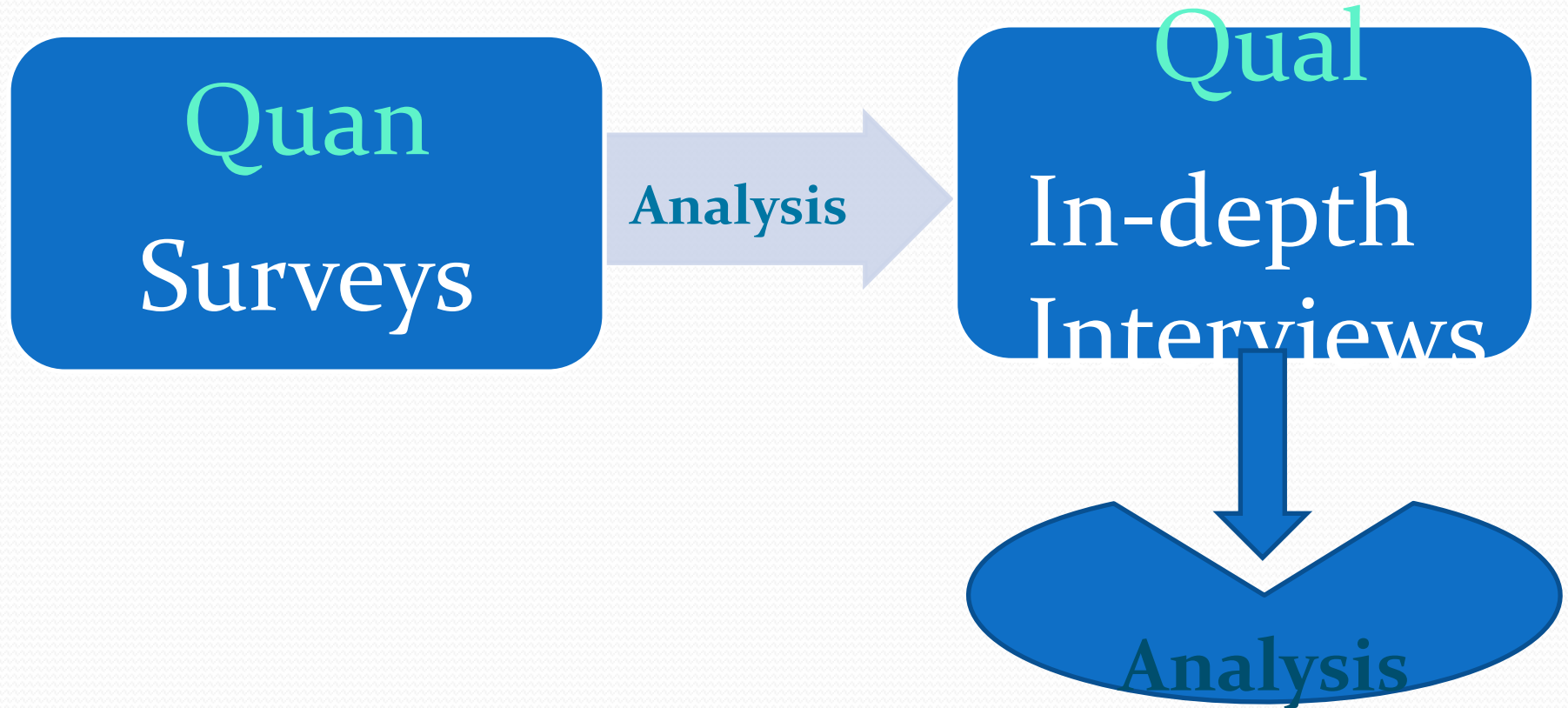
Study aim

- ❑ To gather and summarise Occupational Therapists' perceptions and experiences of clinical leadership.

Objectives

- ❑ To map the current roles, education, training and leadership experience of OTs in the UK.
- ❑ To explore the key attributes of an effective clinical leader from the perspective of OTs.
- ❑ To examine the impact of training on clinical leadership positions held by OTs.
- ❑ To develop an understanding of the perceived barriers and facilitators influencing OTs' leadership development.
- ❑ To provide recommendations for leadership training, development and practice.

Mixed Methods



Interviews

- ❑ 13 occupational therapists were interviewed to explore in depth their perceptions and experiences of clinical leadership.
- ❑ Interviewees had participated in an earlier national survey of clinical leadership undertaken in the UK.
- ❑ Informed written consent was required for participation in the interview.
- ❑ Semi-structured interviews were employed to gain a deeper understanding of the emergent key themes arising from the survey.
- ❑ Interviews were digitally recorded

Questions explored.....

- ☐ Participants understanding of the term clinical leadership in occupational therapy
- ☐ Participants thoughts on why little has been written about clinical leadership in occupational therapy
- ☐ The characteristics of an effective leader
- ☐ Whether anyone can be a leader
- ☐ Whether participants considered themselves to be clinical leaders

Questions explored.....

- ☐ Factors influencing leadership development
- ☐ Barriers and facilitators to clinical leadership development
- ☐ The most important factors influencing the development of clinical leaders in occupational therapy
- ☐ Support that might be of benefit to the development of clinical leaders

Interview analysis

- ❑ Interviews were transcribed verbatim.
- ❑ Supplementary notes were made after each interview to document observations of non-verbal behaviour and also record the investigator's thoughts and feelings about the interviews.
- ❑ Drew on the principles of analysis of grounded theory, as set out by Charmaz (2006)

engagement
awareness
Retain
Supervise
develop
support
Promote
Influence
economy
group
guide
thinking
approaches
Advise
over
Lead
people
work
Overarching
caseload
needs
therapy
Motivate
interventions
Walk
voice
own
Key
all
services
scanning
knowledge
organisation
profession
positions
Staff
Recognition
destiny
Clinicians
Expert
levels
Health
abilities
professional
occupational
within
Enhance
Articulate
vision
Raising
term
clinical
skills
Horizon
Strategic
Leadership
Development
Advocate
training

Key themes

- ❑ Professional identity
- ❑ Profile and Impact (Information needs to be more prominent)
- ❑ Opportunities for development
(mentorship/coaching/experiential learning)
- ❑ Training and education
- ❑ Support and direction

Recommendations

- ☐ Need to promote the profession
- ☐ Need to advocate the value of occupational therapy
- ☐ Need to get to a place of strategic influence
- ☐ Need to ensure clinical leadership is embedded in undergraduate training and education
- ☐ Need strong leadership in work environment
- ☐ Need to promote research and writing for publication
- ☐ Need ease of access to resources – wide reach
- ☐ Need support and direction from RCOT

In summary

RCOT acknowledge the importance of clinical leadership (COT 2013, RCOT 2018) but there appears to be a disconnect between policy and practice.

This study provides an insight into the key issues for practitioners and makes recommendations to strengthen the position of occupational therapists as clinical leaders.

References

Charmaz, k (2006) Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide Through Qualitative Analysis. London. Sage Publications

College of Occupational Therapists (2013) Clinical Leadership: Occasional Paper No1. London: College of Occupational Therapists

Heard CL (2014) Choosing the Path of Leadership in Occupational Therapy. The Open Journal of Occupational Therapy. 2(1): 1-18.

The Royal College of Occupational Therapists (2018) Strategic Intentions 2018-2023. London. Royal College of Occupational Therapists.

Thank you

