**BACKGROUND**

- Krishnagiri (1996) explored the process of choosing a mate among married Indian men and women.
- Krishnagiri (2014) continued her research and studied the process of dating, stages of dating, and how meaningful and impactful the occupation is on an individual’s life, amongst various populations.
- Dating is a widely practiced occupation that is valued by many individuals, especially the young adult, college student population (Rauer et. al, 2013).
- Dating is dynamic, due to influences of evolving contexts, environments and personal beliefs and values.
- For the college student population of this generation, there is a gap in the understanding of the occupation of dating, why individuals are motivated to date, and their personal perceptions of dating.

**PURPOSE**

- Formulate an understanding of the occupation of dating in the SF Bay Area college student population.
- Explore the dating experiences and their impact on the college students as occupational beings.

**Research Question:** How do SF Bay Area college students perceive and practice dating, and how does the occupation impact them?

**FINDINGS**

**Motivation**

**Sub-themes: Internal/External Factors & College Culture**

**Dating Process**

**Sub-themes: Modern Dating, Phases of Dating, & “Secret Hidden Rule Book”**

**Personal Growth**

**Sub-themes: Who You Are & Moving Forward as a Dater**

**Participants**

- **Inclusion criteria:** Single, actively dating, attending college in the SF Bay Area, and 18-25 y/o.
- **Exclusion criteria:** Developmental disabilities, in an exclusive relationship/married, close friends/family of the researchers.

**Research Design & Methods**

- Qualitative study design with semi-structured interviews.
- Questions guided by the Model of Human Occupation (MOHO) (Bruce & Borg, 2016)
- Participants recruited through snowball sampling.
- Member checking, consensus coding, and identifying researchers’ own personal biases on dating.

**Discussion**

Three common themes that were discussed by all participants were: internal and external factors that motivate an individual to date, the dating process and unspoken rules of dating, and their personal growth from their dating experiences. Majority of participants believe dating is mainly influenced from their family and friends, cultural beliefs, environments, and societal pressures and expectations.

**Implications for Practice**

This research study intends to contribute to occupational science. Findings can provide occupational therapists with knowledge to support the young adult, college student population, and they must consider the value of dating, as well as its significant impact on an individual. Further research can be completed to add to occupational science and literature on dating (i.e. online dating).

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