


Name	<p>Ms. Caoileann Cassidy 118224233@umail.ucc.ie</p> 
Title of study	Occupation, Identity and Belonging within Community: The Experiences of People with Mental Health Disability
Supervisor(s)	Professor Jeanne Jackson and Dr. Helen Lynch
Background/Abstract (350 words max)	<p><u>Background</u> This is a qualitative research study exploring the perspectives of Irish people with self-reported mental health disability in participating in occupation within their community environments.</p> <p><u>Methodology</u> Purposive sampling was employed to recruit three participants, from one national mental health support organisation. A phenomenological and narrative framework was adopted in this research. This informed the use of narrative interviews and observation methods to gather data about occupations enacted by participants within their community environments. Open ended narrative interviews were utilised to encourage storied accounts of participants' experiences, with each participant engaging in two interviews.</p>

	<p>Following the first interview, each participant collaborated with the researcher in planning an observation session, with the researcher as complete participant, in a chosen occupation within their local, familiar environment. Following this, each participant engaged in a second interview with the researcher.</p> <p><u>Data Collection and Analysis</u> Digital audio recordings were transcribed anonymously and verbatim from interviews, coupled with field notes from observations, using thematic analysis. This analysis upheld the integrity of each story while illuminating shared meaning of participants’ chosen occupations.</p> <p><u>Findings</u> In answer to the research questions, two primary themes were identified, with each theme encompassing two subthemes. The first theme “Experiencing Normality and Promoting Health” explores how participants in this study experienced feeling or anticipated feeling normal through their participation in occupation. The second theme was “Meaning Making and Experiences of Inclusion and Exclusion within Community” exploring participants meaning making through occupation in their local environments, within places and amongst others.</p> <p><u>Discussion</u> The findings of this study inform understanding of occupation and expand knowledge of its relationship to health, specifically mental health. It contributes to existing research concerning the impact of the social world on a person’s occupational choices, possibilities and resultant identities. Further these findings have elicited greater understanding about the meaning of these occupations to participants and how this enabled their participation through “being” and “belonging” in their communities.</p> <p><u>Conclusion</u> The results of this study contribute to theory generation of occupation within the discipline of occupational science and to the clinical practice of occupational therapy. The findings of the current research indicate that stigma and experiences of exclusion prevail for people with mental health disabilities. Results also find that participation in occupation, within affirming environments can create experiences of normality and promote health. Further, participation in occupation fosters experiences of inclusion and belonging.</p>
Publications (e.g. articles, conferences etc)	Poster Presentation: “Identity and Belonging in the Community” presented at Occupational Science Europe Conference, Amsterdam 30/08/2019.
Link to Orchid Profile/ Research gate profile/Iris profile or website	

<p>Biography e.g. qualification/training/work history (200 words max)</p>	<p>Caoileann holds a B.Sc. in Occupational Therapy from Trinity College Dublin. Her ten years of experience as an occupational therapist in mental health services includes working across both the public and private health sectors. She has worked in a variety of community and inpatient services with people in all life stages from adolescence to later life. Her career to date has brought her to the role of managing a large team of occupational therapists in the provision of a dynamic and diverse occupational therapy mental health service.</p> <p>She is passionate about enabling occupation for people whose lives have been disrupted by mental health disability, which has become the focus of her research. In her current role she strives for the recognition of the right for each person to choose their meaningful occupations, participate in their communities and wider worlds.</p>
<p>Funding body (if relevant)</p>	<p>n/a</p>