

Impact of Mindfulness Integrated Occupational Therapy in the Recovery of Post Stroke Hand Function: A Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Stroke is one of the leading causes of long-term disability worldwide and frequently affects hand function, coordination, muscle strength, and the ability to perform activities of daily living. Occupational therapy plays a significant role in upper limb rehabilitation and functional recovery after stroke. In recent years, mindfulness-based interventions have emerged as supportive approaches in neurorehabilitation because of their potential benefits in improving attention, emotional regulation, stress management, and motor relearning. Techniques such as meditation, breathing exercises, body awareness, and focused attention may enhance patient engagement and participation during rehabilitation sessions.

Aim: This literature review aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of mindfulness-integrated occupational therapy interventions in improving hand function, motor recovery, emotional well-being, and functional performance among post-stroke individuals.

Materials and Methods: A literature review was conducted using electronic databases including PubMed, Google Scholar, Scopus, and the Cochrane Library. Studies published between 2015 and 2026 were reviewed. The selection of studies was guided by the PICO framework, focusing on post-stroke individuals, mindfulness-integrated Occupational Therapy interventions, conventional rehabilitation or standard Occupational Therapy as comparators,

and outcomes related to hand function and upper limb recovery.

Results: The reviewed studies used varied intervention protocols and assessed multiple outcome measures. Several studies reported improvements in hand coordination, motor control, concentration, emotional regulation, therapy participation, and functional independence following mindfulness-integrated Occupational Therapy interventions. Mindfulness practices were also associated with reduced stress and anxiety, while supporting motor relearning and enhancing patient engagement during rehabilitation sessions. However, considerable variations were observed in intervention duration, sample size, and outcome assessment methods across studies.

Conclusion: The findings suggest that mindfulness-integrated Occupational Therapy may positively influence post-stroke hand function recovery by improving both motor and psychological outcomes. Although the current evidence demonstrates promising results, further research with larger sample sizes, standardised intervention protocols, and long-term follow-up is necessary to establish the effectiveness of mindfulness-based approaches in stroke rehabilitation.

Keywords: Mindfulness, Occupational Therapy, Stroke rehabilitation, Upper limb recovery.

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