

# Exploring Sensory Modulation in Adult Occupational Therapy Practice

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- 5-16.5% of adults experience sensory processing difficulties
- Sensory challenges in adults can interfere with work, leisure, and social participation
- Sensory modulation can be used to change the sensory input for the person, their occupation or environment to support participation.

**The gap:** Sensory modulation in adults is often underrecognized in general care and literature does not often describe its use to increase occupational participation.

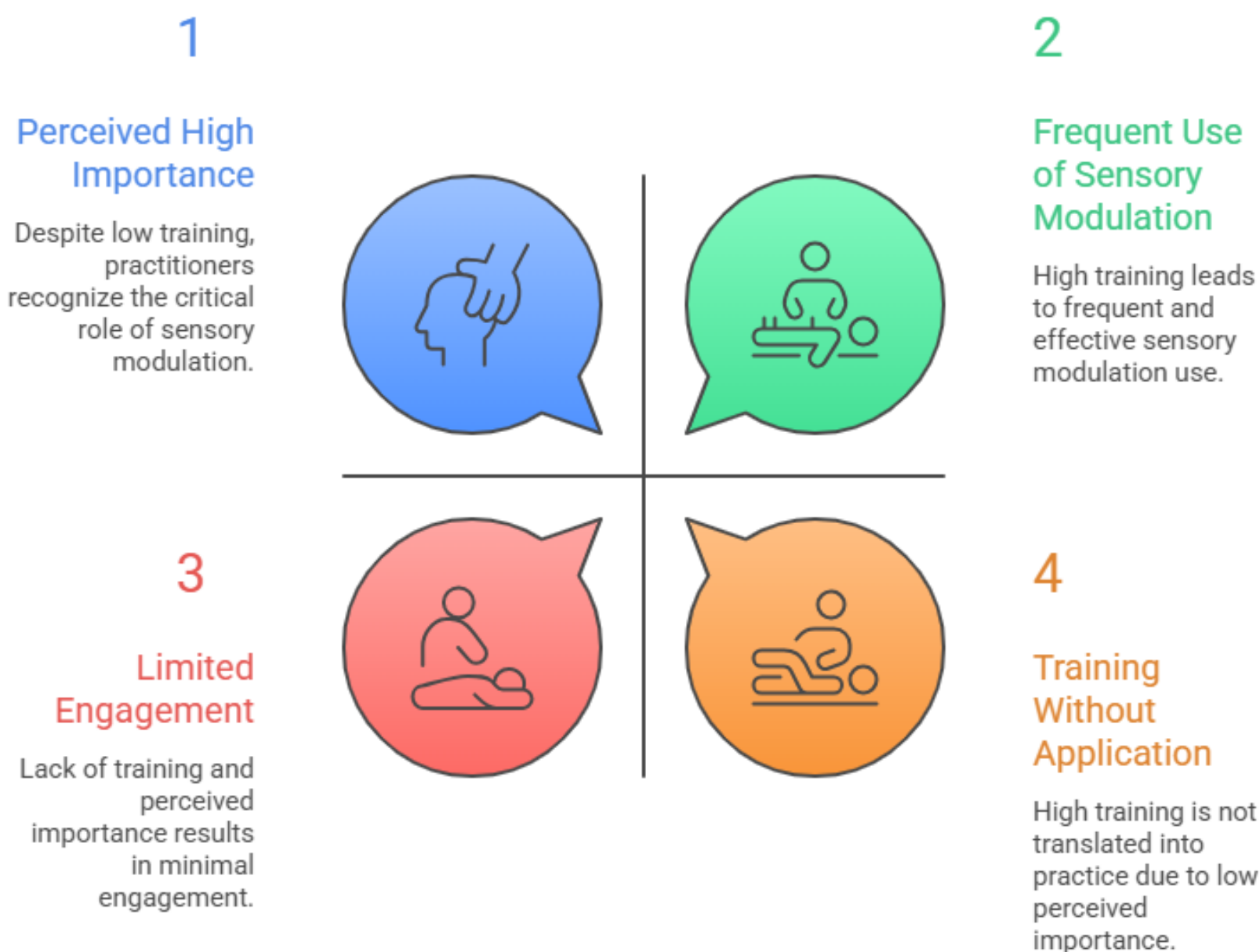
Table 1.

Quantitative description of occupational therapy practitioners' perspectives and experiences with sensory modulation in adult populations (N=169)

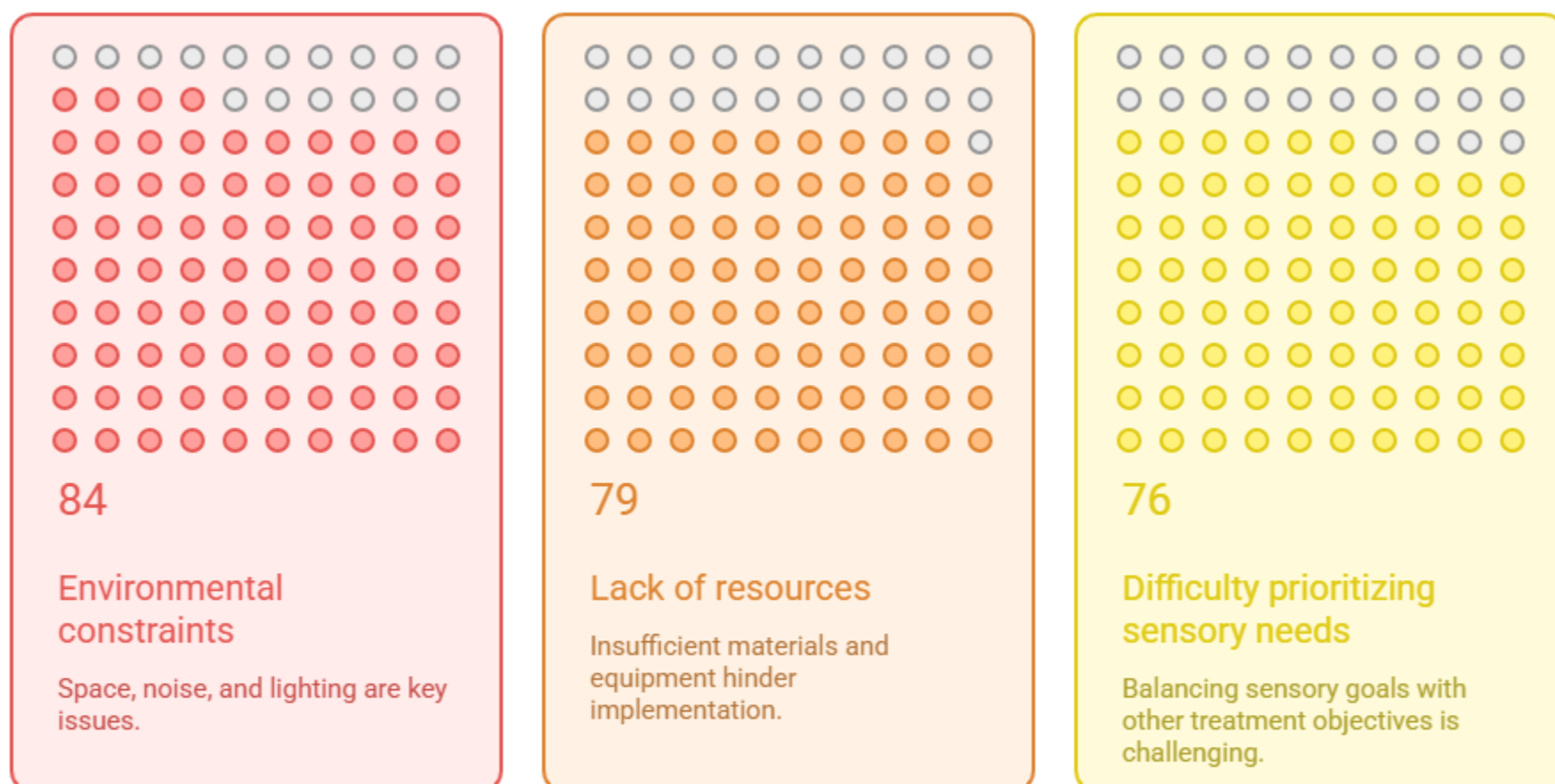
Category	Count
<b>Received formal training on sensory modulation</b>	
Yes	141
No	28
<b>Perceived importance of addressing sensory needs</b>	
Not important	0
Slightly important	0
Moderately important	17
Very important	58
Extremely important	94
<b>Frequency of using sensory modulation strategies</b>	
Never	1
Rarely	2
Sometimes	20
Often	93
Always	53
<b>Challenges in addressing sensory needs</b>	
Limited time during sessions	51
Lack of resources	79
Lack of training or knowledge on sensory modulation	40
Limited support from colleagues or supervisors	31
Difficulty prioritizing sensory needs among other treatment goals	76
Client resistance to sensory interventions	33
Limited understanding or buy-in from families/caregivers	47
Environmental constraints (e.g., space, noise, lighting)	84
Lack of funding	12
No challenges	5
Other	8

Note. This table outlines key quantitative findings regarding occupational therapy practitioners' engagement with sensory modulation in adult care.

## Occupational Therapy Practitioners' Perspectives on Sensory Modulation in Adult Practice



## Occupational Therapy Professional Barriers to Sensory Modulation (N=169)



Environmental constraints are the most significant barrier to implementing sensory modulation in occupational therapy practice.

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### Call to action:

- Increase adult-focused training opportunities
- Advocate for sensory-informed care in adult settings
- Build institutional support and awareness