

19th WFOT Congress, Bangkok, Thailand 2026

Danish stroke survivors' experiences with participation in a home-based cognitive orientation to daily occupational performance (CO-OP) intervention. A qualitative study.

Tove Lise Nielsen, Ph.D., associate professor, VIA University College, Aarhus Denmark

Co-authors

Thea Birch Ransby, assisting professor and Louise Moeldrup Nielsen, senior associate professor, VIA University College, Aarhus Denmark

This work was supported by a grant from the Research Foundation of the Danish Occupational Therapy Association [FF1/21-R169-A3906].

Cognitive Orientation to daily Occupational Performance: CO-OP

Developed in Canada in the late 1990s

Client-centered, goal-based, performance-based

**Guided discovery and dynamic performance analysis →
client develops domain specific strategies (plans)**

**Goal-Plan-Do-Check (GPDC) as global problem-solving
strategy**

**Positive effects have been achieved in various
populations, including stroke survivors**

The qualitative study: objectives and participants

Objectives

How do stroke survivors perceive participation in home-based CO-OP and how may it affect their everyday life post intervention?

Participants

16 stroke survivors (9 men and 7 women)

Age 48 to 78 years

The participants shared their experiences after giving informed consent to participate

Methods

Individual interviews, semi-structured interview guide

Participants spoke freely / in detail about their experiences during therapy and post intervention

Qualitative content analysis a.m. Schreier, through a concept- and data driven coding frame

Three main categories: The CO-OP process, Achievements through CO-OP, and The impact of CO-OP on everyday life post intervention

12 subcategories, for example: GPDC, Involvement in plans and solutions, Goal attainment, Transfer to other performance issues

Results. The CO-OP process

GPDC

“What I think is that the CO-OP method has helped [the therapy] to become very systematic and specific. It was a good tool to work systematically and to ensure good follow-up” (P 19)

“I thought, to begin with, that it was a bit loose. It was actually hard to articulate my goals. Because I am not afflicted in a way where it is about walking 500 meters” (P 18)

”I did them [the plans], she questioned me, and I had to figure something out myself” (P 1)

Results. The CO-OP process

Domain specific strategies

“That thing, sitting in the right way at the end of the table (...) so that I do not become confused. I can’t take it when there are too many voices at both sides of my head...” (P 17)

Homework

“Because these changes, they are not made by just sitting one or two hours a week [with the occupational therapist]. They are made by working on them. It is the work in between that really changes things” (P 19)

Results. Achievements through CO-OP

Improved occupational performance

Improved self-esteem and confidence

“Well, the greatest change is about my wellbeing in my everyday life. My self-esteem and my confidence have improved. It is a combination, and I believe much more in myself now” (P 19)

Some goals were not achieved

Results. How may elements from CO-OP be used post intervention?

“I still experiment a bit with different positions of my hand and with different adjustments of my keyboard (...), so it has given me the wish to try new things” (P 62)

“I also go to psychologist consultations now. And then I think: I will put that in my goal tracking sheet; well, I will use the CO-OP method” (P 19)

“Every time I need to try new things, I need to be prepared, and I actually learned some strategies in this [CO-OP] that I can use” (P 45)

“Now my wife can check me, so it has become better and better, well it is nice that someone checks me once in a while” (P 1)

Study strengths and weaknesses

Strengths

Large group, different courses of treatment and different perspectives

Positive and less positive experiences

Interview guide, interview techniques, analysis process

Involvement of several researchers in interviews and analyses

Weaknesses

Some participants found it hard to explain what went on during CO-OP and to separate CO-OP from other intervention components

Some interviews were rather short (down to 20 minutes)

Some participants had difficulty remembering details

Conclusions

CO-OP was, in general, perceived meaningful and awarding and the goal tracking sheets were a key component to the participants

High degree of satisfaction with goal attainment. The GPDC approach + domain specific strategies were useful in many situations, also post intervention

Focus on goals most important to clients

Encourage involvement of relatives, focus on how to support the client's process

During CO-OP and before discharge, discuss with the client how they may use the CO-OP approach on untrained and possible future performance issues



Bring ideas to life
VIA University College

Thank you for your attention



Our results feed into a larger effectiveness study under conduction in 2025-2027. Stay tuned 😊

Tove Lise Nielsen <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-1253-2413>

Thea Birk Ransby <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7206-4933>

Louise Moeldrup Nielsen <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-3362-6275>

You are welcome to contact Tove Lise Nielsen at: ton@via.dk