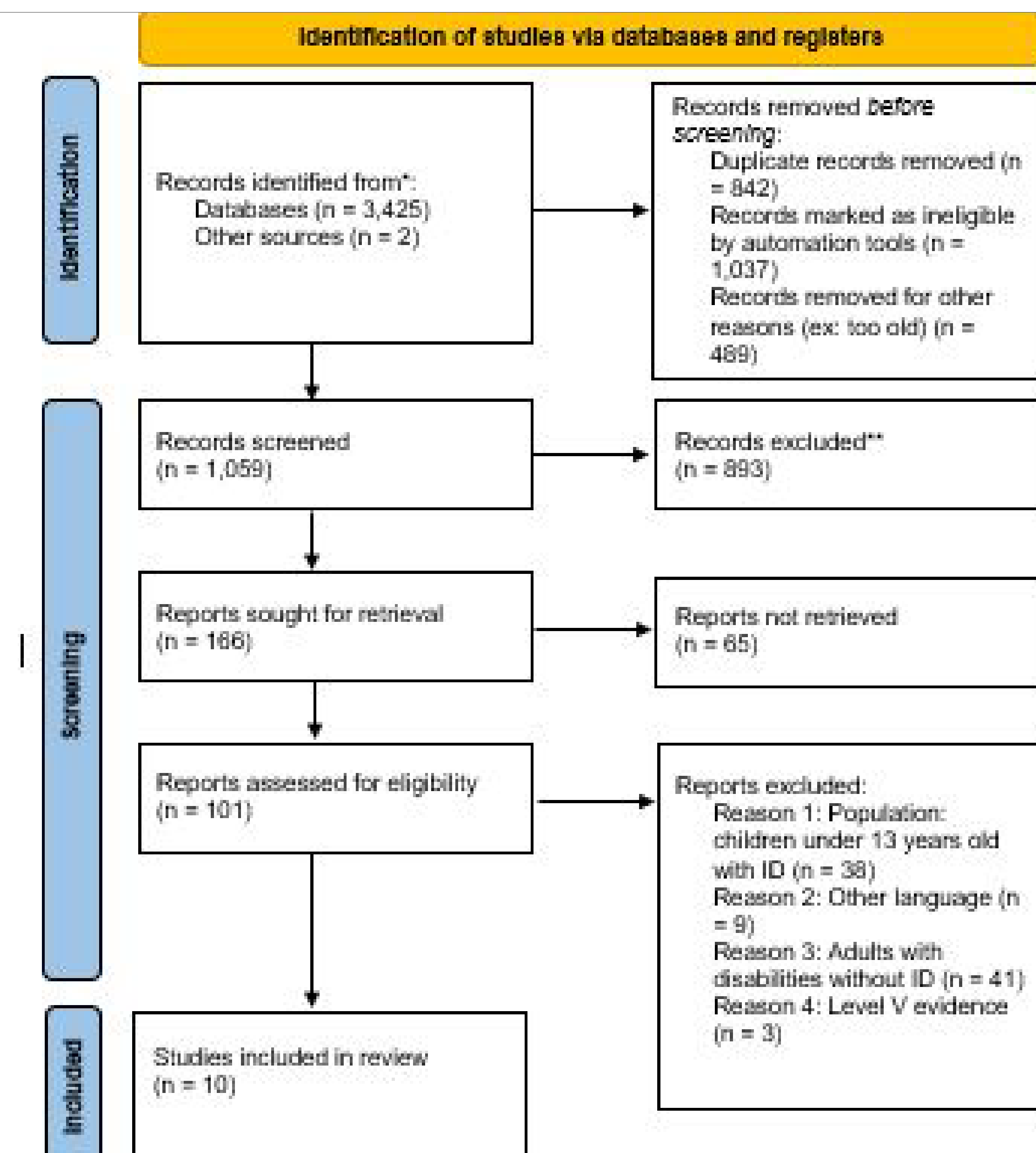


INTRODUCTION

- Service-learning consists of a hands-on teaching method that allows allied health students to apply material learned from didactic coursework while helping an underserved population, such as individuals with intellectual disabilities (ID).
- After engaging in service-based learning experiences serving individuals with ID, occupational therapy (OT) students improved their attitudes towards the population and enhanced their clinical reasoning skills (Schindler, 2014; Sullivan & Mendonca, 2017).
- Despite this evidence, OT students note a gap between OT curriculum and fieldwork experiences due to the lack of practical application in coursework and unclear supervisor expectations in fieldwork (Naidoo & van Wyk, 2016; Rezaee et al., 2014).

METHODOLOGY



PIO QUESTION AND PURPOSE

- Does engaging in a service-based learning experience (I) serving undergraduate students with disabilities improve Slippery Rock University (SRU) entry-level Doctor of Occupational Therapy (OTD) students' (P) clinical reasoning skills (O)?
- The review explores the value of service-based learning opportunities in developing OT student clinical skills while simultaneously increasing clients' participation in desired occupations.

RESULTS

Three identified themes will inform the development of this proposed doctoral capstone project.

OT Intervention Benefits Adults with ID

- After participating in OT programming, students with disabilities progressed towards educational and vocational goals, improved social skills, and increased overall participation in desired occupations (Blaskowitz et al., 2021; Merz et al., 2020; Schindler, 2014).

Challenges to Professional Transition and Potential Solutions

- Absent or controlling supervisors, ineffective didactic coursework, and late exposure to clinical practice contribute to student anxiety and feelings of incompetence in fieldwork settings (Furze et al., 2015; Grenier, 2015; Naidoo, D. & van Wyk, J., 2016; Rezaee et al., 2014; Sullivan & Mendonca, 2017).

Benefits of Service-Learning Based Fieldwork

- Service-learning experiences allow occupational therapy students to carryover their didactic learning to clinical practice in a safe environment through mentorship, improving clinical and leadership skills (Lau, 2016; Schindler, 2014; Seif et al., 2014).



Image from <https://www.goodtherapy.org/learn-about-therapy/issues/intellectual-disabilities/therapy>



Image from <https://shs.touro.edu/news/stories/20-things-every-occupational-therapy-student-should-know.php>

DISCUSSION

- Service-based learning opportunities serving adults with disabilities mutually benefit both OT students and clients.
- OT students apply classroom knowledge to practice, developing their clinical reasoning skills, and clients simultaneously increase their life, academic, and social skills, leading to improved participation in desired occupations.
- OT programs should integrate mentoring and self-reflective experiences throughout the curriculum to facilitate better development of clinical reasoning skills.
- By improving client engagement and motivation skills while still in school, OT students can prepare to advocate for inclusion and independence for their patients in clinical practice.
- Although the research was comprehensive, the low level of evidence in included studies limits this review's generalizability.

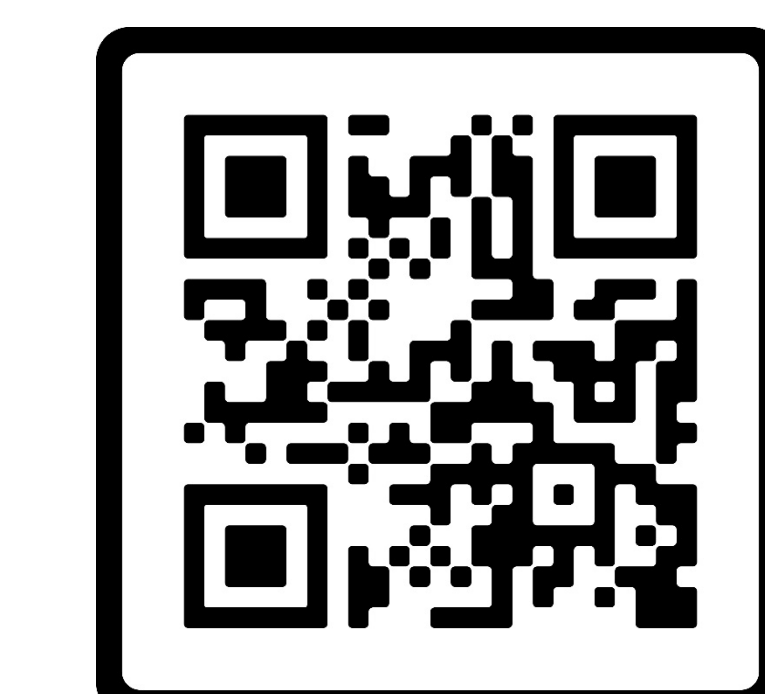
CONNECTION TO DCE AND CONCLUSION

- The gap between practice and evidence justifies the doctoral capstone project's aim to implement service-based learning into occupational therapy coursework.
- The reviewer will utilize the evidence to develop a 14-week Level One fieldwork experience for first-year OT students, serving a postsecondary transition program for adults with ID.
- By drawing from the Person-Environment-Occupational Performance (PEOP) Model, the project will assess how environmental and personal aspects, such as supervisor approach and self-confidence in skills, respectively, influence OT student learning and performance in fieldwork.
- Implementation of this project will seek to increase student clinical reasoning skills while simultaneously improving client's participation in desired occupations.



Image from <https://www.abilityrehab.com.au/services/intellectual-disability/>

ABSTRACT



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REFERENCES



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