



From Challenges to Innovations: Practices in Severe Disabilities and Global Education Among Tanzanian Occupational Therapists

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The Tanzanian Context

- Occupational therapy in Tanzania was established almost 25 years ago
- More than 80% of practitioners work in the urban areas
- 64% of all Tanzanians live in rural areas
- Limited access to early intervention results in the progression of manageable conditions into severe disabilities

(Tanzania Occupational Therapy Association, 2025)

The Challenge: Limited Access to Occupational Therapy

- Late or absent referral to occupational therapy services
- Minimal occupational therapy involvement in acute and post-acute care
- Limited discharge education and follow-up
- Rural and resource-related barriers

Contextual Influences on Functional Outcomes

- Injury alone is not a cause of disability
- Inaccessible services could turn an injury/impairment to a severe disability
- Lack of timely occupational therapy services could accelerate functional limitations



(World Health Organization, 2021)

(Shirima & Saviers, n.d.)

Case Study



Innovation in Practice

- Community outreach
- Multidisciplinary advocacy
- Inter-institution coordination



Amplifying Local Innovation

- Alpha Rehabilitation Centre and UCA Occupational Therapy partnership

This approach focuses on:

- Bi-directional knowledge exchange
- Development of strategies to solve rural access gaps
- Integration of strategies into curriculums for international fieldwork
 - Promoting global dissemination into other low resource settings

The Pedagogy of Partnership

Our Model:

- The “From” → “To” Shift
- Bi-directional exchange
- Internationalization at Home
- Cultural Reciprocity
- Capacity Building
- Ethical Sustainability

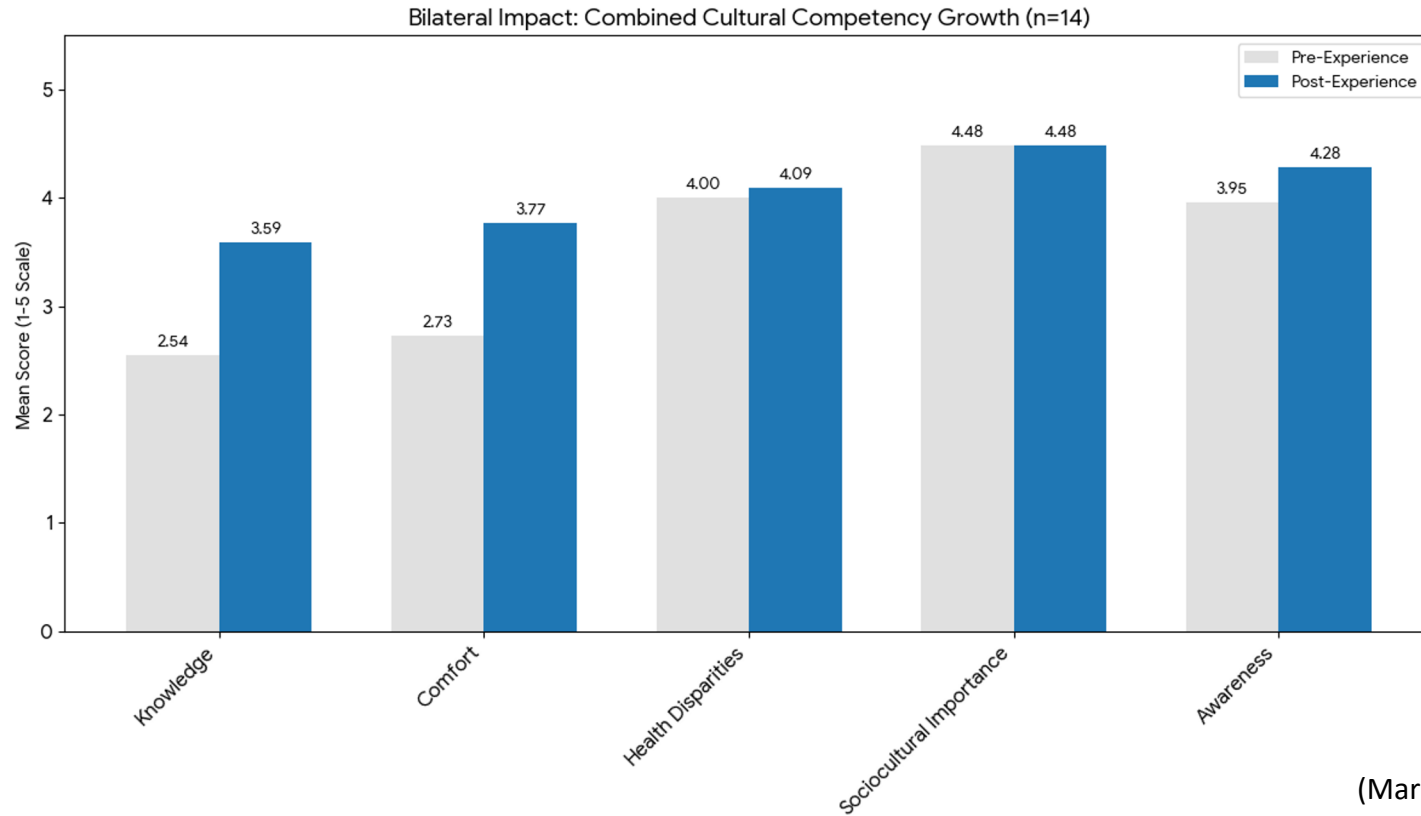


(Saviers & Shirima, n.d.)

Fieldwork Case Study



Impact: Mutual Growth



(Mareno et al., 2013)

Thank You! Asante

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