



# **The Meaning of Participating in the Academic Fieldwork among Occupational Therapy Interns in one Filipino University - A Qualitative Descriptive Study**

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## OT EDUCATION

- World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT) Minimum Standards guide the education of occupational therapists
- Occupational therapy education programs should produce occupational therapists who can address global and local occupational needs (WFOT, 2016)



## FIELDWORK

- Provides opportunities to apply their knowledge, skills, and attitudes to address real-world problems (WFOT, 2016)
- Should prepare students to perform professional roles in diverse settings (Cabatan & Duque, 2020)
- Develops competencies within traditional (role-established) & non-traditional (role emergent) settings



## ACADEMIC FIELDWORK

- Innovative teaching-learning methods that provide interns (entry-level students) with opportunities to perform occupational therapy faculty roles
- Design instruction, teach peers, conduct information sessions, assist classes, monitor exams, attend meetings, make inventories, etc.



## FIELDWORK LITERATURE

- Stressful, challenging
- Experiential, transformative
- Focus on (1) satisfaction, (2) professional skills learned, (3) professional behaviors developed, (4) comparisons between fieldwork settings, (5) students' and supervisors' perception of the program or supervision, (6) perceived readiness or preference for practice



## **GAP IN THE LITERATURE**

- Exploration of reflection beyond the period right after fieldwork
- Explicit examination of meaningfulness of fieldwork experience
- Exploration of academic fieldwork



## MEANING

- “shared mental representations of possible relationships among things, events, and relationships” (Baumeister, 1991)
- subjective representations about life or specific events (situational meaning)
- 3 dimensions: coherence, purpose, significance



### 3 DIMENSIONS OF MEANING

- Coherence: cognitive; experiences are logical, make sense, proceed in predictable patterns (Park, 2010)
- Purpose: motivational; experiences direct to a future outcome and organizes present action (Martela & Steger, 2016)
- Significance: affective; experiences offer a sense of satisfaction, fulfillment, and happiness (Martela & Steger, 2016)



## STUDY SIGNIFICANCE

- Empirical evidence for fieldwork that goes beyond traditional clinical roles
- Develop, improve, or maintain occupational therapy fieldwork that equips students with non-clinical professional competencies (Bagatell, Lawrence, Schwartz, & Vuernick, 2013)



## GENERAL OBJECTIVE

- Explore the meaning of participating in the academic fieldwork among past occupational therapy interns of the Department of Occupational Therapy, University of the Philippines Manila – College of Allied Medical Professions



## **SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:**

1. Describe former interns' sense of coherence between their assumptions/expectations of the fieldwork/profession and their actual learning experience.
2. Describe former interns' perception of purpose for the academic fieldwork.
3. Describe former interns' perception of personal or professional significance of the academic fieldwork
4. Identify contextual factors within the fieldwork that shaped the meaning constructed about their experience.



## DESCRIPTIVE QUALITATIVE

- Provide a comprehensive, straightforward description of events through the exploration of experiences (Lambert & Lambert, 2013)
- Does not involve the preselection or manipulation of variables
- Not committed to any specific theoretical perspective
- Ideal for topics where little research has been undertaken



## SETTING, POPULATION, DATA COLLECTION

- Department of Occupational Therapy, University of the Philippines Manila – College of Allied Medical Professions
- Full enumeration of past interns (n=23)
- Qualitative data from responses to open-ended prompts collected via an online questionnaire and interview
- Written responses to guide questions allow reflection without influence



## DATA ANALYSIS

### 6-Phase Methodological Framework for Doing Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clark, 2006)

1. Becoming familiar with the data
2. Generating initial codes
3. Searching for themes
4. Reviewing themes
5. Defining and naming themes
6. Producing the report



## LIMITATIONS

- Full meaning might no longer be “fresh” for all participants
- No guarantee that all former interns will participate
- Program differences across supervisors



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**YOUR INSIGHTS ARE MOST WELCOME.**

***Thank you.***

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