Perceived Preparedness of OT Graduate Students for Level II Fieldwork and Feelings About Participating in Nontraditional Versus Traditional Fieldwork I Experiences.

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Abstract

Purpose: This study assessed the perceived level of preparedness of OT students for entering level II fieldwork after completing nontraditional or traditional level I fieldwork experiences. In addition, the study assessed OT students perceived feelings regarding participation in nontraditional level I fieldwork experiences in place of traditional level I fieldwork.

Method: An online 23-question survey was delivered to eligible Occupational Therapy Doctoral (OTD) and Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT) programs throughout the United States. Students (n=146) self-reported their level of preparedness for level II fieldwork experiences.

Results: The quantitative data collected reflected a statistically significant difference between fieldwork I experience-related questions for the three groups, including traditional, nontraditional, and a combination of traditional and nontraditional fieldwork I experiences. Students who participated in traditional fieldwork experiences were found to have a higher level of perceived preparedness for entering level II fieldwork. The qualitative data collected indicated students felt a combination of nontraditional and traditional fieldwork provided the most significant benefit from level I fieldwork experiences.

Conclusion: Results suggest most OT students would prefer a combination of nontraditional level I fieldwork and traditional level I fieldwork and find it most beneficial in increasing their level of preparedness before the start of fieldwork II.

Keywords: Perceived preparedness, traditional fieldwork I, nontraditional fieldwork I, student feelings, OTD, MOT, Simucase, hands-on experience, confidence, critical thinking, clinical reasoning, competence.