Evolution of Occupational Therapy Practice: Life History of Dr. Hanson, OTR/L, FAOTA

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Introduction

- This life history is one of 29 life history interviews, which are a part of a larger project, Life Histories of Individuals Who Have Been Influential in Developing Occupational Therapy (OT) in North Dakota and Wyoming.
- The purpose of the project is to gather information about the history and evolution of occupational therapy (OT) practice in North Dakota and Wyoming through life histories of individuals who have been influential in developing OT in these two states. It is anticipated that the life history process will be a powerful way to gather this information.
- This study is intended to provide current and future generations of occupational therapists a view of the history and how occupational therapy practice has evolved from its inception to current practice in North Dakota and Wyoming.

Methods

- This was a qualitative study using a life history approach. The participant was assigned from a list developed by the course instructors through purposive sampling.
- No specific gatekeeper issues existed; initial contact was made by course instructors.
- Informed consent was given.
- The semi-structured interview was guided by an interview schedule prepared by the course instructor; the questions on the interview schedule were designed to be used with all the individuals as part of the larger project. The researchers were allowed to modify or add interview questions as needed for each specific interview.
- The data was collected by a phone interview and audio recorded using Blackboard Collaborate. Dr. Hanson provided her curriculum vitae as additional information during the course of the study.
- The interview was transcribed verbatim, and the researchers worked to increase trustworthiness by constant comparative analysis, reflexive journaling, use of multiple researchers, and consultation with the course instructor.

Data Analysis

- The researchers analyzed the transcribed data and came up with initial codes.
- Together with the course instructor, the researchers used constant comparative analysis to categorize the transcription and initial codes into categories and themes.
- Finally, an assertion was developed describing Dr. Hanson's current perspective of occupational therapy.

Findings

Initial Codes

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Occupational Identity

Dr. Hanson found satisfaction in helping students to achieve and to find their identity in becoming therapists.

Professional Practice

Learning was a primary motivator pushing Dr. Hanson through various areas of practice into her current role as a fieldwork coordinator.

Connectedness in the Profession

When traveling across Wyoming and seeing nothing for miles and miles, Dr. Hanson pondered how that isolation impacted the occupations of the population.

Discussion

- The Kawa Model, with the use of a timeline, was used to guide data analysis.
- As Dr. Hanson moved through different practice areas, she noted that the desire for more learning was at the root of those movements.
- At one point in her career, when it seemed as though she had to put her scholarship aside, Dr. Hanson realized that learning often related to what her students were learning.
- Her role in academia has shown to be the most satisfying area of practice as an occupational therapy practitioner, where the day to day of her profession constantly changes, and she is constantly learning new things.
- As the Occupational Therapy program developed in Casper, Wyoming, Dr. Hanson contributed success to the connectedness and involvement in the profession of individuals in the Casper community.

References


Dr. Hanson feels that occupational therapy is an art that can be seen through connectedness to others in the profession, resources, and the use of models.