

## **Developing Cultural Awareness in Occupational Therapy Education: A Pilot Study of Student Learning in Two Parallel Rehabilitation Cases**

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**Introduction:** Occupational therapy students need to explore personal assumptions to gain self-awareness and acquire knowledge about the influence of culture in order to understand client individuality and goals.

**Study objectives:** Describe an educational strategy to increase students' ability to reflect on the values and beliefs included in case based learning.

Summarize learning outcomes of a pilot study comparing students' appreciation for the influence of culture in two similar rehabilitation cases.

**Method/Approach:** Developed two rehabilitation cases that were identical except that the individual in the case was either from a majority or minority culture. Randomly assigned cases to students in one of four case-based seminars. Two student groups analyzed the case from the majority culture perspective. Two student groups analyzed the case from the minority culture perspective. Obtained student reflections and learning on the case using a post-case survey with both Likert scale and short answer questions. Descriptive statistics and content analysis used to analyze Likert scale items and themes in short answer questions.

**Practice Implications:** Students who worked on the case from the non-majority culture reflected more on the importance of cultural factors. However, they were less likely to identify client motivation as an important factor. Students who worked on the case from a majority perspective described less learning about personal values and beliefs when describing important case factors.

Cases that are identical except for the individual's culture provide a rich learning opportunity to examine student's awareness and understanding of culture as an important factor in occupational therapy practice.