

The Human Library and the Development of Cultural Sensitivity in Student Occupational Therapists

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Introduction

- Living in a culturally diverse world, it is essential to embed cultural diversity education into healthcare professional training to reduce healthcare disparity (Occupational Therapy Council of Australia, 2018; World Health Organization, 2020).
- Monash University has adopted the Human Library (HL) as a teaching activity aiming at enhancing occupational therapy students' cultural competencies for more than three years.
- HL is similar to a standard library except that the books are people with a story to tell and the reading is a conversation (Russell & Linsley, 2011).
- The HL aims to reduce prejudice and stereotyping through storytelling to improve social understanding and cultural awareness (Human Library Organization, 2019a, 2019b).
- In 2021, 98 occupational therapy students enrolled in a undergraduate 2nd year unit completed an online module introducing cultural concepts, and engaged in self-reflection on their own culture and competency prior to participating in a HL.
- This study aims to investigate the effects of HL on cultural competence (CC).

Objectives

- To evaluate the changes in students' cultural awareness and sensitivity after attending the HL.
- To understand the perspective of student OTs participating in the HL to provide a deeper understanding of CCA results.

Methods

- Mixed methods explanatory sequential design used.
- All students eligible to attend the HL are invited to participate in the study
- Outcome measure: Cultural Competence Assessment (CCA) is used to measure students cultural competencies pre and post HL. It uses 7-point Likert self-report scale measuring CC across two factors: Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity (CAS) and Culturally Competent Behaviors (CCB). (Doorenbos et al., 2005; Schim et al., 2003). Internal consistency of CCA is good (Chronbach's alpha 0.86-0.93) and it has sufficient content and construct validity (Osmanovic et al., 2021) and good test-retest reliability ($r = 0.85$, $p = 0.002$) (Doorenbos et al., 2005).
- CCA was administered in the week prior to the HL and again within one week after students attended the HL. Paired t-test used to measure changes of CCA scores.
- Qualitative data will be collected using a focus group approximately 4 weeks following the HL.

Results

- 45 subjects completed the pre-HL CCA, and 28 subjects completed CCA both pre and post-HL
- 71.7% with previous cultural learning experience
- 31.3% with health, aged care or disability work experience
- 96.6% interested in learning about different cultural and building cross-cultural skills
- 81.9% with less than weekly social cultural interactions
- 40% with weekly or less than weekly cultural interactions at work or university

CCA Scores

- CAS score increased from 63.89 (SD 7.86), to 65.64 (SD 6.59). CCB score increased from 45.03 (SD 17.09), to 52.6 (SD 23.11). Total CCA score increased from 108.93 (SD 18.91) to 118.25 (SD 23.13). Both CCB ($p=0.039$) and Total CCA ($p=0.018$) showed significant change from pre to post HL.
- One item (Individual people may identify with more than one cultural group) was statistically significant ($p=0.016$).

Focus groups will be conducted (results not included in this poster)



- 73.4% of participants are from countries other than Australia
- Majority of the participants have less than weekly social cultural interactions
- 40% of participants with weekly or less than weekly cultural interactions at work or university
- This 2020 cohort of students have had a unique experience of beginning their university studies during the global COVID-19 pandemic. This has impacted their encounters with people from different cultures and may help to explain the wide range of responses in the CCA.
- Despite small sample size ($N=28$), results suggest significant differences in pre-post CCB ($p=0.039$) and Total CCA ($p=0.018$) results.

The Human Books in the 2021 Human Library at Monash University:

An Australian Soldier in War and Peace
Caring for a brother with complex physical and mental health issues
Scotland to Australia
The perspective of an OT/Saudi/Muslim/Woman! Working with refugees?
Getting to know you
Long distance grandparenting in the COVID-19 era
Prognosis poor but not dead yet
Growing up with a mental illness in Melbourne
Sri Lanka, military and marine
Immigrant experiences of nursing in Australia
What I learned growing up far from my parents? (in Bangladeshi)
Strategies for Safety in the Community for people on the Autism Spectrum – A Mother's Journey
As an American: Ten things I was not expecting about living in Australia

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Discussion

- Preliminary quantitative results are encouraging for using the HL as a method for teaching cultural competence in student healthcare professionals.
- CCA results will be explored further by focus group in order to understand the perspective of student OTs and the Human Library experience.
- Limitations – only 28 pairs of students, small sample size

Table 1. Participant Demographics (N = 45)

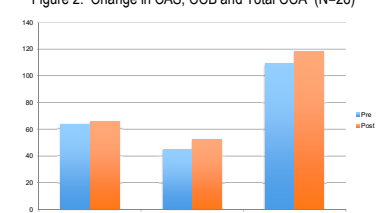
	N=45	Percentage
Age		
18-24	933	4.4
25-34	2.2	26.7
35-44	71.1	2.2
Male	26.7	71.1
Female	18.4	2.2
Prefer not to say	2.2	2.2
Ethnicity		
Australian	26.6	73.6
Other	18.4	2.2
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	2.2	24.4
Australian	2.2	2.2
North-West European ¹	2.2	2.2
Southern and Eastern European ²	2.2	2.2
North African and Middle Eastern ³	4.0	8.9
South-East Asian ⁴	11.1	6.7
North-East Asian ⁵	11.1	6.7
Southern and Central Asian ⁶	11.1	6.7
Prefer not to say	6.7	6.7
Previous Cultural Learning Experiences		
Cultural Learning Course	21.57	19.61
Cultural Learning Workshop	18.3	15.67
Lived Abroad	1.96	7.84
Studied Abroad	1.96	7.84
Cultural Learning Immersion Program	1.96	7.84
International Homestay	1.96	7.84
Other Cultural Learning Experience	6.7	6.7
Cultural Interactions at Work, Volunteer, or University	11.1	11.1
Almost never	11.1	40
2-4 times/month	22.2	20
Weekly	40	34.1
2-4 times/week	40	27.9
Daily	20	28.8
Cultural Interaction at Home or Social	20	6.6
Almost never	34.1	11.4
2-4 times/month	27.9	11.4
Weekly	28.8	11.4
2-4 times/week	6.6	11.4
Daily	11.4	11.4

¹England, France
²Italy
³Saudi Arabia
⁴Brunei
⁵Hong Kong, Macau, China
⁶Afghanistan, India

Figure 1. CCA Baseline (T1) (N=45) and Post HL (T2) (N=28)

Column1	Mean	Range	Std. Deviation
CAS T1	63.82	44	7.86
CAS T2	65.64	27	6.59
CCB T1	43.24	67	17.09
CCB T2	52.61	97	23.11
CCA T1	105.07	82	18.91
CCA T2	118.25	94	23.13

Figure 2. Change in CAS, CCB and Total CCA (N=28)



* Denotes statistically significance

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