



Experiences of Internationally Educated Occupational Therapists (IEOT) Transitioning into Canadian Practice

Jacob Colby, Natalie Carrion, Katie Lee Bunting, Suzanne Huot & Susan Forwell
UBC Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy

Introduction

- BC currently has a shortage of OTs¹
- IEOTs are one way of meeting this shortage²
- An IEOT registering in BC is a predictable life transition.

Definitions

Predictable Life Transition:

The process that results when an individual chooses a path of change that affects their occupational repertoire.³

Occupational Repertoire:

The body of occupations that encompass how a person spends their time.⁴

Objectives

1. Understand the process, barriers and facilitators for IEOTs becoming registered OTs in BC
2. Explore the transition from an occupational perspective
3. Appraise the fit of the P-TOP Model

Methods

- IEOTs were recruited through the College (COTBC) who registered between 2013 and 2017
- Data collection:
 - Online survey - addressed process, barriers & facilitators for obtaining registration with COTBC
 - Semi-structured interviews - explored the transition experience of IEOTs and further refined the P-TOP model

Results

Survey (n=40)

Demographics	
Age Range	26 - 59 Years
Gender	30 Female 9 Male 1 Genderqueer
Marital Status	12 Single 27 Married/Common Law 1 Separated
Year OT Degree Completed	1985 - 2016



Key Messages

- **Top 3 countries IEOTs trained in were Australia, New Zealand and USA**
- **Top 3 Facilitators: Personal motivation, planning/preparation & help from COTBC or another governing body**
- **Top 3 Barriers: Registration costs, lack of guidance & lack of info for NOTCE**

Interviews (n=10)

Theme 1: Effect of Environment on Occupations

Sub Theme: Experiences and feelings of stigma during the job search

"I felt stigmatized honestly a little bit... I had a very bad experience when I was doing an interview (for a health authority) ...she called me, and she said, you know your knowledge is good but I think you're not really competent. You shouldn't start from community because you are internationally educated..." - Sandy

Theme 2: Transitions can interrupt occupations which can affect self-identity

"For me it was a big stress because my parents sent me to school ... to expect me to be an OT and yet I'm not. For 2.5 years that was really frustrating. ...that for me was like what if I don't have it? like, who am I?" - Kris

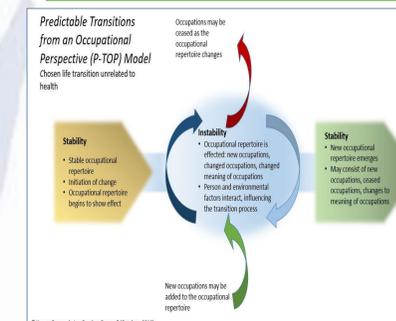
Theme 3: Navigating Transitions

Sub-theme: Multiple transitions occur at once

"Physically transitioning away from family,... that was obviously probably the biggest transition, away from our culture, our home, our language, our first language that we speak... in transitioning away from the known and the familiarity... to come to something that is totally unfamiliar..." - Henrietta

Theme 4: Utility of the P-TOP Model with IEOTs

Sub-Theme: Fit of the P-TOP Model



P-TOP Model³

"... I just wonder too for a lot of people if the stability at the beginning is always going to be guaranteed. You know, will everybody start off in a stable position before they are even having the change?... I just know my situation wasn't stable for quite a while before I was even looking at the move." - Elle