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Transition Workshops: A programmatic approach to supporting theory-to-practice in health education

Michelle Bissett^a, Melanie Roberts^b, and Clare Wilding^c

^a Southern Cross University, Australia; ^b Griffith University, Australia; ^c Knowledge Moves, Australia.

Abstract

Health graduates must competently apply theory in their practice, but this is challenging for students to learn. This study explored student experiences of a program-level curriculum design aimed at supporting theory-to-practice translation in occupational therapy. Annual 'Transition Workshops' targeted theoretical tenants of the program and supported students to transition their learning from one year to the next. The Transition Workshops were evaluated using pre- and post-workshop surveys and focus groups. There were 223 post-workshop surveys completed by student participants and four focus groups with 18 student participants. The quantitative survey data were analysed using Wilcoxon signed rank tests. Qualitative survey data were analysed using content analysis and group interview transcripts were inductively analysed using thematic analysis. Students conveyed that the Transition Workshops were beneficial and their perceived levels of theoretical knowledge, and confidence in applying that knowledge, increased after engaging in them. The workshops assisted students to transition their learning across the degree by providing opportunities to revise and prime for their next stage of learning, learn how to apply theory-into-practice, and build self-confidence for practice education learning within their degree. Transition Workshops, designed at a program-level, can be incorporated into curriculum to assist occupational therapy students to develop their theoretical knowledge and support theory-into-practice. This approach may be of value within other clinical and professional programs and that inclusion in university policy is required to guide academic practices.

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Introduction

Knowledge and skill development related to the use of theory in practice is a requirement for many health students and graduates. However, it has been acknowledged that a “theory-practice” gap exists across a range of health professions including medicine (Beane et al., 2017), nursing (Greenway et al., 2019; Şimşek et al., 2023; Zieber & Wojtowicz, 2020), physiotherapy (Schwab et al., 2023), social work (Archer-Kuhn et al., 2021) and occupational therapy (Feldhacker & Feldhacker, 2022; Rodger & Turpin, 2011; Zahedi & Rowe, 2021) at both the student and graduate (Di Tommaso et al., 2016; Di Tommaso et al., 2019; Monaghan, 2015; Woo & Newman, 2020) level. In a recent concept analysis, Greenway et al. (2019) explored the notion of a theory-practice gap and defined this as “the gap between the theoretical knowledge and the practical application...most often expressed as a negative entity, with adverse consequences” (p. 1). Health educators are challenged with how to provide suitable learning experiences which then ensure students have a solid understanding of professional theory and the ability to apply this theory in diverse contexts (O’Connor, 2022; Stein et al., 2004).

Occupational therapy academics and researchers have been exploring this challenge for over a decade. This body of knowledge has proposed ways in which theory-into-practice can be better taught, including strategies used in university classrooms and those applied during practice education. Hansen (2013) investigated university teaching that linked class-based learning activities with practice education. Students learned about theory during academic classes, applied their knowledge of theory in practice education practice settings, and reflected on their experiences with academic staff to better integrate theory and practice (Hansen, 2013). Bonsaksen et al. (2013) focused on the use of a specific assessment tool, the Assessment of Communication and Interaction Skills, which is linked to the Model of Human Occupation, within a mental health practice education experience to help students bridge the theory-into-practice gap. This focus, on a particular assessment tool and theory, was considered effective for assisting students to better apply theory to practice (Bonsaksen et al., 2013). Leclair et al. (2013) developed a Theory Advancement Process which used a reflective and social learning approach to advance the use of theory in practice. Ikiugu and Smallfield (2011) tested Ikiugu’s eclectic method of combining theories and found that occupational therapy students who used this method were clearer and more articulate about the theories they used and their confidence in using theory in practice increased. Focussing on practice education, Towns and Ashby (2014) advocated that students’ ability to learn how to apply theory-into-practice is highly dependent upon practice education educators’ ability to explicitly articulate with students how theory applies to their day-to-day work. Zahedi and Rowe (2021) trialled bringing students back to campus for half day seminars and workshops on theoretical concepts during their external placements to support their theory to practice translation. Students in that study identified that the session provided time for reflection which supported them to link theory to their practice. More recently, Moores et al. (2022) identified that variability existed in theory articulation and implementation which posed additional challenges for students to make links between university content and practice.

As part of routine curriculum evaluation, we identified that our students were compartmentalising their learning within the degree, having difficulty recalling learning from previous semesters and years and were challenged by theory to practice integration. We reviewed existing literature and previously used strategies and identified that most strategies were unit specific and not ongoing

across the curriculum. We postulated that a program-level approach to addressing theory-into-practice translation may be an alternative and feasible strategy. This approach ensured that theory-to-practice remained central to student learning across the duration of the degree. It also alleviated responsibility from individual educators to address theory-into-practice and, instead, enabled them to anchor their teaching to the programmatic-level content. Consequently, academic staff at Griffith University designed a 'Transition Workshop' for each of the four years within the Bachelor of Occupational Therapy program. This is a novel approach which, to our knowledge, has not been trialled in other health programs.

The Bachelor of Occupational Therapy program is underpinned by four theoretical pillars: (i) evidence-based practice; (ii) client-centred practice; (iii) theory-driven practice; and (iv) occupation-centred practice. These concepts have previously been identified as threshold concepts in occupational therapy (Nicola-Richmond et al., 2016; Rodger & Turpin, 2011) and so they became the focus of the transition workshops. For each transition workshop, academic staff identified learning outcomes for each theoretical pillar. These were determined by:

1. identifying graduate level competencies for each of the theoretical pillars so that expectations of student knowledge and skill could be scaffolded in complexity across the four transition workshops. As examples, students in Year 1 were expected to have a beginning knowledge of how evidence informs practice but were expected to be able to develop an evidence-based intervention plan by Year 4;
2. reviewing level of exposure to theoretical concepts to date within the curriculum. Academic staff classified this as 'minimal', 'some' and 'considerable' in recognition that students received different levels of theory exposure at different times of their degree. As examples, students were considered to have 'some' knowledge of client-centred practice by the end of year 1 but only 'minimal' knowledge about evidence-based practice; and
3. identifying and addressing troublesome knowledge within occupational therapy. As reported in the literature, troublesome knowledge is defined as concepts that are "difficult to grasp... or conceptually challenging, requiring the unlearning of earlier perspectives" (Rodger et al., 2015, p. 546). This knowledge was identified, collectively by program educators, from the previous trimester or year's curriculum.

The design required students to complete an annual Transition Workshop as they progressed through the four years of the Bachelor of Occupational Therapy. The purpose of the Transition Workshops was to support students in developing confidence and skills in identifying and applying the theoretical knowledge that underpins occupational therapy practice. It did this by re-connecting students to their existing knowledge (obtained from the previous year(s)) and supporting them to *transition* their existing theoretical knowledge into the new year of the degree (Bissett & Roberts, 2021). The workshops required students to apply theoretical knowledge to practice scenarios and explore how the theories would be advanced and connected to practice in the coming year. The Transition Workshops were implemented at the beginning of the academic year for students in Years 2, 3 and 4 of the degree program. For Year 1 students, the Transition Workshop was implemented at the beginning of the second teaching period of their first year. The workshops adopted teaching and learning approaches that were active (Feldhacker & Feldhacker,

2022), collaborative (Pedersen, 2010), and authentic to practice (Lee et al., 2022). In small groups, students worked through a range of activities for each theoretical pillar across classes which ranged in length from four to six hours. Team teaching (Roberts et al., 2023) was implemented whereby two educators facilitated each workshop to reduce the staff to student ratio and provide students with improved access to academic support throughout the learning activities. More details about the underpinning pedagogy, structure and content of the workshops can be found in Bissett and Roberts (2021). The terms 'transition' and 'transition pedagogy' are used in higher education but typically relate to supporting students transitioning into the first year of their studies, primarily through coordinated curriculum and support services to enhance student experience (Kift, 2015). Our approach uses these traditional approaches but extends the focus of transition beyond first year and, instead, across the entirety of the learning experience. Using a program level, rather than course level, approach to theory-into-practice integration is an innovation in occupational therapy curriculum, and therefore it was appropriate to evaluate the workshops. The purpose of our study was to evaluate whether the Transition Workshops enabled students to increase their understanding of, and develop confidence in, applying occupational therapy theory to professional practice. This paper reports on students' involvement in their first Transition Workshop experience.

Method

Design

The study adopted a mixed methods design, specifically a multi-stage evaluation design as described by Creswell (2015) because the study aimed to evaluate the value of the Transition Workshops. Quantitative data were collected via pre- and post-workshop surveys to compare students self-perceived knowledge and confidence, and qualitative data were collected after each Transition Workshop via year level group interviews/focus groups to elicit information about students' experiences and perceptions of the workshops. The study received ethical approval from the Griffith University Human Research Ethics Committee.

Recruitment

All 281 students enrolled in the Bachelor of Occupational Therapy at Griffith University were invited to participate. Students received information about the study when they arrived for their timetabled Transition Workshop. Student recruitment was completed by a Transition Workshop facilitator who was not part of the research team. Student consent to participate in the surveys was implied by the completion of a survey; students who did not wish to participate did not complete the survey. The final question of the post-workshop survey invited the students to express their interest in participating in a follow-up focus group about the Transition Workshop. If a student wished to attend a focus group, they provided their contact details as the answer to the final survey question. Subsequently, a researcher, who had not facilitated the Transition Workshop and was not teaching or assessing the students at the time of the focus group, contacted students who had provided their details and invited them to attend a focus group. Students who agreed to participate in a focus group provided written consent.

Data collection

As there was no existing survey tool that addressed the research questions, the researchers developed a custom-designed online survey (see Appendix 1). The survey asked students about their perception of their knowledge and their level of confidence in understanding, articulating, and applying each of the four theoretical pillars. Questions from one sub-domain (usefulness) of the Intrinsic Motivation Inventory (IMI) (Ryan, 1982) were also included. These questions required participants to respond using a Likert scale from 1-7, in which 1 = “not at all true” and 7 = “very true”.

Survey data were collected immediately prior to each Transition Workshop and again immediately after the workshop. A total of 251 pre-workshop surveys (89%) and 223 post-workshop surveys (79%) were collected. By year level, post-workshop surveys were submitted by 68 first-year students (72%), 78 second-year students (85%), 36 third-year students (80%) and 41 (82%) final year students. A focus group of approximately 60 minutes duration for each year level was held at varying time intervals after the year level’s workshop. The timing of the focus group was determined by the year level timetable and student availability (which was impacted by the need to undertake practice education). The time interval for each focus group/group interview was as follows: Year 1, one month after the workshop; Year 2, two months after the workshop; Year 3, three months after the workshop; Year 4, four months after the workshop. Overall, 18 students participated in four focus groups/group interviews: two Year 1 students, two Year 2 students, five Year 3 students, and nine Year 4 students. The focus groups were completed by the first two authors (MB and MR)

The interview guide for the focus groups was developed specifically for the study and students were asked to speak about the positive and negative aspects of the workshop’s content and format. They were asked whether they thought these types of workshops should be continued, whether they supported development of their knowledge and skills, and for improvements suggestions for future workshops. See Table 1 for indicative focus group questions. All focus groups were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim.

Table 1

Focus Group Indicative questions

1. The transition workshops were designed to support your re-connection with the theory you have learnt so far in your program and its connection to practice. Can you start by telling us your thoughts about whether the workshops met this aim?
2. What worked well for you in the transition workshops in terms of format and content?
3. What worked well for you in the transition workshops in terms of learning outcomes, your engagement and learning experience?
4. What didn’t work well for you in the transition workshops in terms of format and content?
5. What didn’t work well for you in the transition workshops in terms of learning outcomes, your engagement and learning experience?
6. What suggestions do you have to improve the transition workshops in the future?
7. Is there anything you would like to share that you haven’t been able to regarding your experience of, or ideas for, the transition workshops?

Data Analysis

The verbatim transcripts of the focus groups were imported into a QSR International NVivo 12® project and coded by an experienced and independent qualitative researcher (the third author) who was not involved with the education of the students, using a qualitative descriptive approach as described by Stanley (2015). The framework for coding was based on the structure of the questions that were asked during the focus group and used inductive open coding for unanticipated responses. Codes were collapsed into categories and subsequently descriptive themes were generated. There was one short open-ended question asked in the students' surveys. Verbatim responses to this question were explored by content analysis (Liamputtong & Serry, 2016) to ascertain the number of responses that expressed an experience of benefit from participating in the workshop compared to the number of responses that expressed no benefit or mixed benefit. The descriptive themes and summarised responses from the content analysis were discussed and reviewed in research team meetings to ensure a peer review during the analysis process.

The quantitative data from the surveys were imported into SPSS Version 27. Descriptive statistics were used to interpret student responses about "usefulness" (from the IMI). Students' pre- and post-workshop knowledge and confidence in using the four pillars were compared using Wilcoxon signed rank tests. Effect sizes were calculated to give an indication of the size of change that occurred in student knowledge and confidence resulting from participation in the workshop. Not all students answered all questions, so comparison analysis was only completed on matching sets of data.

Results

The students viewed the Transition Workshops as being beneficial. Content analysis of the students' short responses when asked to describe their experience by completing the sentence: "This workshop has ..." resulted in 198 beneficial experiences and only 10 experiences that were not beneficial or of mixed benefit (there was some benefit but also some disadvantage); thus, 95% of respondents considered the workshop to be advantageous. Analysis of survey data for the sub domain of usefulness showed that students perceived high levels of value from engaging in the Transition Workshops (Figure 1). There was a statistically significant increase in scores of students' perception of their levels of knowledge and confidence for all four pillars (Table 2). The effect sizes ranged from small to medium.

From the focus group data there were three themes that described the students' experiences of involvement in the Transition Workshops: (1) revision of prior learning and priming for the next stage of learning; (2) facilitated knowledge of how theory applies to practice; and (3) built self-confidence for practice education. The students were asked about drawbacks of the workshop and ways in which they could be improved, however, there was no consensus or clear theme pertinent to problems or improvements. For example, one student thought there was repetition of learning content, however, another student from that year found the repetition invaluable, whilst another student considered the same activity provided a fresh perspective on the issue:

Facilitator: You're saying it felt like we've done this before?

Student 1: Yeah and I felt like it wasn't really extended that much.

- Student 2: I get what you're saying but I felt like that was necessary for me coming from the big break [from university] to go over, reset, go over it again.
- Student 3: And also, in terms of being able to bring in those four pillars into your definition of occupational therapy when you're describing it to someone who doesn't necessarily know what those pillars mean but it's really important in your practice that they know those things (Year 4 focus group).

Revision of prior learning and priming for the next stage of learning

Transition Workshops for Year 2, Year 3, and Year 4 students were the first teaching and learning activities engaged in at the beginning of the new academic year. The students described the workshops as an effective way of bringing existing knowledge together and launching the forthcoming year. "I think for me the most important part was helping to re-engage. Yeah, it was a really great summary of what had happened the year before and psychologically it got me excited about doing OT [occupational therapy] for second year, which wasn't something I was actually expecting" (Year 2 focus group).

The Transition Workshop for Year 1 students occurred mid-year, just prior to the start of the second semester. Similarly, to the other students, Year 1 students considered that the Transition Workshops provided both opportunities for revision and also for looking forward to the next stage of learning:

It gives you an insight to trimester 2 and what you're going to investigate and learn. It also gives you ... like a layout of what you've also learnt in first trimester. Yep, it gives you yeah, [a] summary. It gives you a summary of Trimester 1 but also introduces what you're going to do in Trimester 2. (Year 1 student focus group)

Figure 1

Percentage of students who indicated a high level of agreement (scores of 6 and 7) for usefulness domain of the Intrinsic Motivation Inventory related to the Transition Workshops

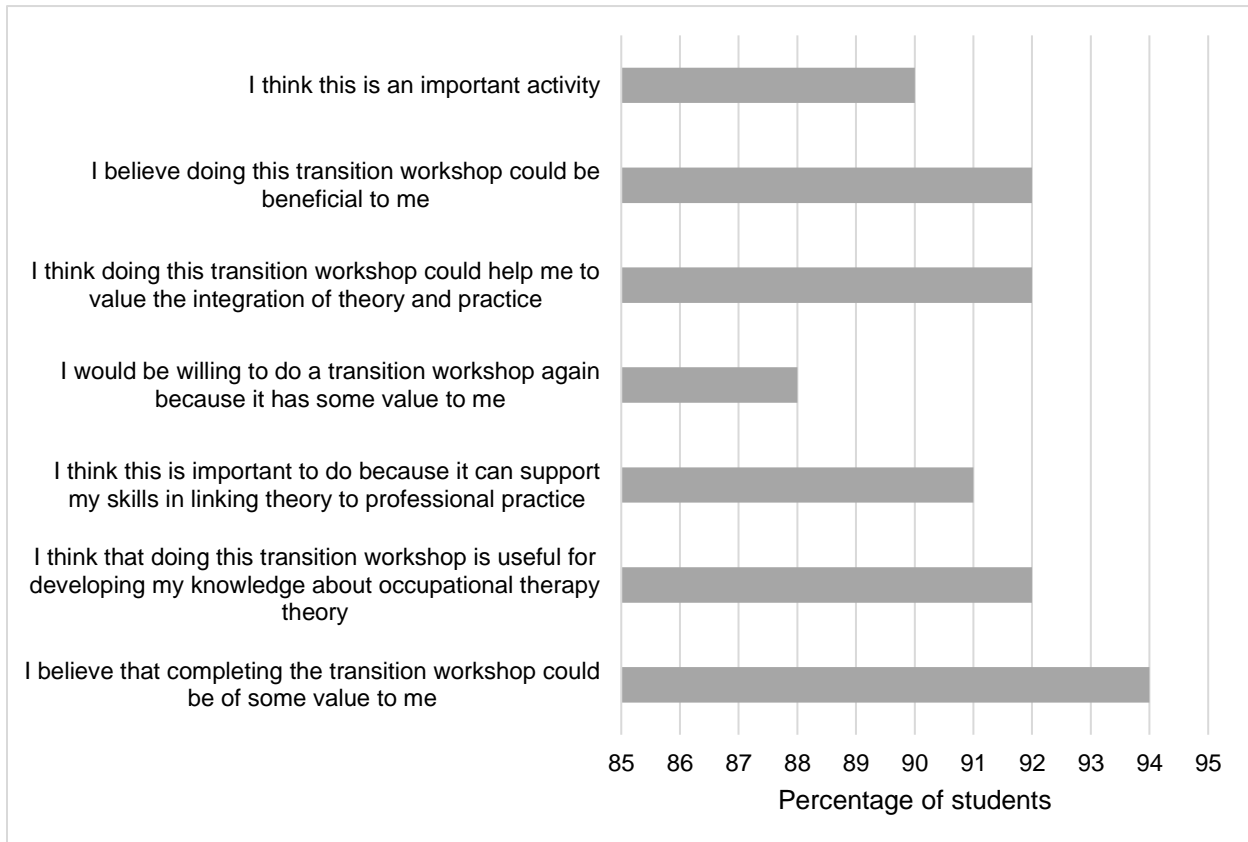


Table 2*Comparison of students' perceived level of knowledge and confidence pre- and post-workshop*

Variable	N	Z score	p value	Effect Size (r)
I have a sound understanding of evidence-based practice relevant to where I am up to in the occupational therapy program	219	-5.345	p < 0.01	0.25
I feel confident in my ability to explain evidence-based practice to another person	219	-6.995	p < 0.01	0.33
I feel confident in my ability to implement evidence-based practice	219	-8.982	p < 0.01	0.43
I have a sound understanding of theory-driven practice relevant to where I am up to in the occupational therapy program	218	-7.669	p < 0.01	0.37
I feel confident in my ability to explain theory-driven practice to another person	219	-9.116	p < 0.01	0.44
I feel confident in my ability to implement theory-driven practice	218	-9.298	p < 0.01	0.44
I have a sound understanding of client-centred practice relevant to where I am up to in the occupational therapy program.	218	-7.196	p < 0.01	0.34
I feel confident in my ability to explain client-centred practice to another person	219	-6.190	p < 0.01	0.30
I feel confident in my ability to implement client-centred practice	219	-8.327	p < 0.01	0.40
I have a sound understanding of occupation-centred practice relevant to where I am up to in the occupational therapy program.	218	-8.060	p < 0.01	0.39
I feel confident in my ability to explain occupation-centred practice to another person	219	-8.561	p < 0.01	0.41
I feel confident in my ability to implement occupation-centred practice	219	-9.34	p < 0.01	0.45

Although students found the workshops to be intellectually challenging, they considered them to be an effective way of tuning back into academic and occupational therapy thinking: “[It] enabled me to refresh my memory and link theory to practice again. It has been a good way to launch into second year” (Year 2 survey). The Transition Workshops provided the opportunity for students to remember concepts from their previous year/s of study and to prepare for the forthcoming academic year. A Year 2 student commented, via the survey, that the workshop had “been great for revision and also for a window into the coming year.” A Year 4 student wrote on their survey that the Transition Workshop “encouraged me to start thinking like a 4th year”.

Another way in which the Transition Workshops helped to initiate learning for the year was by building enthusiasm and an expectation of further development:

I walked out feeling like “Yes! This is fourth year” you know. We're stepping it up. Yeah like our definition had to be you know, amped up from you know, just self-care, productivity and leisure and yeah looking at the guidelines, the evidence-based practice. I could just

feel like “yes, this is fourth year you know, time to step things up a notch” (Year 4 student focus group)

Facilitated knowledge of how theory applies to practice

The main purpose of the Transition Workshops was to help students to have a better understanding of theory and how it can be applied to practice. It was pleasing, therefore, to see that this aim was achieved. [The workshop] “helped show what OTs [occupational therapists] do, linking the theory we learn to practising it” (Year 1 survey). [The workshop] “helped me to understand how we apply some of the theory we have previously learnt, into a clinical/practical setting” (Year 1 survey). “The practical component [of the Transition Workshop] too, it was fantastic you know, it really took what we had learnt in first year as theory and said this is how we're going to go about looking at it in a practical way and that was wonderful” (Year 2 focus group).

The workshops helped the students learn about theory and how it related to their particular skill set. Students extrapolated their existing learning to consider what they knew and also what they still needed to learn and develop. “This workshop has highlighted both what I have a solid understanding of, as well as what I need to revise” (Year 3 survey). [The workshop has] “shown me where there are gaps in my understanding in the theory; has helped me to understand the importance of linking theory for practice; has also shown me I need to learn how to explain content with my own voice, and not [a] textbook” (Year 3 survey). “It was really nice to try and articulate what I know and obviously see the gaps” (Year 4 focus group).

The students appreciated being informed, plainly and openly, about the underlying teaching philosophy on which the Bachelor of Occupational Therapy was built. For example, Year 2 students said “it's been amazing, and everything is explicit and explained and the links are clear” and “everything was there you know, they talked about the four pillars and they broke it down for us and they outlined exactly what they were doing and why” (Year 2 focus group). Clarity and simplicity in presentation meant that students developed a clear picture about how philosophical ideas underpinned practice actions: “we'd never like put them categorically as the four pillars ... I guess it's only really been in the workshop that it was mentioned really concretely ... It gave like a good metaphor that yeah the four pillars supported everything” (Year 1 focus group).

Built self-confidence for practice education placements

Another aim of the workshops was to assist students to develop confidence in being able to relate theory to practice, and student feedback attested that this target was also achieved. A Year 4 student wrote in their survey that “it has also shown me that I am able to clearly articulate what I've learned and I do know what I'm talking about which really helps boost confidence right before we start prac [practice education]”. A Year 4 student developed composure through completing workshop activities:

I found that helped me with MDT [multi-disciplinary team] meetings in placement... they're asking you what you're doing with a patient. Having that like chance to articulate and explain in an area that you might have absolutely no idea in beforehand and you've

actually got this experience; it allows you to be more confident in that situation...I felt that was actually a very good, helpful thing (Year 4 student focus group)

Using a colloquial expression for achieving outstanding success, another Year 4 student said succinctly, "It just really set us up well to get into prac ed [practice education] and then smash it!" (Year 4 student focus group).

The Transition Workshops enabled the students to prepare for the realities of placement as they practised giving a theoretical- and evidence-based rationale for their practice actions.

It was straight from what they would expect at placement so you're ready for that before you had to go to your first day at placement... Like if I went to my first day of placement without those classes...it would be a very different story [laughs]. (Year 4 student focus group)

Discussion and implications

Student responses in both the quantitative and qualitative elements of the study revealed that the Transition Workshops were effective in helping them know how to apply theory-into-practice and to develop confidence in doing this. One of the key facilitators in assisting students to develop their skills and confidence appears to have been the overt way in which theory-into-practice was discussed. This finding is consistent with other approaches to teaching theory-into-practice. Leclair et al. (2013) asserted that using an explicit and intentional process (such as the Theory Advancement Process) for helping occupational therapy students to translate theory-into-practice should be considered. Similarly, Ikiugu and Smallfield (2011, 2015) advocated for explicit teaching for students to be more systematic and deliberate about how they applied theory-into-practice and that using Ikiugu's eclectic method of combining theories increased students' confidence in using theory.

The finding that the Transition Workshops were a revision, and launching, of future study activities can be explained by the timing of the workshops (as the first teaching activity of the year for three of the four-year levels) and the content of the workshops. The workshops explicitly focused on foundational philosophical principles and theory, thus, reinforcing this knowledge and bringing it to the forefront of students' minds. By focusing on the core tenets of occupational therapy, the students were assisted to see more clearly the fundamental purpose of occupational therapy and their role in the occupational therapy process. Accordingly, the Transition Workshops were priming the students for the coming year or trimester of study and showing them the pathways of learning they would be expected to follow in the ensuing year/trimester.

The students, particularly those in Year 4, felt more prepared for practice education by participating in the Transition Workshops, because they were able to develop the skills to explain the theory and evidence-base that underpins practice. Previous research has identified that when educators and occupational therapy practitioners value theory and have sufficient "theoretical language" to discuss theoretical concepts, then students are more likely to also value use of theory and to be able to apply it in practice more easily (Banks et al., 2000; Towns & Ashby, 2014). Our research adds to the belief that developing the ability to explicitly articulate theory is likely to result in better and more confident usage of theory in practice. The Transition Workshops are one way of achieving this goal.

Currently, there is “a paucity of research investigating how occupational therapy students can be specifically instructed to ensure development of competencies in use of theory in clinical decision-making” (Ikiugu & Smallfield, 2015, p. 174) and, therefore, our study strengthens understanding in this infrequently-researched area. However, some questions that arise from our study and previous research include whether there is one method that should always be applied, or if a range of methods of teaching theory-into-practice result in more effective learning, or if there are contextual circumstances in which one method is superior to others? These questions would be interesting foci for future studies.

Another question raised is whether learning how to apply theory at the pre-practice level will result in sustained use of theory across time as a practitioner. Nash and Mitchell's (2017) qualitative study of 34 occupational therapy students found that although the students' valuing of frames of reference was initially increased through learning about theory during academic study, as they were exposed to practice education experiences their valuing of theory decreased. The students' esteem of theory lessened when they worked with practitioners who appeared not to use theory in their practice and who struggled to adequately describe and explain how they used theory. Therefore, future studies could investigate the interactions between practice educators and students on placement regarding how theory is used by educators and students in practice education placements.

This study was driven by the ongoing challenge to support our occupational therapy students to integrate theory-into-practice, a challenge shared across numerous health disciplines. Our results provide practice-based evidence that program-level designed Transition Workshops, based on the four pillars, are one effective curriculum approach that supports students with this integration. We propose that such a model, uniquely designed to address discipline specific theoretical constructs and threshold concepts at critical points in the curriculum, has applicability to support students in other health programs. We note that there is a plethora of research which now explores 'program-level' initiatives in curriculum. One such example is the increasing focus on program-level assessment design in recognition that it enables sequential development of knowledge (Charlton et al., 2022). There has been recognition that, for assessment, health professional accreditation standards and university policy are factors which positive influence this practice (Charlton & Newsham-West, 2023). We contend that accreditation standards and university policy also have the potential to guide academics to implement program-level approaches to both theory-into-practice constructs and discipline specific threshold concepts. Based on our findings, we recommend the consideration of such expectations within curriculum, evaluated across the curriculum and into graduate practice through scholarly enquiry.

Limitations

This study evaluated a local learning situation in one university undergraduate occupational therapy degree program at one point in time. Therefore, the findings may not be relevant to other institutions or degree programs. There was a significant time delay for some students between the Transition Workshop and their focus group due to curriculum timetabling, which may have impacted their ability to recall accurately what was covered in their Transition Workshop. The long-term impact of the Transition Workshops is not known. The survey relied upon self-ratings and was, therefore, based on perception rather than objective measurement of learning.

Conclusion

Teaching theory for professional practice is not straightforward, because practice itself is unpredictable, complex, and contextually-determined by individuals and environments. It is, therefore, valuable to innovate and explore new ways of helping student health professionals, such as occupational therapy students integrate theory-into-practice. Through such an innovation, the Transition Workshops, we discovered that occupational therapy students could be assisted to better understand the foundational pillars of occupational therapy and apply them to practice. We propose that a programmatic approach to theory-into-practice, targeting discipline specific threshold concepts, may also be of benefit to other health and professional programs. We advocate for the inclusion of this approach through higher education institutional policies.

Conflict of Interest

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Appendix 1

1. Demographic data:

1.	What is the first letter of your father's first name?	<i>Select A – Z from the list provided</i>
2.	What is the first letter of your mother's first name?	<i>Select A – Z from the list provided</i>
3.	What is your month of birth?	<i>Select from the list provided</i>
4.	What year of the program are you currently enrolled in?	Year 1 Year 2 Year 3 Year 4

2. Student Knowledge:

We are interested in your evaluation of your knowledge of the four theoretical concepts underpinning the Bachelor of Occupational Therapy. Please select the response that best describes your current rating for each of the following statements. **Please reflect on your knowledge at this current stage of your undergraduate training.**

		SD	D	U	A	SA
1.	I have a sound understanding of evidence-based practice relevant to where I am up to in the occupational therapy program. <i>In answering this question, please consider the content you have been provided in the program to date.</i>					
2.	I have a sound understanding of theory-driven practice relevant to where I am up to in the occupational therapy program. <i>In answering this question, please consider the content you have been provided in the program to date.</i>					
3.	I have a sound understanding of client-centred practice relevant to where I am up to in the occupational therapy program. <i>In answering this question, please consider the content you have been provided in the program to date.</i>					

4.	I have a sound understanding of occupation-centred practice relevant to where I am up to in the occupational therapy program. <i>In answering this question, please consider the content you have been provided in the program to date.</i>					
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SD = Strongly disagree, D = Disagree, U = Undecided, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

3. Student confidence:

We are interested in your evaluation of your confidence in applying theoretical concepts in professional occupational therapy practice. Please select the response that best describes your current rating for each of the following statements. **Please reflect on your confidence at this current stage of your undergraduate training.**

I feel confident in my ability:

		SD	D	U	A	SA
1.	To explain evidence-based practice to another person					
2.	To implement evidence-based practice					
3.	To explain theory-driven practice to another person					
4.	To implement theory-driven practice					
5.	To explain client-centred practice to another person					
6.	To implement client-centred practice					
7.	To explain occupation-centred practice to another person					
8.	To implement occupation-centred practice					

SD = Strongly disagree, D = Disagree, U = Undecided, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

4. Usefulness of the Transition Workshop (ONLY ASKED IN POST-WORKSHOP VERSION)

We are interested in your experiences of participating in the transition workshop and its associated activities. For each of the statements below, **please indicate how true the statement is for you**, using the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>Not at all</i>			<i>Somewhat</i>			<i>Very true</i>

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	I believe that completing the transition workshop could be of some value to me.							
2.	I think that doing this transition workshop is useful for developing my knowledge about occupational therapy theory.							
3.	I think this is important to do because it can support my skills in linking theory to professional practice.							
4.	I would be willing to do a transition workshop again because it has some value to me.							
5.	I think doing this transition workshop could help me to value the integration of theory and practice.							
6.	I believe doing this transition workshop could be beneficial to me.							
7.	I think this is an important activity.							

5. Usefulness of co-teaching

This workshop had two academic staff members in attendance. Please indicate how true the following statement is for you.

		SD	D	U	A	SA
1.	Having more than one academic teaching this workshop enhanced my learning experience.					

SD = Strongly disagree, D = Disagree, U = Undecided, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

Please explain your response in more detail here

This workshop involved student occupational therapists in the delivery of workshop content. **Please indicate how true the following statement is for you.**

		SD	D	U	A	SA
1.	Having student occupational therapists co-teach this workshop enhanced my learning experience.					

SD = Strongly disagree, D = Disagree, U = Undecided, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

Please explain your response in more detail here

6. Overall perception of the transition workshop

Reflect on the transition workshop and provide a response that best describes your experience

This workshop has ...

Involvement in further data collection

We are interested to understand student experiences of the content and format of the transition workshop through a semi-structured focus group. These focus groups will occur at university and will last between 45-60 minutes. If you would be interested and willing to participate in this aspect of the study, please provide your student email below. Please note that your email information will be separated from your survey responses to ensure your confidentiality. A research assistant will pass on your email address to the researchers.

Please list your email here: