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## Collaborative Fieldwork Supervision Model Supports Identified by Occupational Therapy Fieldwork Educators

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# Collaborative Fieldwork Supervision Model Supports Identified by Occupational Therapy Fieldwork Educators

## Abstract

Within the occupational therapy (OT) profession, the collaborative fieldwork supervision model is considered a non-traditional approach to fieldwork education. Although supportive strategies for fieldwork education have been developed, there is little data to validate fieldwork educators' perspectives on the value and helpfulness of these supports for this model. Using a mixed-methods research design, this study aimed to identify what supports influenced fieldwork educators to use the collaborative fieldwork supervision model, what supports are valued when implementing it, and what supports would be considered helpful for those who have not used it. A total of 382 fieldwork educators completed the study, with 113 who identified as model users and 269 who identified as model non-users. Four themes emerged from model users that influenced their decision to use the model: support from 1) fieldwork site context, 2) academic program, 3) student engagement, and 4) professional resources. Based on the study results, a four-part approach is recommended for educational programs to support the initiation and use of the collaborative fieldwork supervision model.

## Keywords

Collaborative fieldwork supervision model, fieldwork education, occupational therapy, fieldwork support

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## Collaborative Fieldwork Supervision Model Supports Identified by Occupational Therapy Fieldwork Educators

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### ABSTRACT

Within the occupational therapy (OT) profession, the collaborative fieldwork supervision model is considered a non-traditional approach to fieldwork education. Although supportive strategies for fieldwork education have been developed, there is little data to validate fieldwork educators' perspectives on the value and helpfulness of these supports for this model. Using a mixed-methods research design, this study aimed to identify what supports influenced fieldwork educators to use the collaborative fieldwork supervision model, what supports are valued when implementing it, and what supports would be considered helpful for those who have not used it. A total of 382 fieldwork educators completed the study, with 113 who identified as model users and 269 who identified as model non-users. Four themes emerged from model users that influenced their decision to use the model: support from 1) fieldwork site context, 2) academic program, 3) student engagement, and 4) professional resources. Based on the study results, a four-part approach is recommended for educational programs to support the initiation and use of the collaborative fieldwork supervision model.

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## **Introduction**

Quality fieldwork education is a critical process for occupational therapy (OT) and occupational therapy assistant (OTA) students in their educational journey to become entry-level practitioners. The collaborative fieldwork supervision model within the OT profession is a non-traditional approach utilized by fieldwork educators to supervise future OT practitioners while they complete their fieldwork education. This model uses peer-assisted learning techniques, where students from similar programs help each other to learn (Guraya & Abdalla, 2020), and is a process-oriented approach that allows students to work cooperatively to acquire knowledge and skills (Cohn et al., 2001). In this model, the fieldwork educator facilitates, coaches, and mentors students throughout the experience (Hanson & Deluliis, 2015). The collaborative fieldwork supervision model provides a context for students to enhance their teamwork and problem-solving skills as they learn with and from each other (Topping, 2005). Its use in fieldwork supervision is a stark contrast to the more traditional apprenticeship model, where one fieldwork educator supervises and provides directives to one student at a time (Evenson et al., 2015; Sevenhuysen et al., 2014). Although the collaborative fieldwork supervision model was introduced to the OT profession over two decades ago (Cohn et al., 2001), it continues to be underutilized, with only 30% of Level II fieldwork educators surveyed reporting having used it (Hanson et al., 2019).

Challenges for fieldwork educators who have used the model and those who have not used the model have been identified, such as students' professionalism and knowledge, the client's needs and comfort level, and fieldwork educators' knowledge and skills about this supervisory approach (Rogers et al., 2022), while specific supports desired by these fieldwork educators for model use are still unclear. Research suggests support is needed and desired by fieldwork educators (Cohn et al., 2001; Evenson et al., 2015; Hanson & Deluliis, 2015), thus obtaining direct perspectives of fieldwork educators are needed to foster an evidence-based approach for model use, validate the usefulness of existing supports and identify additional supports that need to be developed. Therefore, this study aimed to identify what supports influenced the use of the collaborative fieldwork supervision model, what supports are valued when implementing it by fieldwork educators, and what supports would be considered helpful for those who have not used it.

## **Background**

The collaborative fieldwork supervision model within the OT profession is often described as one fieldwork educator supervising two or more students (1:2) throughout a fieldwork experience. This model allows for positive interdependence where students focus not only on their success but the success of others, individual and group accountability for tasks and goals, and interpersonal and teamwork skills (Johnson & Johnson, 1990; Hanson & Deluliis, 2015). In contrast to this model, other approaches to fieldwork supervision are the traditional apprenticeship approach (1:1), where the fieldwork educator is viewed as the expert to one student, and the multiple mentoring model (2:1), when two fieldwork educators work collaboratively to supervise one student (Graves & Hanson, 2014; Hanson & Deluliis, 2015; Kinsella & Piersol, 2018; Oldenburg et al., 2020; Sevenhuysen et al., 2017). The collaborative fieldwork supervision model

has been used in various practice settings over the past several decades in health profession training programs (Alpine et al., 2019; Bartholomai & Fitzgerald, 2007; Briffa & Porter, 2013; Lekkas et al., 2007; Rindflesch et al., 2009). This model is equal in rigor for practice education outcomes across the OT and physical therapy professions (Alpine et al., 2019; Lekkas et al., 2007; Loewen et al., 2017; Martin et al., 2004). Several benefits have been reported for model use, including more opportunities for peer learning, shared problem-solving, increased autonomy and confidence, and the availability of peer support (Carey et al., 2018; Dawes & Lambert, 2010; Hill et al., 2020; Loewen et al., 2017; Price & Whiteside, 2016; Sevenhuysen et al., 2014).

In 2015, 694 occupational therapists and 41 occupational therapy assistants completed a national survey about fieldwork education, with a small number of respondents (15% OT; 2% OTA) indicating they have used the collaborative fieldwork supervision model (Evenson et al., 2015). The survey results indicated that fieldwork educators' most challenging factors related to fieldwork education were having the necessary resources to support the fieldwork program and student readiness for placement. When asked to identify helpful items, approximately 54% of respondents reported sample student objectives as beneficial. Sample weekly schedules and information on the management of unprofessional behavior were identified as desired by 51% of respondents. Fieldwork educator self-assessments (49%) and remediation plans before student failure (49%) were also identified as helpful. The academic fieldwork coordinator's (AFWC) availability to help resolve potential problems was highly valued by 76% of respondents, along with the availability for face-to-face meetings with the student and fieldwork educator if needed (70%). While this data is helpful for fieldwork education in general, further exploration is needed to determine whether any specific supports are desired by fieldwork educators who have used or would like to use the collaborative fieldwork supervision model.

Price and Whiteside (2016) interviewed eight Australian fieldwork educators about their perceptions of the collaborative fieldwork supervision model before and after using it with students. Study participants noted the value of professional colleague support when using this model and resources describing the focus and use of the model. They also identified practical supports as helpful, such as coverage for the annual leave of staff responsible for student supervision. Hanson and Deluliis (2015) suggested that unique supports are needed for the successful use of this model, including resources to help students, clinical site coordinators, and fieldwork educators to prepare in advance of student arrival and during student placement. They described strategies for student orientation, scheduling clients, sequencing of learning activities across the Level II fieldwork placement, and strategies for student supervision and feedback. However, the strategies suggested by Hanson and Deluliis (2015) and Price and Whiteside (2016) have not yet been verified by the wider fieldwork educator community regarding the collaborative fieldwork supervision model. In addition, minimal literature describes the types of support that would be considered helpful by non-users of the collaborative fieldwork supervision model.

The term *support* in this study is defined as anything extrinsic to the fieldwork educator that may assist them when initiating and implementing the collaborative fieldwork supervision model. The following research questions guided the study:

1. What supports do fieldwork educators who use the collaborative fieldwork supervision model value when implementing this model?
2. What supports have influenced fieldwork educators' decision to utilize the collaborative fieldwork supervision model?
3. What supports would fieldwork educators who have not used the collaborative fieldwork supervision model perceive as helpful to model implementation?

## Methods

### Research Design

The researchers received approval from their respective university's institutional review boards to perform this study. This study used a mixed-methods approach with a convergent design, also known as a concurrent design (Fetters et al., 2013). This design allowed the researchers to comprehensively understand the issues surrounding the research problem (Creswell & Clark, 2018). The researchers collected quantitative and qualitative data using a survey to better understand what supports are valuable to those who have used the model and what supports would be helpful to those who have not used the model.

### Survey Development

A survey was developed based on literature about the collaborative fieldwork supervision model, peer learning, and fieldwork in general. The investigators combined 80 years of lived experience serving in the AFWC role also supported the survey's development. The survey was intentionally created to collect quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously to understand this topic comprehensively.

An initial survey was constructed with 38 questions using an online platform, Qualtrics. It was categorized into four sections: demographics, beliefs about the benefits and limitations of the collaborative fieldwork supervision model, ease of use of the collaborative fieldwork supervision model strategies, and collaborative fieldwork supervision model supports. A pilot study was conducted to examine the readability and clarity of the survey questions. Seven OT practitioners that had served as fieldwork educators for the researchers' institutions completed the pilot study. Five had used the collaborative fieldwork supervision model, and two had not. Based on feedback from the pilot study respondents, the survey was revised to provide targeted questions based on the respondents' experience with the collaborative fieldwork supervision model and place survey questions in smaller sections.

The final survey was comprised of Likert scale, multiple-choice, and open-ended questions and was expected to take 15 minutes to complete. Demographic data were collected at the beginning of the survey for all respondents. The following definition of the collaborative fieldwork supervision model was provided at the start of the next sequence of questions to promote consistent and clear terminology and understanding of the survey's concept. The collaborative fieldwork supervision model is having one

fieldwork educator supervise two or more students and also includes “principles of positive interdependence, face-to-face interaction, individual accountability, cooperative skills, and group processing are built into the structure of the fieldwork learning experiences, students learn to problem solve together and develop creative intervention plans” (Cohn et al., 2001, p. 82).

The survey respondents were asked to self-identify if they had ever used the collaborative fieldwork supervision model to supervise Level II fieldwork students. Respondents who marked “no” were classified as model non-users and were asked to respond to 25 survey questions. Those who marked “yes” were classified as model users and were asked 30 survey questions. The additional questions asked to model users focused on familiarity with the model's associated teaching and learning strategies.

For this study, the questions included in the data analysis beyond the demographic questions may be found in Table 1.

**Table 1**

*Survey Questions*

| <b>Respondent Type</b> | <b>Question Type</b>           | <b>Question Content</b>   |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| Model Non-Users        | Multiple Choice, “yes” or “no” | <p>Would any of these supports be <b>helpful</b> if you were to implement a collaborative fieldwork supervision model for your Level II fieldwork students?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Availability of the AFWC by phone/email</li> <li>2) In-person continuing education about the collaborative fieldwork supervision model</li> <li>3) Written materials (i.e., samples, articles, templates)</li> <li>4) Resources listed on the academic program website</li> <li>5) On-line continuing education about the collaborative fieldwork supervision model</li> <li>6) Real-time meetings with students, fieldwork educator, and AFWC during a fieldwork rotation</li> <li>7) Regular check-ins by faculty and/or AFWC</li> <li>8) Networking with others who use the collaborative fieldwork supervision model</li> </ol> |

|             |   |  |
|-------------|---|--|
| Model Users | Five-point Likert Scale<br>(1 = not at all valuable to<br>5 = extremely valuable) | Rate your <b>value</b> of supports when implementing the collaborative fieldwork supervision model.<br><br><ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Availability of the AFWC by phone/email</li> <li>2) In-person continuing education about the collaborative fieldwork supervision model</li> <li>3) Written materials (i.e., samples, articles, templates)</li> <li>4) Resources listed on the academic program website</li> <li>5) On-line continuing education about the collaborative fieldwork supervision model</li> <li>6) Real-time meetings with students, fieldwork educator, and AFWC during a fieldwork rotation</li> <li>7) Regular check-ins by faculty and/or AFWC</li> <li>8) Networking with others who use the collaborative fieldwork supervision model</li> </ol>   |
| Model Users | Multiple selections<br>(up to 5)  | Which written materials would be most <b>helpful</b> to provide a more effective collaborative fieldwork placement?<br><br><ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Sample orientation plan</li> <li>2) Sample weekly schedules</li> <li>3) Sample individual student learning objectives</li> <li>4) Sample student team learning objectives</li> <li>5) Sample student weekly supervisory meeting forms</li> <li>6) Sample individual student learning activities</li> <li>7) Sample student team learning activities</li> <li>8) Articles on collaborative fieldwork supervision model</li> <li>9) Newsletters with fieldworker educator tips</li> <li>10) Information on scoring the AOTA Fieldwork Performance Evaluation</li> <li>11) Suggestions for providing feedback</li> </ol> |
| Model Users | Open ended question   | What supports have you experienced that have influenced your decision to utilize a collaborative fieldwork supervision model?  |



### **Data Collection**

An initial email with the study overview and a survey link was distributed to the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) Academic Fieldwork and Capstone Coordinator Listserv in the spring of 2018. The listserv includes AFWC and capstone coordinators from OT and OTA educational programs within the United States. At the time of email distribution, there were 418 accredited OT and OTA programs, with an allocation of 5% doctoral programs, 42% master's programs, and 53% associate programs. The email respondents were asked to send the survey to OT practitioners who served as corresponding Level II fieldwork educators for their program over the past five years. The survey was open for four months. Follow-up email reminders to forward the survey to fieldwork educators were distributed to the AOTA listserv.

### **Data Analysis**

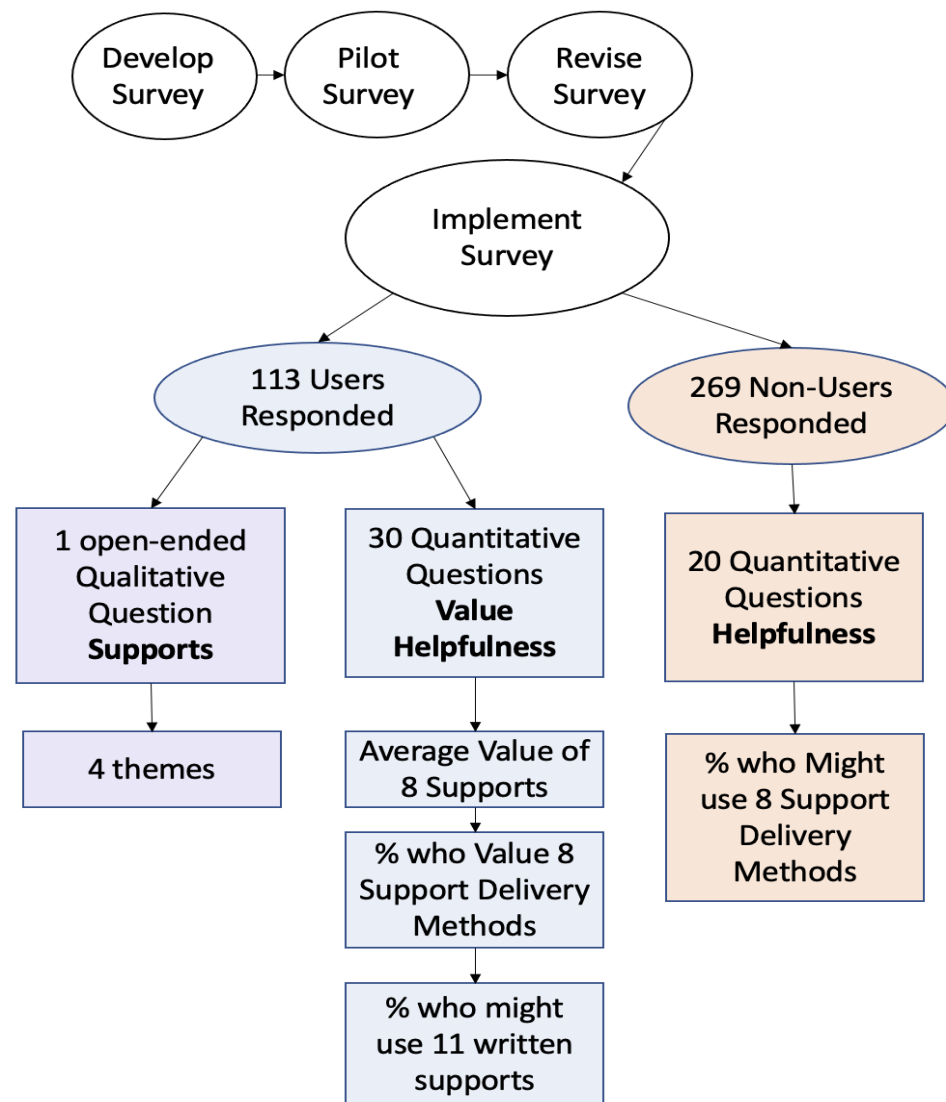
To align with the study's convergent design, quantitative and qualitative data were collected simultaneously (Creswell & Clark, 2018). After the data was collected, one research team member analyzed the quantitative data while another analyzed the qualitative data. Three research team members collectively reviewed the results of both analyses, and the team merged the results. Lastly, the entire group of researchers interpreted the merged results.

The following actions were completed to analyze the quantitative data. Means and averages were used to describe model users' Likert scale ratings of the value of supports provided. Percentages were used to describe the supports that non-users identified as potentially helpful and materials identified as most helpful by model users. Chi-square and independent t-tests were used to test any group differences. SAS v 9.4 was used for the quantitative analysis.

A thematic analysis approach was used to analyze the narrative data of the open-ended question. This approach was deemed the most appropriate due to the volume of narrative data gathered (Nowell et al., 2017). The researchers followed the five phases recommended by Nowell et al. (2017) to complete the thematic analysis, which included 1) familiarizing themselves with the data, 2) generating initial codes, 3) searching for themes, 4) reviewing themes, and 5) producing the report. Figure 1 outlines the methods of this research study.

**Figure 1**

## Methods

**Results**

A total of 382 fieldwork educators completed the survey in full. 113 respondents self-identified as model users and completed the quantitative data, while only 97 of those respondents answered the open-ended question. The remaining 269 survey respondents self-identified as model non-users.

Table 2 describes the survey respondents. The 113 users of the collaborative fieldwork supervision model had, on average, 2.5 more years of experience as an OT ( $p=.037$ ) and 3.5 more years with fieldwork supervision ( $p=.002$ ). They also supervised 1.2 more students per year ( $p<.001$ ), and on a Likert scale of one (not at all familiar) to five (extremely familiar), they were more familiar with the collaborative fieldwork supervision model (3.78) compared to non-users (2.17;  $p<.001$ ).

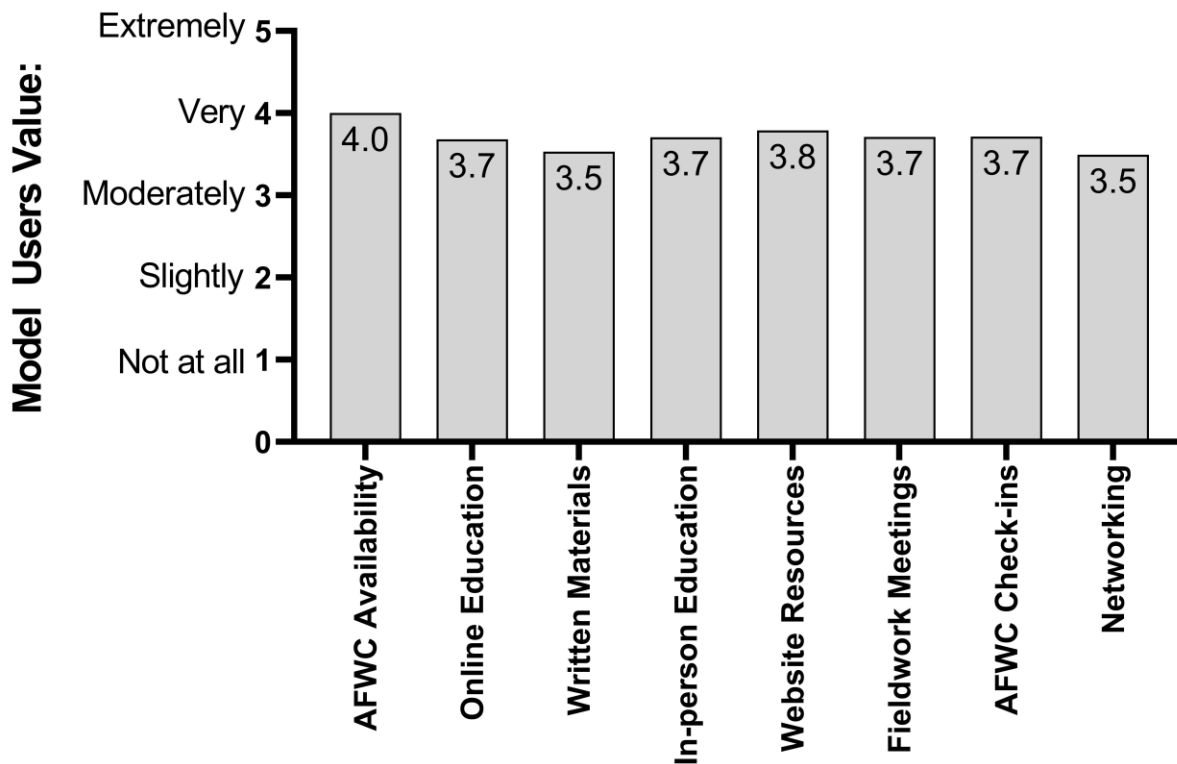
**Table 2***Description of Survey Respondents*

|                                     | <b>Model User</b> |             | <b>Model Non-User</b> |             |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------|-----------------------|-------------|
|                                     | <b>N</b>          | <b>%</b>    | <b>N</b>              | <b>%</b>    |
| OT                                  | 109               | 97.32       | 254                   | 97.48       |
| OTA                                 | 3                 | 2.68        | 7                     | 2.52        |
| *Missing                            | 1                 |             | 1                     |             |
| Role-Established Setting            | 108               | 95.58       | 258                   | 96.99       |
| Employed Full Time                  | 101               | 89.38       | 241                   | 89.59       |
| Bachelor's or<br>Associate's Degree | 42                | 37.17       | 91                    | 33.96       |
| Master's Degree                     | 50                | 44.25       | 148                   | 55.22       |
| Ph.D./Professional Degree           | 21                | 18.58       | 29                    | 10.82       |
| *Missing                            | 0                 |             | 1                     |             |
|                                     | <b>Mean</b>       | <b>S.D.</b> | <b>Mean</b>           | <b>S.D.</b> |
| Years of Experience in OT           | 17.47             | 10.82       | 14.96                 | 10.61       |
| Years of Experience in<br>fieldwork | 14.04             | 10.10       | 10.63                 | 9.30        |
| Number of Students per year         | 2.61              | 3.80        | 0.87                  | 0.65        |
| Familiarity with Model              | 3.78              | 1.23        | 2.17                  | 1.22        |

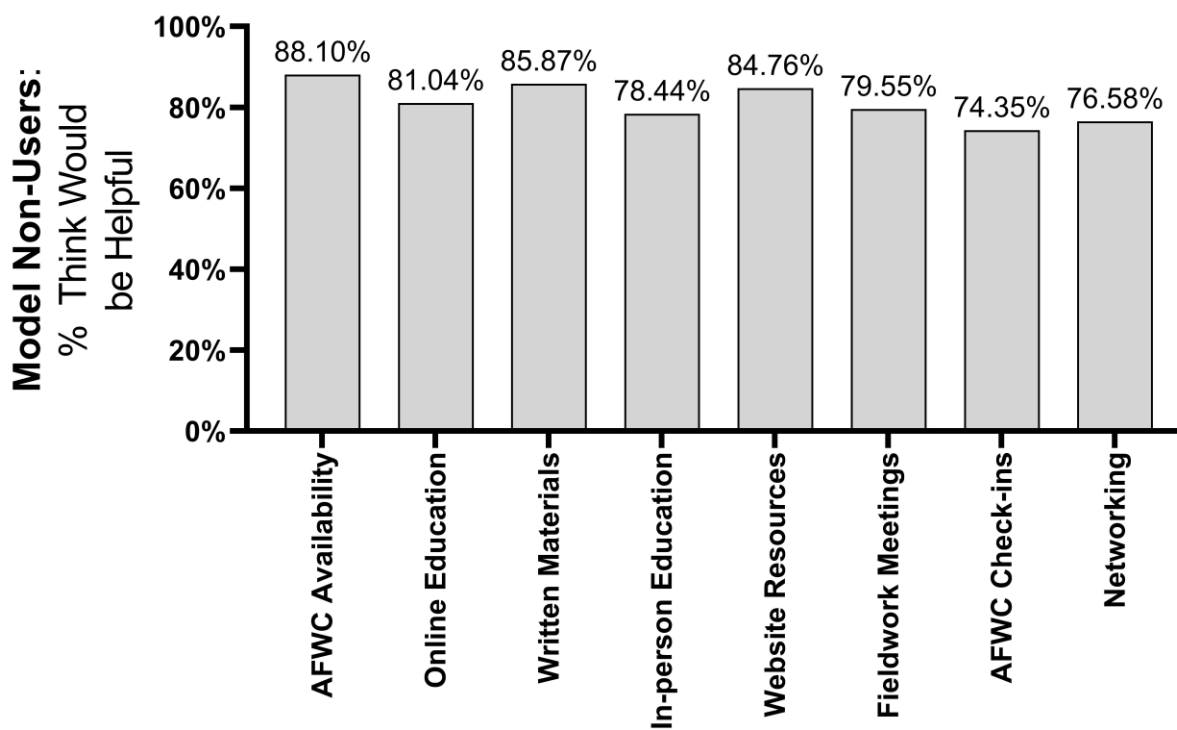
\* Missing values are included in the counts. They are not included in the percentages as those observations are not used in the analyses.

**Valued and Helpful Fieldwork Support**

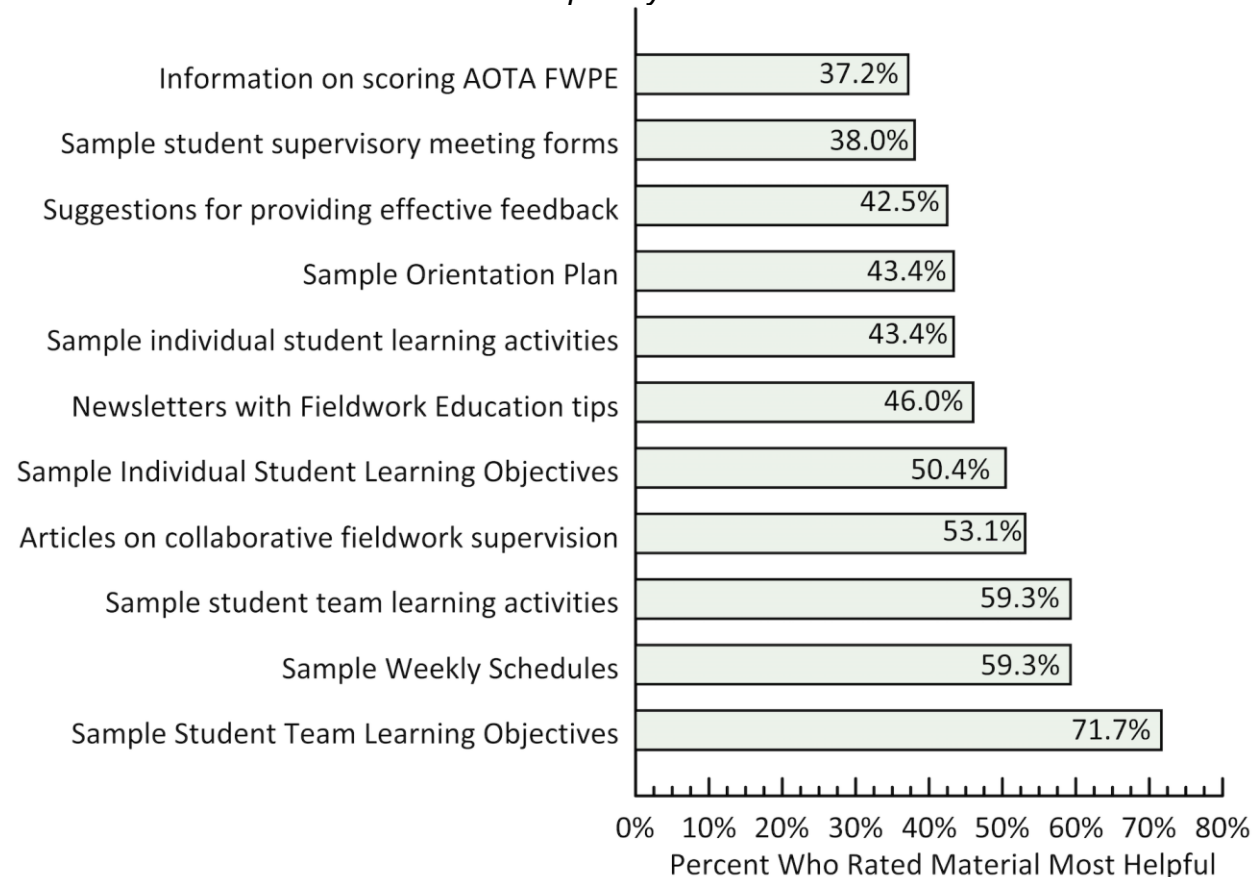
Model users were asked to rate their value of eight supports that may be provided by academic programs on a Likert scale of one (not at all valuable), two (slightly valuable), three (moderately valuable), four (very valuable), and five (extremely valuable). Figure 2 shows the average ratings for the supports identified as valuable by the model users. The average ratings ranged from 3.5 (written materials, e.g., samples, articles, or templates, S.D. 0.92) and networking with others who use the collaborative fieldwork supervision model, S.D. 1.05) to 4.0 (AFWC availability by phone/email, S.D. 0.93).

**Figure 2***Value of Supports for Model Users*

The 269 model non-users were asked a similar question about these eight supports. Non-users responded “yes” or “no” when asked if each of these supports would be helpful to them if they were to implement the collaborative fieldwork supervision model. Figure 3 outlines the percentage of model non-users who marked “yes” that the support listed would be helpful to them. The response ranged from 74% (regular check-ins by faculty and/or AFWC) to 88% (availability of the AFWC by phone/email).

**Figure 3***Supports that would be Helpful for Model Non-Users*

Model users were then given eleven written material options that may be provided as support by the academic program. The 113 model users were asked to identify up to five written materials that would be the most helpful to them to provide a more effective fieldwork experience when using the collaborative fieldwork supervision model. Figure 4 shows the percentage of respondents who indicated that a particular material would be the most helpful. The five most selected materials were samples for student team learning objectives (71%), weekly schedules (59%), student team learning activities (59%), articles on collaborative fieldwork supervision (53%), and samples for individual student learning objectives (50%). Information on scoring AOTA Fieldwork Performance Evaluations (37%) and sample student weekly supervisory meeting forms (38%) were the least selected written materials.

**Figure 4***Written Materials Identified as Most Helpful by Model Users***Supports Influencing Decision to Utilize the Model**

Model users were asked, *what supports have you experienced that have influenced your decision to utilize a collaborative fieldwork supervision model?* Out of the 97 model users who answered the open-ended question, 88 provided meaningful answers that were included in the data analysis. The included responses answered the open-ended question and ranged from a couple of words to a paragraph in length. The following four themes emerged after analyzing the data: 1) fieldwork site context, 2) academic program, 3) student engagement and 4) professional resources.

***Fieldwork Site Context***

Over one-third of the model users who responded to the question remarked that the support from their administration and OT and interprofessional colleagues at their fieldwork site influenced their decision to use the collaborative fieldwork supervision model, making this the most prominent theme. Respondents reported that having administrative support to provide clinical teaching at their facility, such as “a department director willing to try new things and is supportive,” influenced their decision to use this model. Additionally, respondents specifically noted that the administration supported using the collaborative fieldwork supervision model by “creating a leadership position

with increased pay to direct the collaborative model,” and their “supervisor really supported my desire to trial the collaborative model.” Support from OT colleagues was also noted, with one respondent saying, “our OT team at the hospital facilitates the entire learning process and consistently fosters collaborative teaching models”, and another reported that having “support from fellow OT staff” influenced their decision. Colleagues from other disciplines already “utilizing an informal collaborative model [with an interprofessional] student team” was the starting point for model initiation. Interprofessional colleagues also helped respondents by “using therapists from other disciplines to share some orientation and supervision responsibilities.”

### ***Academic Program***

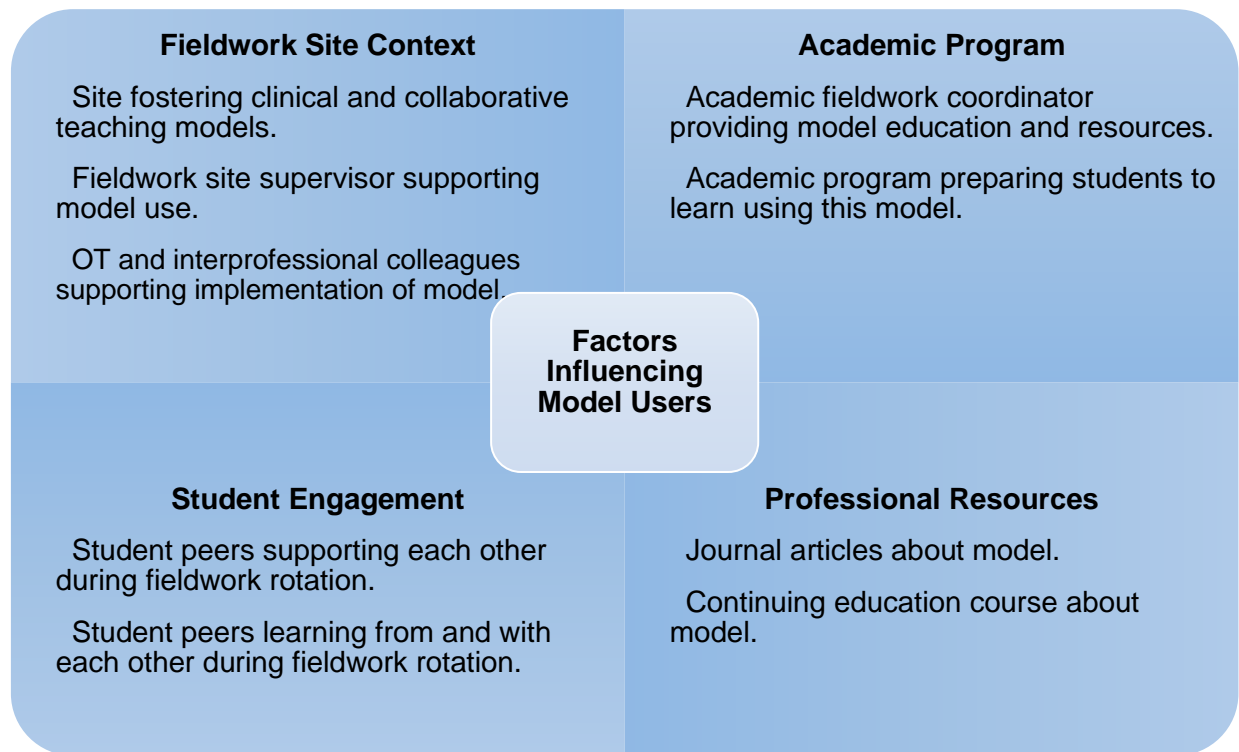
The second largest support identified by nearly one-third of the model users was the support given by the academic programs. This theme identified assistance and resources provided to the fieldwork educator by the AFWC and program. As one respondent stated, “when AFWC introduced the collaborative model, it gave me more tools to use and improve what we were doing.” The AFWC was most notably identified as the largest support within this theme. A few quotes highlighting the AFWC are how they “worked and spent time educating and providing helpful resources to better prepare me to use the collaborative approach” and simply “academic fieldwork coordinator support.” The resources given by the program were identified in conjunction with the program's faculty to prepare students to engage with this unique model. One respondent reported, “Having the school work with the students to prepare their mindset for this model as well as any resources for me” influenced their decision to utilize this model.

### ***Student Engagement***

Although not as prominent as the previous themes, several model users identified that students learning from and supporting each other when engaged in a collaborative fieldwork experience influenced their decision to use it. “The students seem to feel more comfortable when they have another student to bounce ideas off of” and “students enjoy the peer support between each group” were noted by respondents of how students support one another. A quote highlighting how students learn from one another while engaged in this type of fieldwork experience is, “They can learn from each other and may have more insight with each of them asking questions.”

### ***Professional Resources***

Model users did identify other supports provided than what was previously mentioned. However, they were only reported a few times, making this the least reported theme. Other supports identified included using journal articles and attending professional development training related to the collaborative fieldwork supervision model. One respondent reported, “Attending continuing education that encourages the collaborative fieldwork model”, and another wrote, “research articles.” Figure 5 represents the supports identified by model users.

**Figure 5***Identified Supports that Influenced Model Users' Decision to Use Model***Discussion**

The survey respondents were primarily occupational therapists who worked full-time in role-established practice settings and had not used the collaborative fieldwork supervision model. Fieldwork educators who had used this model had more experience as practitioners and fieldwork educators and supervised more students per year than those who had not. Additionally, model users were significantly more familiar with the collaborative fieldwork supervision model than those who had not used it. The high percentage of those who had not used this model and were not familiar with it may be attributed to the lack of the accreditation standard required for OT and OTA educational programs to teach about it (Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education, 2018) and the limited number of fieldwork educators who report using it to train others (Evenson et al., 2015; Hanson et al., 2019). The proliferation of fieldwork educators using this model will likely not occur without a concerted effort to educate students and practitioners about it. This effort may be initiated by academic programs teaching about different fieldwork supervision models to students and fieldwork educators when describing the purpose and expectations of level I and level II fieldwork rotations, in addition to state and national OT associations providing professional development opportunities specific to this model for practitioners to become more familiar with it.



The quantitative findings of this study provide insights as to the types of supports perceived as helpful by model non-users and experienced as valuable by model users. Model users rated all supports as moderately valuable to extremely valuable. Most model non-users indicated that the support options would be helpful if they implemented the collaborative fieldwork supervision model. Model non-users identified that the availability of the AFWC would be the most helpful support to implement this model. The AFWC was also found to be the most valued support by model users. Of particular importance is the attention given in the qualitative data to the role of the AFWC in supporting the decision to utilize the collaborative fieldwork supervision model. The AFWC appears to play a significant role in initiating the use of this model as a conduit for model education and being available to fieldwork educators during the fieldwork rotation to support all stakeholders. The AFWC can play a key role in educating those who have not used the collaborative fieldwork supervision model by helping them understand its key components to better evaluate its feasibility in their setting.

Following the AFWC availability, model users recognized website resources as the next most valuable support listed. Model non-users also identified website resources and written materials as the second and third most helpful supports that academic programs could provide. Interestingly, model users identified written materials as the least valuable support. However, when prompted, model users did indicate which written material would be the most helpful to provide a more effective fieldwork experience using the collaborative fieldwork supervision model. The five most selected supports by model users were samples for student team learning objectives, weekly schedules, student team learning activities, articles on collaborative fieldwork supervision, and samples for individual student learning objectives. Currently, there is no universally known website or standardized written materials about the collaborative fieldwork supervision model for fieldwork educators. Creating these supports is a prime opportunity for OT associations and academic programs to educate and help occupational therapy practitioners considering becoming fieldwork educators or currently serving in that role. Based on these study's findings, the written materials identified as valuable by model users should be prioritized when creating materials about the collaborative fieldwork supervision model.

Closely after the website resources, model users valued the support offered through continuing education classes and meetings, phone calls, and check-ins by the AFWC. Model non-users noted that these resources would also help implement the collaborative fieldwork supervision model, except for the AFWC check-in. Although considered average ratings, model non-users identified check-ins with the AFWC and networking to be the least reported support that would be considered helpful. Model users also identified networking as one of the least valuable resources that could be offered. Thus, academic programs should consider creating and implementing continuing education courses related to the collaborative fieldwork supervision model as opposed to hosting a related networking event that may be less appealing to both groups.

A notable qualitative finding from model users was how the support provided by their fieldwork site influenced their decision to use this model. Consideration of supports available from the fieldwork site for the collaborative fieldwork supervision model is a shift in thinking for those involved in fieldwork placements. Typically, fieldwork supports are conceptualized as coming from the academic sector and directed to the fieldwork educator rather than the fieldwork site (Evenson et al., 2015; Hanson & Deluliis, 2015). However, Hanson (2011) argued that therapists are more likely to commit to student supervision when provided with appropriate release time and an easement of productivity requirements, at least in the first quarter of the fieldwork placement. The importance of commitment by administration and colleagues in supporting this model of supervision points to the important role that the fieldwork site context plays in influencing the fieldwork educator's decision to use this model. There is a need for directed efforts toward providing education not only to fieldwork educators but also to all stakeholders at the fieldwork site so they can learn how to support the fieldwork educator and students for this model's successful initiation and use. In-person and real-time connections with the administration, colleagues, and fieldwork educator at the site would be the best means of offering fieldwork site support, as identified by the quantitative findings of this study. The AFWC could be a key player in accomplishing these tasks.

Students and their education are at the core of the collaborative fieldwork supervision model. Although students have identified the value of learning from each other in previous research (Alpine et al., 2019; Dawes & Lambert, 2010), the qualitative findings validate that fieldwork educators also recognize the benefit of students providing support to and learning from one another. Recognition by model users of the value of peer learning also lends support to the need for advanced preparation of students on the basic tenants of collaborative learning before fieldwork placement so that they are ready to engage in this constructive learning approach (Hanson & Deluliis, 2015).

### **Implications for Occupational Therapy Education**

Based on this study's findings, the authors suggest a four-part approach to encourage fieldwork educators to use the collaborative fieldwork supervision model and to support those who use it:

- Allocate dedicated time for the AFWC to learn about the collaborative fieldwork supervision model and to provide education and support to students, fieldwork educators, and fieldwork sites that do and do not utilize this model.
- Create and disseminate tangible resources (i.e., sample student team learning objectives, sample weekly schedules, sample student team learning activities, etc.) through written materials and online platforms to educate fieldwork educators about the collaborative fieldwork supervision model and to provide practical strategies for model implementation.
- Provide education to administrators and colleagues at fieldwork sites about the benefits of the collaborative fieldwork supervision model and recommendations for supporting the use of the model in their setting.

- Intentionally select and prepare students to know what to expect when they engage in a collaborative fieldwork placement so that they are prepared to provide support and learn from one another.

### Limitations

Significant measures were made to reduce limitations within this study, but a few have been noted. The researchers consciously made efforts to limit researcher bias, however, due to their experience serving in the AFWC role for an extended period, their experience and understanding of the collaborative fieldwork supervision model may have impacted the data analysis. The fieldwork educators who participated in the study may have been biased against or for using the model, which could have impacted the data. The survey was anonymous, so the researchers could not complete member checks or verify the accuracy of themes found in the narrative data. The study was conducted with fieldwork educators within the United States, so these results may not be generalizable to those supervising students in other countries. The fieldwork educators who completed the survey were primarily occupational therapists working in more traditional practice areas. Once again, this may limit the generalizability to OTAs and OT practitioners working in role-emerging practice settings.

### Conclusion

The results of this study explored model users' value of supports that can be made available by academic programs and provided insight into additional supports that influenced model use, including the fieldwork site context, academic program, student engagement, and professional resources specific to the collaborative fieldwork supervision model. Information was gleaned to better understand what supports were perceived as helpful to fieldwork educators who have yet to use the model. The study findings show that support provided by both the fieldwork site and the academic program is influential in the fieldwork educators' decision to utilize the collaborative fieldwork supervision model. Model users identified the availability and engagement of the AFWC to support fieldwork educators as highly valuable. Similarly, model non-users perceived the AFWC would be the most helpful support. A four-part approach is suggested based on these study findings, including the allocation of dedicated time for the AFWC to learn and educate others about this model, the development of tangible supports for both model users and model non-users, coupled with the ongoing communication between stakeholders in fieldwork education and preparation of students.

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