Information Gathering

Researchers split into four groups and compiled a research proposal. This was done so that every researcher could understand the research process. Within these four groups, literature reviews were also conducted. This was done to find information on similar studies to help us form questions for the questionnaire, and to give us results to compare with.

Participant Recruitment

To gather participants contact details, the researchers searched through the Southland Times Archives, Massage New Zealand website and Facebook. A snowball email was then sent out to these participants in April 2013, to try to gather any other contacts that we did not already have.

Questionnaire

A self-report questionnaire, comprised of four sections, was designed to explore the outcomes of a BTSM education as well as demographic characteristics of the respondents. Previous surveys guided the questions that were asked. Mainly quantitative questions but some qualitative questions were included. Section A was a Snapshot (personal profile). Sections B-D asked questions about Education and Employment, Personal Details, and Practice Characteristics. The questionnaire was sent out to 63/81 graduates in April 2013. A response rate of 73% (46/63) was achieved for section A, and 79.4% (50/63) for sections B-D.

Interviews

An interview guide was finalised. This covered the topics of their personal journey with massage therapy, massage education, and massage practice/career. Researchers practiced interview techniques. Participants had stated on the questionnaire their willingness to be contacted for a follow up interview. Interviews were conducted during June and July 2013 using a range of strategies: telephone, face-to-face, and Skype. The interviews were approximately 20-45 minutes long. All interviews were audio recorded, transcribed and transcripts were sent back to participants for approval.

Data Analysis/Results

Questionnaire responses were collected & entered into Excel Spreadsheet by the 2013 BTSM year 3 student researchers for further analysis. Statistics such as the mean, median and frequency count was performed on data. For some questions, the data from the 2013 ‘graduates’ was not included. Interview transcripts were thematically analysed. Graduate stories were compiled from individual or groups of transcripts. A journal was put together containing information gathered throughout the research process. This includes snapshots, graduate stories, and questionnaire findings. Four posters have been made to present the methods and results of the research project. Findings will be made available to the public in November 2013.

Learning

Over the duration of this research project, the group of 2013 year 3 researchers have learnt a great deal about the research process and collaboration. These quotes give a few examples of the learning involved from undertaking a group research project.

Methods

- Information Gathering
- Questionnaire
- Interviews
- Data Analysis/Results

Learning

- "Creating questionnaires are extremely time consuming"
- "Good learning experience to step back and give up some control"
- "Research projects are such huge tasks, but extremely rewarding in the end"
- "Research can discover some very important and interesting information"
- "Group strategies just ‘evolved’ through working together"
- "It amazed me how much background information was required before we even got started!"