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## Effects of Lula Mae Virtual Training Modules on Occupational Therapy Students

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**Effects of Lula Mae Virtual Training Modules  
on Occupational Therapy Students**

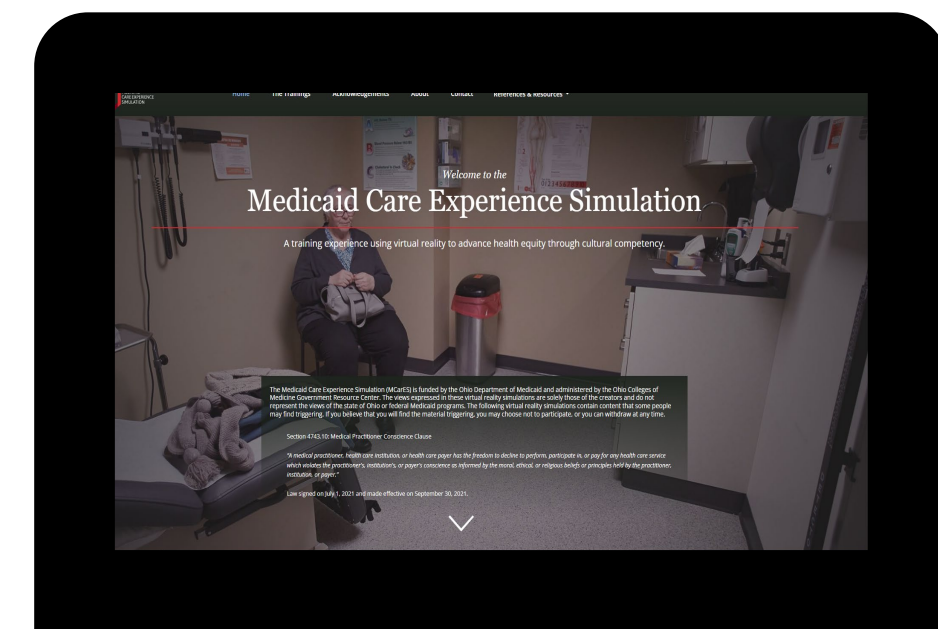
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Lula Mae is the module's main character. She is a fictional 72-year-old Appalachian widow with diabetes.

**BACKGROUND**



The Ohio Medicaid Care Experience Simulation offers a 360-degree, interactive view of the life of Lula Mae through 12 virtual reality (VR) modules.

Occupational therapy (OT) students watched the modules, then phenomenological qualitative research methods were used to evaluate the impact of the VR through their reflection papers.

**IMPORTANCE**

This research could support the use of virtual reality simulations like Lula Mae's in educating future providers.

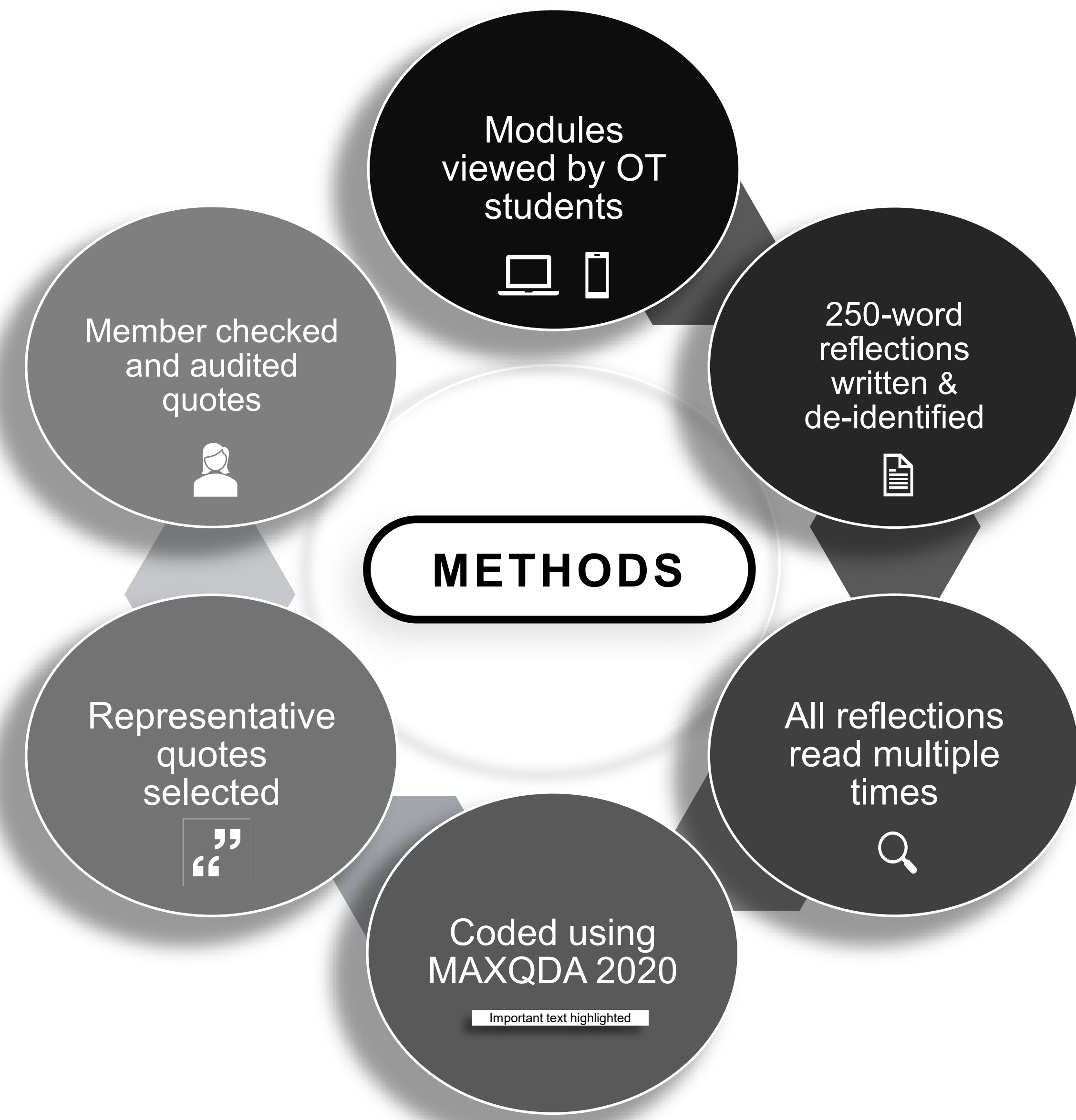
**DEMOGRAPHICS**

- n = 50 reflection writers
- First-year UNMC OT students
- Primarily female (88%)
- Primarily white (96%)
- Majority had a friend or family member with diabetes (56%)
- Majority from urban area (68%)

**LIMITATIONS**

- Reflections were assigned to OT students, not freely written
- Reflection format did not allow for follow-up or clarification questions
- Only 1 person coded

IRB # 0832-20-EX



**Phenomenological Research** is a form of qualitative study used to describe an event as the participants experienced it.

An **OT lens** was used during the coding phase to identify shared themes in the reflections. See the QR code or contact Emma Gardner for more information on this lens.

**Occupational Therapists (OTs)** assist clients with their **occupations** (eating, sleep, work, ADLs, hobbies, education, etc.)

# Impacts of Lula Mae

According to Occupational Therapy Students

**THEMES**

Illustrating factors that affect occupations, especially health management

**Social Determinants of Health**

"I felt that many **social determinants** impacted her occupations. I noticed some big ones..."

**Roles and Responsibilities**

"She basically is working **multiple fulltime jobs** as mother, grandmother, teacher, maid, chef, and financial advisor. **All of this forced Lula to put her health on the back burner.**"

**Comorbidities**

"...her **hearing loss** makes it hard for her to call and ask for help."



Immersing viewers in client life

**Sensory Fidelity**

"I was surprised with how **realistic** it was playing those roles. At moments, I **felt as though I was physically sitting across from Lula Mae**, having those in-person conversations."

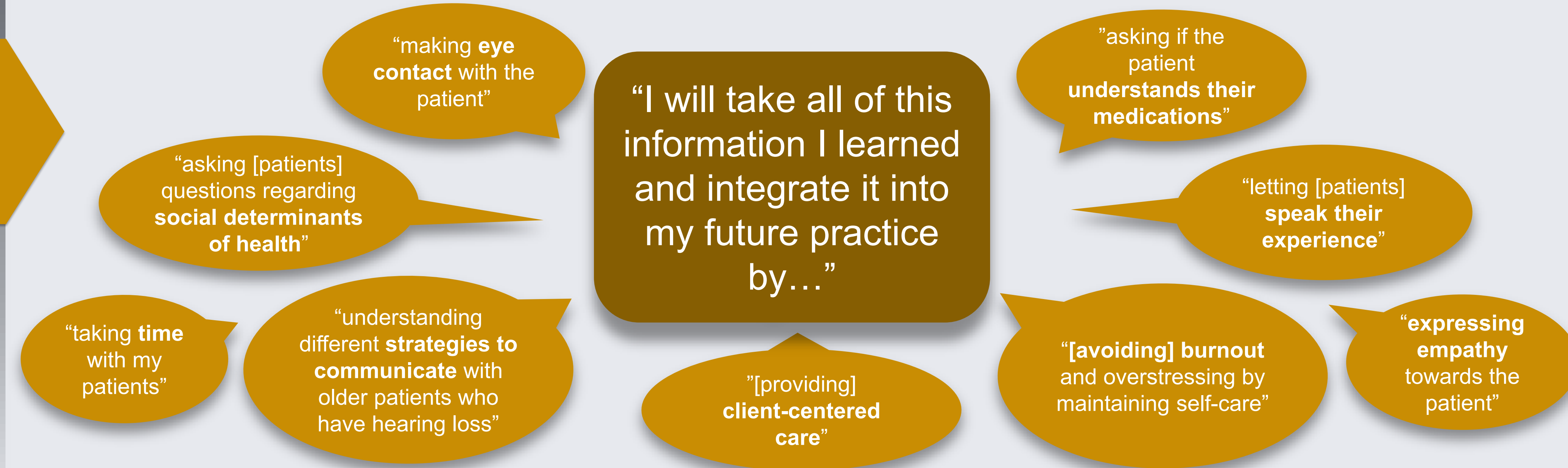
**Daily Routine**

"Being a fly on the wall in someone else's life helps provide a **perspective you usually do not experience**. It helps to see someone's genuine daily life and what they may be dealing with behind closed doors."

**Emotional Connection**

"I was surprised by how **emotional and attached** I grew to Lula Mae throughout the simulation; it made me **feel for her circumstances** and **want to help**."

Inspiring mindfulness in provider behaviors



**CONCLUSIONS & APPLICATION**

OT student reflections suggested that the modules had three main effects:

- Illustrating factors that affect occupations
- Immersing viewers in client life
- Inspiring mindfulness in provider behaviors

The results of this study might be used to...

- Encourage the creation of other VR modules
- Support the use of VR in medical education, especially in the case of another worldwide pandemic

Questions? Contact me at 21egardner@gmail.com

