

Psychology
Higher level
Paper 3

Monday 16 May 2016 (afternoon)

1 hour

Instructions to candidates

- Do not turn over this examination paper until instructed to do so.
- Read the passage carefully and then answer all the questions.
- The maximum mark for this examination paper is **[30 marks]**.

The stimulus material below is based on a case study that investigated the use of groups when offering occupational therapy to terminally ill patients.

The aim of this case study was to investigate if patients could benefit from being in groups (rather than being alone) when they participated in occupational therapy in a hospice setting.

5 A hospice is a specialized place that provides care and activities for patients who are terminally ill. By the time people are admitted to a hospice, they are very limited in what they can do so patients often experience a sense of isolation and despair. Occupational therapists offer help with daily tasks and various activities for each individual in the hospice such as music therapy, beauty treatment, social outings, picnics, massage and exercise. The researcher was herself one of the occupational therapists working in the hospice where this study was conducted.

10 Patients who attended occupational therapy gave informed consent to participate in the study. For five months the researcher carried out participant observations in various groups, usually involving between four and ten patients. All groups were open to participants who felt well enough or motivated to attend. The researcher participated in the group sessions in order to better understand how being in a group, sharing activities, and having the opportunity to talk to each other during this difficult time could improve patients' psychological wellbeing. The
15 researcher recorded her own thoughts and feelings in a field diary to note any biases that may have been present as she interacted with the patients. After performing a content analysis of the field diary the results of the analysis were discussed with two external researchers.

20 At the end of the study, the researcher carried out two separate focus group interviews in which participants were asked to discuss their experiences of being in a group during occupational therapy.

The overall results showed that occupational therapy can provide a safe and supportive group environment that assists patients to face their future and cope with pain and fear. The main themes that emerged from the observations and the focus group interviews were the patients' need to share their experience with people in similar situations and be accepted by others,
25 which helped to decrease feelings of isolation and helplessness.

[Source: © International Baccalaureate Organization 2016]

Answer **all** of the following three questions, referring to the stimulus material in your answers. Marks will be awarded for demonstration of knowledge and understanding of **qualitative** research methodology.

1. Explain **one or more** possible effects of participant expectations in this qualitative study. [10]

2. Discuss the use of the case study in this qualitative study (for example, the data collection methods used). [10]

3. Explain the use of reflexivity in this qualitative study. [10]