

Scholarship Stories: Ms Tee Ting Fang

Master of Arts (Applied Psychology)



What were the takeaways from your experience as a volunteer at the after-school care?

The importance of creating a safe and supportive environment

One of the main things I learned at the after-school care programme was the importance of creating a safe and supportive environment for children. This involved providing emotional support and understanding the unique needs and personalities of each child. In my work as a volunteer there, I developed positive relationships with the children. This allowed me to gain their trust and, in turn encouraged them to speak openly about their emotions and experiences. This experience was particularly relevant to my studies in applied psychology, as it highlighted the importance of developing empathetic listening skills and the competency to provide emotional support to individuals in need.

The opportunity to develop behaviour management skills

Another important learning experience I had at the after-school care was the opportunity to develop my behaviour management skills. This involved working with children who exhibited challenging

As a recipient of the Irene Tan Liang Kheng Master's Degree Scholarship, Ms Tee Ting Fang volunteered at an after-school care programme. There, she provided educational and behavioural support to primary school children. Ting Fang's experience allowed her to gain practical knowledge and skills that complemented her studies in NIE's Master of Arts (Applied Psychology) programme.

behaviours such as aggression, defiance, and test anxiety. Specifically, it gave me the opportunity to apply the various strategies and techniques I learned in my courses such as incorporating rules and

positive reinforcement, redirecting attention, and utilizing relaxation techniques. Through this experience, I honed my skills in developing and implementing effective intervention strategies to address a wide range of challenging behaviours.

The chance to work with children from diverse backgrounds

Additionally, the volunteer work at the after-school care programme also provided me with the opportunity to work with children from diverse social and cultural backgrounds, including those from single-parent households, high-risk environments, and complex family backgrounds. This experience was particularly relevant to my studies as it highlighted the importance of cultural competence and the ability to adapt to different cultural practices and beliefs. By working with children from diverse backgrounds, I learned to appreciate the unique perspectives and experiences of each child and how this can impact their educational and emotional needs.

The creation of new knowledge and insights

Finally, my experience at the after-school care programme allowed me to gain practical knowledge and insights about child development and learning. This included knowledge about working with children of different ages and across developmental stages and understanding the characteristic needs of each child. I also learned various educational strategies to support children's learning, such as incorporating play-based learning activities and providing opportunities for outdoor learning (e.g., getting the children to engage in experiential learning by bringing them to a goat farm). This experience led me to recognize the importance of understanding the cognitive, social, and emotional aspects of child development and how these can inform educational and behavioural interventions.

Why did you choose NIE's Master of Arts (Applied Psychology) programme? What sets it apart in your eyes?

I decided to pursue the Master of Arts (Applied Psychology) after working for two years in a hospital setting. During my time there, I had the opportunity to work with children who experienced developmental disorders, particularly in areas related to learning and behaviour. While I found this work to be incredibly fulfilling and rewarding, I also recognised that I had much to learn to become an effective practitioner in this field.

I realised that pursuing a postgraduate degree would enable me to gain a deeper understanding of the underlying causes of developmental disorders and the types of evidence-based interventions to address them.

Additionally, there was a recognition that the field is rapidly evolving and there is a growing demand for professionals with training and expertise in this area. But more importantly, the passion I held for helping children with developmental disorders inspired and motivated me to develop the requisite knowledge and skills to be an effective educational psychologist in this field.

The programme has given me an invaluable learning experience and provided me with a stronger foundation in educational psychology. It also equipped me with valuable practical skills and sound professional knowledge that would enable me to make a positive difference in the lives of children and their families.

How have you benefited from NIE's Master of Arts (Applied Psychology)?

The Master of Arts (Applied Psychology) programme has been a transformative experience. First, the programme provided me with a deeper understanding of human behaviour and the psychological processes. It helped develop my critical thinking and analytical skills and taught me to evaluate and apply evidence-based interventions in my practice. It also provided opportunities for self-reflection and personal growth, allowing me to improve my ability to empathise, communicate, and collaborate effectively with individuals from diverse backgrounds.

Second, the programme enhanced my ability to provide high-quality psychological services. I gained practical knowledge and skills in psychological assessment, counselling, and interventions, and this allowed me to design and apply a holistic approach to client care. The programme also enabled me to become more aware of ethical issues in the field, which helped improve my decision-making and risk management skills.

What will you say to potential students?

The Master of Arts (Applied Psychology) programme at NIE was an engaging and valuable experience, as it provided students with ample opportunities to apply the skills learned through practical assignments, such as practicing Cognitive Behavioural Therapy techniques on actual clients. It was a great way to gain first-hand experience in the field.

Ms Tee Ting Fang is a graduate of NIE's Master of Arts (Applied Psychology). NIE's Master of Arts (Applied Psychology) is designed to provide theoretical knowledge and research insights as well as practical skills to interested individuals who have the pre-requisite qualifications to train as specialists in the field of Educational Psychology or Counselling Psychology.



For more information on the Master of Arts (Applied Psychology) programme, please visit [https://www.ntu.edu.sg/education/graduate-programme/master-of-arts-\(applied-psychology\)](https://www.ntu.edu.sg/education/graduate-programme/master-of-arts-(applied-psychology)).