

**'Queering' Occupation: Exploring the the occupational experiences of four gay young adult men in Cape Town.**

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Sexual orientation and sexual expression, and the relevance to occupational therapy has largely been absent from professional literature until recent times. This paucity of literature, together with the researcher's early clinical intervention with a young gay adolescent following a homophobic attack, served as an impetus for the undertaking of this research study. Recent media reports in South African news papers have highlighted the increasing marginalization and victimization that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals' (LGBT) face in society while health risk data shows that lesbian, gay and bisexual youth are more likely to engage in high risk behavior. Through this phenomenological inquiry, the researcher hopes to explore the possible links between the social marginalization that young gay men experience and the occupational choices that they make, within a South African context.

The aims of this study were therefore to explore the lived 'occupational' experiences of four young gay male adults in Cape Town, and to determine the participants' perceptions about how their sexual orientation influences their occupational engagement. Semi-structured interviews, a focus group and photographs were utilized as qualitative and inductive methods to capture the occupational experiences of the participants, followed by a thematic discussion of the research findings. At the time of submission of the abstract, the researcher was in the data analysis phase of the research process and therefore the findings of the study were not available. The researcher will therefore present the final research findings at the WFOT Congress (2010).

It is hoped that this research study will enhance the occupational therapy profession's understanding, knowledge and attitude regarding lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals and provide insight into the occupational choices and experiences of these individuals from an occupational perspective. This occupational analysis may furthermore lead to an understanding of the issues that identify risk and victimization of this marginalized group.