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*‘Novice Occupational Therapists’ perceptions  
and experiences of professional socialization  
in the first year of practice in South Africa’.*

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# Introduction



- Professional socialization is a key dimension within the professional development of an Occupational therapy practitioner.
- Development of;
  - knowledge
  - skills
  - values necessary for successful entry into the profession
- Very little is known about professional socialization in Occupational Therapy within a South African context.

(MacLellan, 2011).

# Findings



Theme	1 Stepping into the unknown	2 A passionately, confusing profession	3 Uncovering the OT culture	4 Becoming a professional	5 Stepping out of the known
Category	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘I thought I was ready’</li> <li>• Expectation versus Reality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It’s who we are</li> <li>• But who are we really?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Power dynamics in the OT family</li> <li>• Hegemonic practices</li> <li>• No role models</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finding the OT in you</li> <li>• Coping with the obstacles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal &amp; professional development</li> <li>• Team work makes the dream work</li> </ul>

# Theme 3: Uncovering the OT culture



## Category 1: Power dynamics within the OT family

- Insecurity in OT
- Constant advocating
- Questioning the purpose for advocating for OT
- OT culture not lived up to



## **Category 2: Hegemonic practices**

- Oppression in practice
- Power struggles
- Placing ourselves in a box
- Lack of support



## **Category 3: No role models**

- Lack of support
- Sense of belonging needed
- Negative working relationships
- Unethical and unprofessional OT practice
- Negative perception of OT based on experienced OTs

# Recommendations



- Conduct a post community service survey.
- Unpack the underlying issues within the OT profession.
- Start journal clubs for novices during first year of practice.
- Creating awareness around these experiences to OTASA and HPCSA.
- Clinical support on a tertiary institution level prior to community service.
- Prior exposure into what the experiences are of novice therapists.
- Mentoring and support for novice therapists is crucial to support their professional socialization process.

# References



- MacLellan, D. (2011) Professional Socialization in Dietetics: A Review of the Literature. *Canadian Journal of Dietetic Practice and Research*. (72) 1. 37 – 42.



# Thank you!

