‘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

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<th>Theme</th>
<th>1 Stepping into the unknown</th>
<th>2 A passionately, confusing profession</th>
<th>3 Uncovering the OT culture</th>
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<td>Category</td>
<td>• ‘I thought I was ready’</td>
<td>• It’s who we are</td>
<td>• Power dynamics in the OT family</td>
<td>• Finding the OT in you</td>
<td>• Personal &amp; professional development</td>
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<td>• Expectation versus Reality</td>
<td>• But who are we really?</td>
<td>• Hegemonic practices</td>
<td>• Coping with the obstacles</td>
<td>• Team work makes the dream work</td>
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<td>• No role models</td>
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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.
Thank you!