

# Breaking Barriers: Enhancing Occupation-Based Interventions in Malaysian Occupational Therapy Practice

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## Introduction

Occupation-based intervention (OBI) within the Malaysian context is defined as using the occupation as a means and as an end<sup>1</sup>. OBI is vital for professional identity, yet Malaysian therapists face unique bureaucratic and cultural barriers that hinder its implementation. Occupational Therapy (OT) in Malaysia faces a crisis of identity, constrained by bureaucratic systems and a rehabilitation model governed largely by physicians<sup>2</sup>.



## Barriers to implementing OBI<sup>3</sup>:



Logistic  
Factors



Contextual  
Factors



Client  
Factors



OT Factors



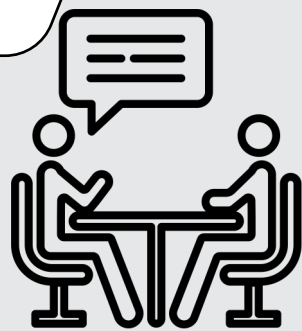
Occupation as  
Modalities

The goal is to shift from impairment-based treatments back to the profession's core. While previous studies defined the concepts and identified obstacles, existing solutions fail to address the specific local context. This study employs a secondary analysis of focus group data to identify tailored strategies for enhancing occupation-based practice in Malaysia.

## Methods

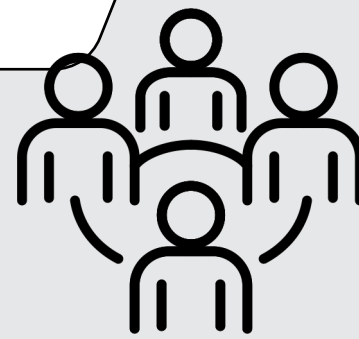
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Experienced  
Malaysian  
occupational  
therapists



### Data Source

3 Focus Group  
Discussions (FGDs)



### Participants

Senior clinicians (5+  
years experience) from  
public & private  
sectors.



### Sampling Method

Snowball sampling

Sessions lasted 60-90 minutes in mixed English and Malay to facilitate rich, casual conversation and generate meaningful insights. Methodological rigor was maintained through experienced moderation and field notes to minimize potential bias.

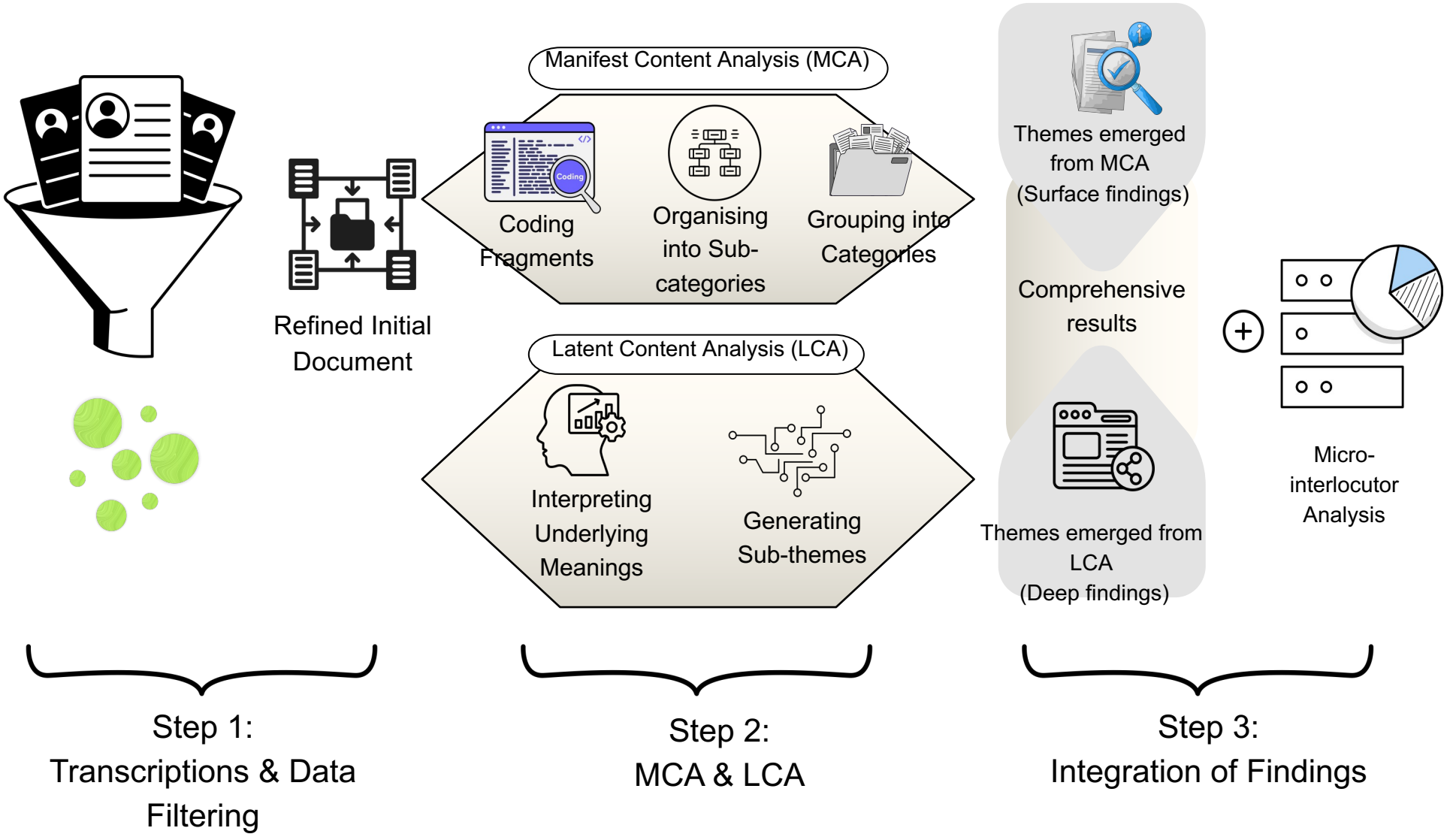
Trustworthiness was ensured via collaborative thematic development, audit trails for analytical decisions, and member checking with expert participants. The study strictly adhered to the Consolidated Criteria for Reporting Qualitative Research (COREQ) checklist to guarantee transparency and rigor<sup>4</sup>.

# Data Analysis

Data analysis followed Nili et al.'s framework, utilizing both manifest content analysis (MCA) and latent content analysis (LCA) to extract solutions from the focus group transcripts<sup>5</sup>. Coding was conducted individually by the first author and validated through regular consensus meetings with the research team to ensure rigor.

Final findings integrated derived categories and sub-themes, while micro-interlocutor analysis was employed to capture participant agreement and capture diverse perspectives.

Based on the Nili et al. (2017) framework for analyzing focus group data.

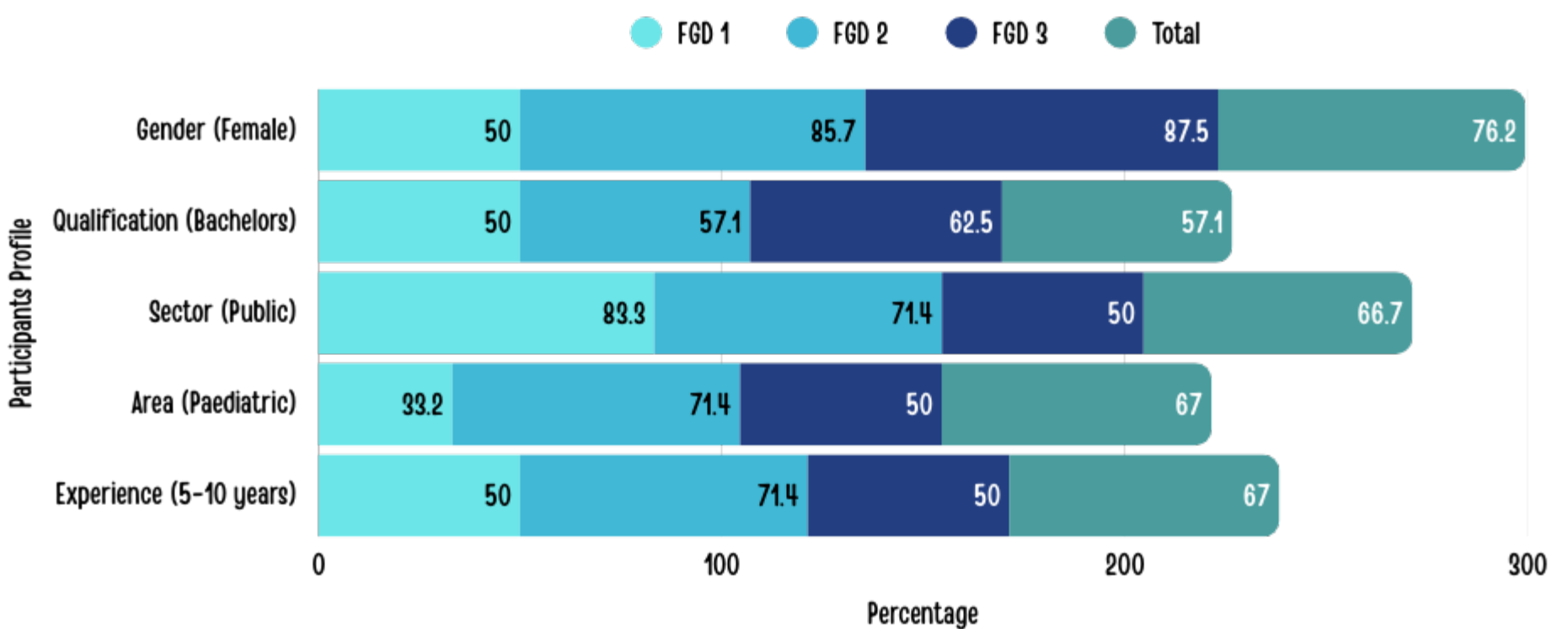


# Result

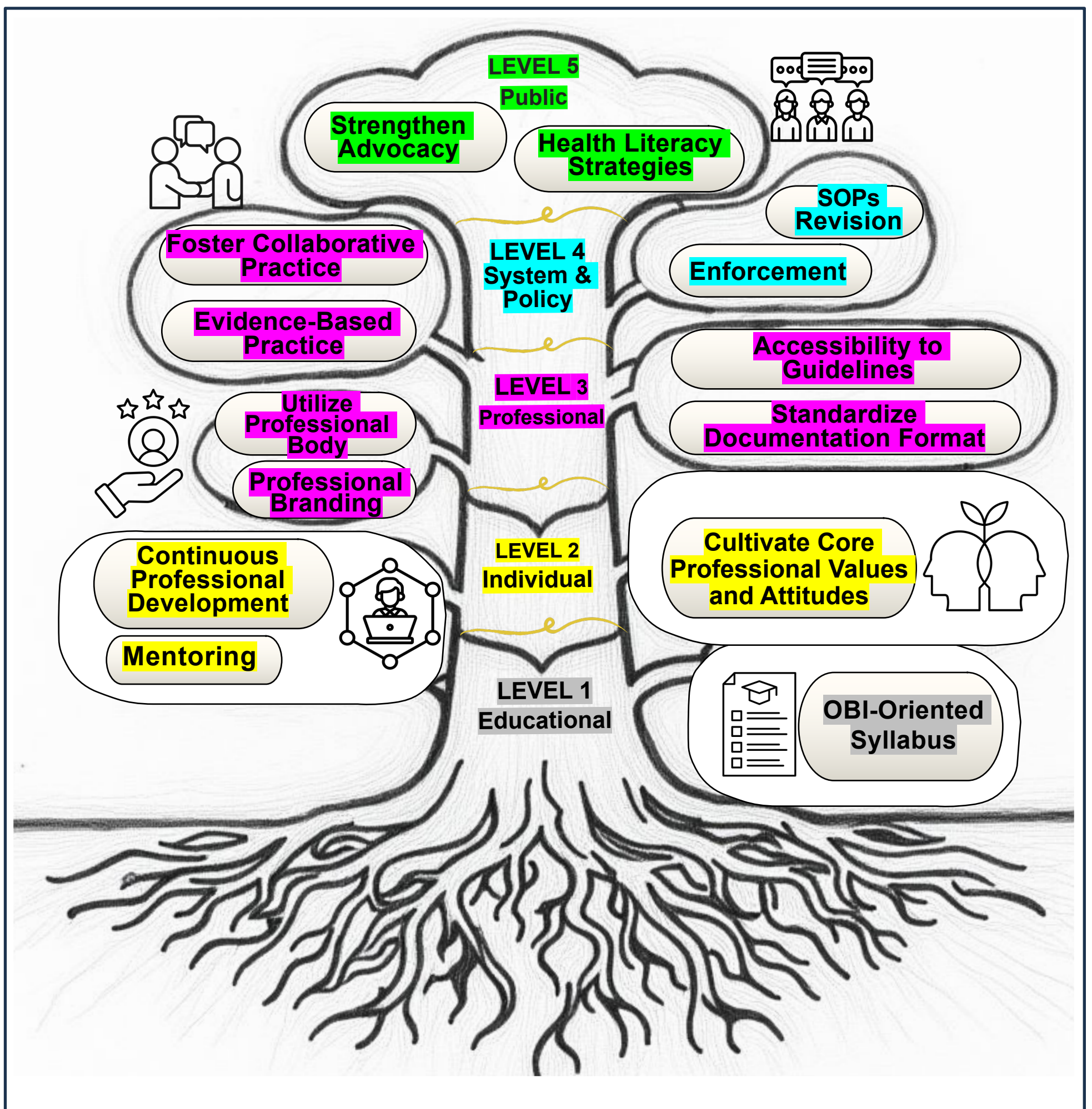
Most participants were female (76.2%) and held a bachelor's degree as their highest level of education. More than half of the participants (57.1%) were employed in the public sector, and paediatric practice accounted for 66.7% of the overall participants. The majority of participants had between 5 and 10 years of experience as occupational therapists.

Five sub-themes have emerged from the analysis of the content areas. These sub-themes were formed after reviewing the transcripts multiple times: [1] individual level, [2] public level, [3] professional level, [4] system and policy level and [5] education level.

Study Participants Profile (%)



# A Multi-Level Strategy for Advancing Occupation-Based Practice in Malaysia



## References:

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