Specialization into practice areas within occupational therapy has been a controversial issue for the last decade; in fact, it was the theme of the 1978 AOTA Annual Conference. Specialization may well serve as one ingredient in the "professionalization" of occupational therapy (1). However, if specialization will be a significant factor in the continued development of the profession, data are needed on therapists entering the different areas of practice. By developing data bases for each specialty area of practice, the processes contributing to the "professionalization" of occupational therapy via specialization can be better understood. Thus, a pilot study was designed to develop a profile or data base on therapists seeking to specialize in one area of practice—sensory integration—and, specifically, those seeking certification from the Center for the Study of Sensory Integrative Dysfunction (CSSID).

Methods
A questionnaire of 14 items was developed specifically for this study. The items covered topics ranging from age, sex, and years of professional experience, to motivation and reason for seeking specialization. Participants in a 2-day work-
shop, held in Washington, DC, on administration and interpretation of the Southern California Sensory Integration Tests (SCSIT) were asked to fill out the questionnaire. All 28 therapists who attended the second day of the workshop completed the questionnaire. The subjects' responses were coded for computer analysis and run, using the subprograms frequencies and condescriptive from the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (2).

Results
Of the 28 subjects, 27 were female and 1 was male; 27 were occupational therapists, and 1 was a physical therapist. Their average age was 33 years, ranging from 23 to 53 years, with a median of 41 years. One therapist was certified in neurodevelopmental treatment (NDT), and all but one were members of The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA). In addition, 20 were members of CSSID. Five of the therapists (18%) reported that they had published and 11 that they had conducted research. Other results are presented in tabular form (Table 1).

Discussion
Certain findings are particularly relevant to the "professionalization" of occupational therapy. First, more than half of the therapists seeking certification have advanced degrees, which seems a high proportion. This raises the question about whether or not therapists with advanced degrees are more likely to become practitioners in specialty areas than therapists who do not possess advanced degrees. Thus, future consideration might be given to the extent and the nature of the influence of graduate education on specialization within occupational therapy.

Second, most respondents paid for the certification process themselves. This suggests that specialty sections, the AOTA, as well as other organizations should try to obtain private or federal funding to help subsidize therapists' expenses for training in specialty areas of practice. Otherwise, many talented and qualified therapists will be kept from specializing because of the financial burden associated with it.

Third, the finding that nearly one-quarter of the therapists were seeking CSSID certification for use in private practice suggests a changing model of occupational therapy service delivery. The traditional hospital-based delivery of services is being transformed into community-based delivery of services, of which the private practice of occupational therapists might be a significant component.

In summary, the findings of this pilot study indicate that the processes apparently associated with specialization in occupational therapy and, hence, "professionalization," are graduate education, financial resources of the therapists or sponsoring agency, and the mode of the delivery of occupational therapy services.

Delimitations. The results of this pilot study are only preliminary. The sample size was small (N=28) and thus the results cannot be generalized to all therapists seeking specialization in sensory integrative testing or other specialty areas. Furthermore, only those therapists seeking certification were studied; not those who had already received it.

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