

Examining the consequences of exclusion from occupation in everyday life



Aim

The aim of this study was to examine the self perception of occupational performance, engagement and health of the persons assisted by the Basic Health Units (BHU) in Belem, Brazil. Based on this, potential implications for occupational science were identified, including issues with occupational justice, occupational balance, and social inclusion. The BHU provides equal access to basic public and free primary care, with services organized and geographically distributed in different regions of Brazil.

Method

Quantitative and qualitative data were collected from 103 participants using a convergent parallel mixed-methods design. Quantitative data were collected using the Canadian Occupational Performance Measure (COPM), and qualitative data were collected in individual interviews, including socio-demographic information and five openended questions about occupation.



Results

The most frequent mentioned occupational issues were types of active recreation, 91.26% (n = 94), with the participants expressing desires to involve in leisure occupations such as outings, being active, and visits to family members in other regions. However, these desires were seldom met due to environmental constraints, which led to an imbalance between productive and leisure occupations. The BHU participants revealed how engagement in satisfactory occupations was closely linked to a supportive environment. Thus, lack of urbanization and fears related to urban violence reduced their favor to participate in day-to-day occupations like walks in the community. Furthermore, they described inability to participate in desired leisure activities due to financial conditions, lack of adequate time or fatigue resulting from heavy homework routines.

The greatest difficulty we have is walking the streets, because it's very bumpy; it's not paved, the asphalt that we have has a lot of holes when it's flooding, we're at risk.

Joana

Because we live in a neighborhood that doesn't have a sidewalk, the streets are difficult to pass as they get filled with sewage or rainwater sometimes it almost hits your knees, and you have be aware so you don't fall into manholes.

Vanisa

We put a lot of things aside because of work. We, women leave our homes to help our spouses, then go to work, so there is not much time to do what we like doing like leisure and being close to our families.

Lu

The environment in the suburbs of Belem hugely diminished the people's possibilities of having diversified and satisfactory occupational lives due to environmental, institutional and socio-environmental restrictions, creating occupational injustice and occupational imbalance.

Anette Enemark Larsen, Katia Maki Omura, Jose Naum de Mesquita Chagas, Victor Augusto Cavaleiro Corrêa, Mark Kovic. **Contact:** anel@kp.dk

Foundings by: the World Federation of Occupational Therapy under the Thelma Cardwell Foundation Award for Research.

Kovic M, Omura KM, Chagas JN de M, de Souza AA, Enemark Larsen A, Cavaleiro Corrêa VA. Occupations and occupational engagement: A portrait of social differences in a city in the Amazon region of Brazil. *World Federation of Occupational Therapists Bulletin*, June 2021: 1-8.