

Review Article

An overview of occupational therapy community practices in Latin America

Um panorama das práticas comunitárias da terapia ocupacional na América Latina

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Abstract

Introduction: The recent history of Occupational Therapy (OT) shows, on a global scale, great concern about socio-communal issues that affect people's occupations and daily lives. Occupational therapists, acting in society and meeting its demands, seek to promote inclusion, emancipation, and participation in the socio-communal life of people. Nevertheless, Latin American studies on community interventions realized by occupational therapists are still scarce, suggesting more specific research on the designs and foundations of these interventions. **Objective:** To investigate the production by occupational therapists on community practices in Occupational Therapy, prioritizing the concepts used to support these interventions in Latin America, between 2006 and 2016. **Method:** A scoping review was carried out in Portuguese and Spanish. We searched for the articles through the CAPES Portal of Periodical databases, questionnaires for key informants, and manual searches in Occupational Therapy journals. The descriptors applied were: occupational therapy, practices, intervention, community, and occupational social therapy, in both languages. **Results:** The thematic analysis of the material showed that there is great diversity in the practices developed in the community, which have been growing in recent years. Nevertheless, theoretical-methodological foundations, as well as conceptual definitions, are still scarce. **Conclusion:** Community practices developed by occupational therapists, although more frequent, are still not systematically investigated in Latin America. Greater theoretical and methodological work on identified models is recommended for the consolidation of the field.

Keywords: Occupational Therapy, Professional Practice, Community Participation, Latin America.

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Resumo

Introdução: A história recente da terapia ocupacional (TO) mostra, em escala global, grande preocupação com questões sociocomunitárias que afetam as ocupações e o cotidiano das pessoas. Terapeutas ocupacionais, atuando na sociedade e atendendo a suas demandas, buscam promover inclusão, emancipação e participação na vida sociocomunitária das pessoas. Não obstante, estudos latino-americanos sobre as intervenções comunitárias de terapeutas ocupacionais ainda são escassos, o que sugere pesquisas mais específicas sobre os contornos e fundamentos dessas intervenções. **Objetivo:** Investigar a produção de terapeutas ocupacionais sobre as práticas comunitárias em terapia ocupacional, priorizando os conceitos utilizados para fundamentar essas intervenções, na América Latina, entre 2006 e 2016. **Método:** Uma revisão de escopo foi realizada nos idiomas português e espanhol. A busca pelos artigos foi feita por meio das bases de dados do Portal de Periódicos da CAPES, de questionários para informantes chave, além de busca manual em revistas de terapia ocupacional. Foram usados os descritores: terapia ocupacional, práticas, intervenção, comunidade e terapia ocupacional social, nos dois idiomas. **Resultados:** A análise temática do material mostrou que há grande diversidade nas práticas desenvolvidas em comunidade, que vêm crescendo nos últimos anos. Não obstante, a fundamentação teórico-metodológica, bem como as definições conceituais ainda são escassas. **Conclusão:** As práticas comunitárias desenvolvidas por terapeutas ocupacionais, embora mais frequentes, ainda não são sistematicamente investigadas na América Latina. Recomenda-se maior aprofundamento teórico e metodológico dos modelos identificados para a consolidação do campo.

Palavras-chave: Terapia Ocupacional, Prática Profissional, Participação da Comunidade, América Latina.

1 Introduction

On a global scale, socio-community issues that affect people's occupations and daily lives have great relevance in recent decades in occupational therapy (Farias & Laliberte, 2016; Farias et al., 2016, 2017, 2018; Galheigo, 2011; Gerlach et al., 2017). The first community experiences in occupational therapy in Latin America were in the 1970s, with the psychiatric reform movements and the community model in mental health (Paganizzi, 2015a; Nabergoi, 2013). These processes impacted the professional practice and led to deinstitutionalization, not only of psychiatry but also of a set of practices by other professionals, including occupational therapists¹. Thus, interventions also began to be developed in new spaces, in community organizations, in clubs, among others (Navarrete et al., 2015). In these practices, professionals seek to promote social participation and emancipation to improve people's living conditions

¹ The authors of this article support the fight against the use of the generic masculine (false neutral) in publications. In this way, whenever possible, we will use the generic feminine, since, statistically, female occupational therapists are the majority, in the countries studied in this review (Franco & Cervera, 2006).

(Kronenberg et al., 2006), articulating individual, collective and institutional demands (Malfitano, 2016).

Navarrete et al. (2015) showed that historically, occupational therapists have always needed tools to develop theories and actions in a systematic and solid way, arguing that only in recent decades have there been in-depth studies on the influence of social issues on occupational participation. This opinion is supported by Chilean colleagues (Pino et al., 2015).

In this study, we have adopted the term community occupational therapy trying to cover the different practices developed in Latin America, considering spaces beyond traditional medical offices and health institutions, in addition to approaches aimed at the collective, differently from individualized health care models and social promotion. As we will discuss later, this expression is far from being consensual, but it appears to be the one that most represents the models adopted by Latin American therapists, as observed in this review.

1.1 Theorizing about the community: a theoretical and practical challenge

Community is a controversial concept with perspectives of different ways of thinking about the social organization (Correia & Akerman, 2015; Costa, 2012). Despite this, in the context of occupational therapy, Oliver & Galheigo (2016) showed that the practices carried out in the community can help to face the problems in the daily life of people with disabilities, and those in situations of disruption of social and support networks. Thus, the authors explained that it is essential to understand the conditions of social exclusion not as an individual problem, but as part of a social process.

Although the theorizations about the community proposed by occupational therapists are rare, the literature brings related notions, such as community participation, for example (Barros et al., 2007). Based on a perspective inspired by theories of popular participation, the use of the term implies the engagement of people from a community who are involved in local issues, creating opportunities to contribute to local development and more equitable distribution of results than this engagement generates (Barros et al., 2007). In this way, we observed the engagement of the groups in the solution of common problems and that aim “the achievement of social and political emancipation of this population” (Barros et al., 2007, p. 357). Palacios, a Chilean occupational therapist, stated on the community occupational therapy practices that: “[...] the participation in collective occupations through community-strengthening actions can allow the construction of a sense of community [...]” (Palacios, 2015, p. 245).

However, American occupational therapists Scaffa & Reitz (2014) have suggested a specific definition of community, inspired by Green & Raeburn (1990 apud Scaffa & Reitz, 2014, p. 5) as “[...] a non-institutional meeting of people united by common goals or other purposes”. The authors also quoted O’Connell (1988 apud Scaffa & Reitz, 2014, p. 5) when describing the “[...] space in which people think for themselves, dream their dreams and come together to create and celebrate their common humanity”. Although these concepts can even be seen as idealized and historically decontextualized, they showed a perspective linked to the occupational dimension, the belonging, and the collective projects. Furthermore, Scaffa & Reitz (2014) recalled that as the community practices develop in people’s daily environments, they generate visibility for the work of

occupational therapists by offering answers to the occupational needs of the community. This led us to carry out a review of the scope of the literature based on the assumptions of Arksey & O'Malley (2005) aimed at investigating the production of occupational therapists about community practices in occupational therapy, prioritizing the concepts used to support these interventions in América Latina, between 2006 and 2016.

2 Methodological Considerations

The scoping review of the literature, also called panoramic review, was proposed by the British scholars Arksey & O'Malley (2005). Their guidelines have been subsequently expanded and refined (Colquhoun et al., 2014; O'Brien et al., 2016; Grant & Booth, 2009; Tricco et al., 2016). Scoping review is a literature synthesis model suitable for topics that are still seldom explored and addresses broad themes in which the different study designs can be synthesized, including the so-called gray literature. The central idea is to describe and organize the scope of scientific production on a given topic, in which the quality (methodological robustness) of the works included is not assessed (Peters et al., 2017).

According to the steps suggested by Arksey & O'Malley (2005), we carried out five phases: 1. Identification of the research question; 2. Selection of relevant articles to be analyzed; 3. Sample consolidation; 4. The extraction of data from articles according to the research question; 5. The numerical/thematic analysis and 5. Reporting of results. A sixth additional step (Colquhoun et al., 2014) was carried out exclusively to the search for material in Spanish, as detailed below.

Two questions guided the study: 1. What did occupational therapists produce about community practices in OT in Latin America, between 2006 and 2016? 2. What concepts have been used to support these interventions?

Search strategies both for peer-reviewed articles and gray literature were based on the Portal of Journals of the Brazilian repository *Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior* (CAPES), which is an important international database. Theses and dissertations were excluded. The first search had 295 articles in Portuguese and only 2 in Spanish. Considering the low number of articles in Spanish, we adopted additional search strategies for the language, determining the consultation with key informants through an e-mail sent to occupational therapists that we had access² to Latin America and that could offer information about it. Also, we contacted Latin American entities representing occupational therapists, requesting written work on the theme as suggested by Arksey & O'Malley (2005), and Colquhoun et al. (2014). An exhaustive search of occupational therapy magazines with texts in Spanish from Latin America was also carried out: *Revista Argentina de Terapia Ocupacional*, *Revista Ocupación Humana* (Colombia), *Revista Chilena de Terapia Ocupacional*, *Revista ContextO* (Chile).

The first search was based on combinations of the terms: occupational therapy, practices, community, intervention, and their Spanish language correspondents. The expressions "social occupational therapy" and territory were attached in a second search, in response to the high number of occurrences when searching for articles in

² Those occupational therapists whose contact (e-mail) appeared in articles or books related to the theme of community practices.

Portuguese. As suggested by Arksey & O'Malley (2005), the scoping review gives the possibility of adding or removing expressions, in response to the findings from the searches. The two expressions were not identified in studies published in Spanish.

In the end, empirical, theoretical studies and experience reports published in Portuguese and Spanish were included due to the interest in identifying studies that are more accessible to all professionals in Latin America. The search was between 2006 and 2016 considering that theoretical production has increased in recent decades (Navarrete et al., 2015).

The search had 325 works in Portuguese and Spanish obtained by the referred search strategies: 297 articles were collected through databases, 20 texts were obtained through key informants and 8 were extracted from Latin American occupational therapy journals in Spanish.

Also, a set of relevance criteria (Kastner et al., 2012) was applied to the inclusion of the material, containing the following elements:

1. Describing practices carried out by occupational therapists in community approaches;
2. Having been published in the proposed period and regions;
3. Available in Portuguese or Spanish;
4. Describing research, interventions or theoretical discussions about these practices.

We selected only texts that met the 4 criteria. Based on the reading of the titles and abstracts of the 325 initial articles, we excluded those who did not refer to occupational therapy practices in the community or so-called social occupational therapy. We also excluded literature reviews, which should not be included in reviews, to avoid duplicating the analysis of the same article (Lopes & Fracolli, 2008). The two first authors carried out the search separately, for each language. Whenever there was doubt about the inclusion of an article or material, the final resolution was made by the third author.

Finally, only 56 of the 325 works obtained by the search strategies (CAPES Portal, consultation with key informants and exhaustive search in OT magazines) were selected for final analysis because they met the relevance criteria, as shown in Figure 1.

We read the selected articles in full for data extraction. Then, we organized the description and analysis of the articles in the matrix model (Garrard, 2016), containing the following columns: title, authors, data and place of publication/presentation, objectives/purpose/research question, population, location, strategies used, main results, recommendations and questions for future investigations. We paid special attention to the concepts used to support community practices. A thematic analysis of the findings was carried out, seeking to answer the two research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

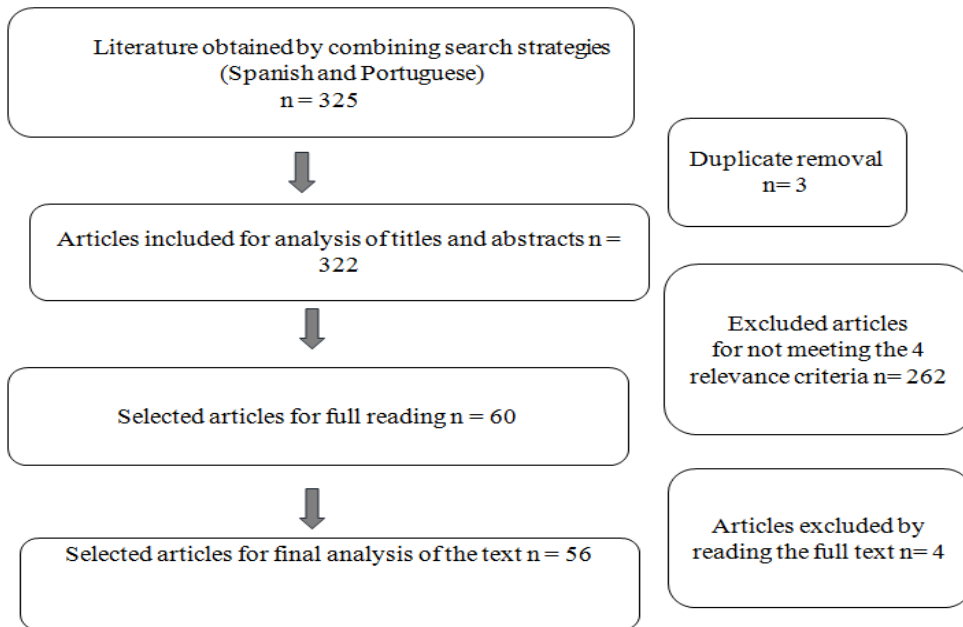


Figure 1. Flowchart of the literature search and inclusion of the articles.

3 Community Practices in Occupational Therapy in Latin America: a Field Developed Based on Many Aspects

This literature review highlighted a great diversity of perspectives and approaches in the production developed by occupational therapists in the field of community practices. Most of the studies included were of a qualitative nature (88.8%), two were mixed surveys (quali-quant) and only one investigation used quantitative methods.

In general, there was a constant growth in production in the area, although only authors based in four Latin American countries have been identified: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Colombia.

3.1 Studies on the community occupational therapy practices: a typology

Fifty six published or presented at congresses pieces, 23 (41.07%) from Brazil, 22 (39.28%) from Argentina, 9 (16.07%) from Chile and 2 (3.58%) from Colombia, between 2006 and 2016, were included in the review.

The articles and publications found in Brazil are mostly research articles (63.6%), followed by experience reports (22.7%) and theoretical guidance essays (13.7%). In Argentina, experience reports predominated (52.2%), followed by theoretical articles (26.1%) and research articles (21.7%). Chilean publications prioritized research articles (83.3%), while Colombian publications were equally distributed between research and experience reporting (1% each) (Figure 2).

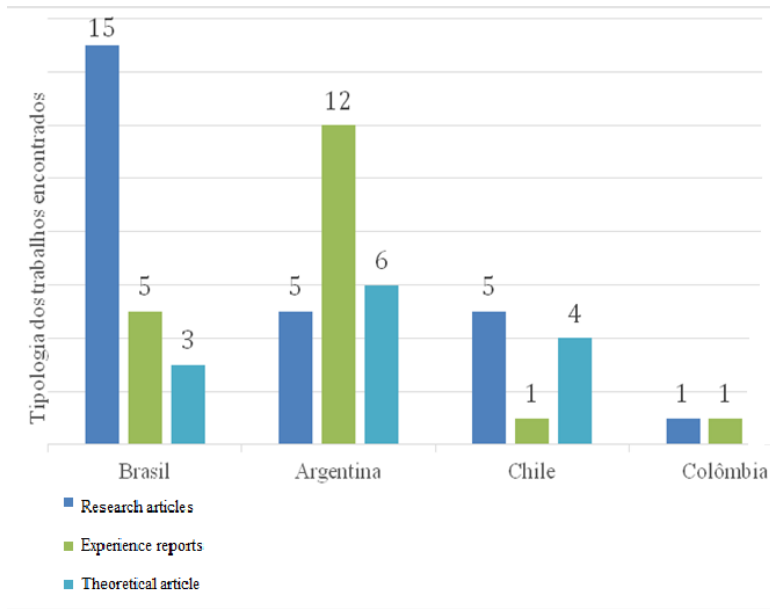


Figure 2. Distribution of types of articles by country.

Figure 3 shows the distribution of the articles from each country in the period studied. In recent years, the production on the theme has increased. Sixty per cent of the analyzed material is concentrated in the last four years of the considered decade (2012-2016).

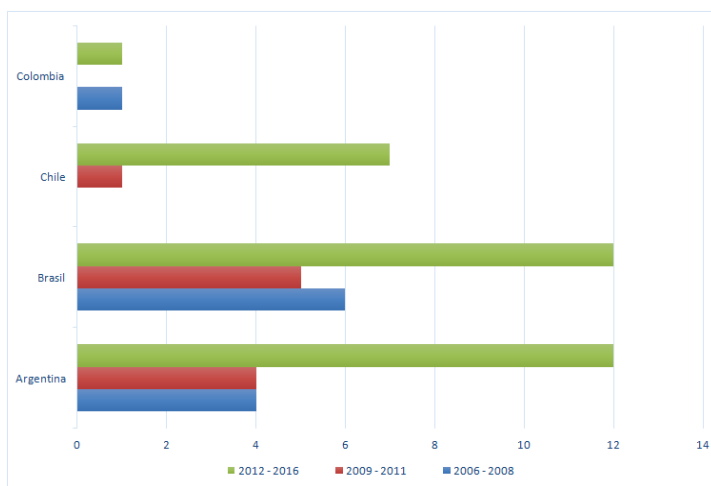


Figure 3. Productions by year and country.

The first (Table 1) shows the authors, years of publication and publication platforms for the articles, and the second table (Table 2) shows the authors, years and sources of gray literature included in the review (sent by key informants).

Table 1. Authors, year and publication platforms.

Publishing platforms	Authors (Year)
Revista Chilena de Terapia Ocupacional	Arévalo & Yáñez (2016)
	Pino & Ceballos (2015)
	Muñoz (2014)
	Ossandón (2014)
Revista Ocupación Humana	Oyarzun et al. (2009)
Revista Argentina de Terapia Ocupacional	Santacruz (2006)
	Spampinato & Testa (2016)
Cadernos Brasileiros de Terapia Ocupacional	Yujnovsky (2016)
	Silva & Menta (2014)
	Paiva et al. (2013)
	Castro et al. (2013)
	Barros et al. (2013)
	Aoki & Oliver (2013)
	Costa (2012)
Revista de Terapia Ocupacional of the University of São Paulo	Correia & Akerman (2015)
	Gomes & Brito (2013)
	Ferro et al. (2012)
	Brunello et al. (2010)
	Pradolini (2010)
	Coutinho et al. (2009)
	Lima et al. (2009)
	Jardim et al. (2008)
	Baldani & Castro (2007)
	Castro & Silva (2007)
	Brunello et al. (2006)
Magazines from other topics: Ciências Médicas, Ciências Sociais, Saúde, Interface: comunicação, saúde e educação, Ciência e Saúde Coletiva, Gestão e Saúde.	Palacios (2016)
	Guajardo-Córdoba et al. (2015)
	Tszesnioski et al. (2015)
	García-Ruiz & Quintana (2015)
	Aoki et al. (2014)
	Tundidor (2013)
	Araujo et al. (2013)
	Lopes et al. (2011a)
	Lopes et al. (2011b)
	Lopes & Fraccolli (2008)
Moreira (2008)	

Table 2. Authors, year and platforms for the study of gray literature (Spanish).

Presentation Platforms	Authors (Year)
Occupational Therapy Congresses: Argentina, Venezuela, Chile e Peru.	Narvaez (2015)
	Chaura (2015)
	Paganizzi (2009, 2015a)
	Zorzoli & Chaura (2013)
	Palacios (2015)
	Vega et al. (2010, 2013)
	Arenaza et al. (2007)
	D'Angelo (2007)
	Robles et al. (2007)
	Metz (2013)
Congresses in other topics: Psychology, Sociology, Health and population	Pradolini (2009)
	Vega et al. (2009)
Revista Terapia Ocupacional de Galicia	Pino et al. (2015)
WFOT Bulletin	Mengelberg (2013)
	Pradolini (2013)
Terapia-Ocupacional.com: el portal en español de terapia ocupacional	Cella & Polinelli (2008)
	Pellegrini (2006)

3.2 Theoretical foundations of the practices of occupational therapists with a community focus

We divided the findings into two major groups to organize the text: studies in Portuguese and Spanish studies.

3.2.1 Community practices in Spanish-speaking countries

We identified few studies of a theoretical nature on community practices in Spanish. Only two articles sought to conceptualize these practices (Paganizzi, 2015b; Oyarzun et al., 2009), and four articles developed community definitions, using references from Community Psychology and Sociology (Pino et al., 2015; Palacios & Morán, 2016; Pino & Ceballos, 2015). The occupational therapist Liliana Paganizzi argues that, in Argentina, community practice is characterized as:

[...] a practice that expands the professional scenario for the territory of life of people with disabilities and/or in situations of social risk, community is also developed as a strategy within the field of mental health, and today, the community can be thought as a growing foundation that expands the disciplinary field (Paganizzi, 2015b, p. 1).

Then, the author proposes an “arch concept” (Paganizzi, 2015b, p. 1), since it would not be possible to think of it from a single place, and should be described in “[...] three provisional categories: a professional practice, a strategy, and a growing foundation” (Paganizzi, 2015b, p. 1).

Chilean authors Oyarzun et al. (2009) also investigated community practices. In their study, the occupational therapists interviewed pointed out three central elements in these practices: “[...] the daily life, the experience and the meaning given to them” (Oyarzun et al., 2009, p. 14).

On the other hand, Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) is a strategy driven by international organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO), International Labor Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) that appear in seven Latin articles of the named countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Colombia). In this case, Pellegrini (2006, p. 1) proposes:

In CBR, interventions are oriented to the social integration of the individual in most cases. The emphasis of the work is based on the assessment of the functional profile and the allocation of resources that can compensate for the disabilities and allow full integration into their natural environment.

García-Ruiz & Quintana (2015, p. 162) examine the CBR's strategy from the perspective of rights, explaining that “[...] it intends to comply with the principles of the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities based on community development [...]”. Thus, the community practices developed by professionals from Argentina, Chile, and Colombia seem to have received influences from CBR. In this sense, there is a criticism by Guajardo-Córdoba et al. (2015, p. 49) after a study on CBR in Chilean territories:

is a vision of the community as a territory, sector or residence with articulation with actors or individuals, centered on the offer of rehabilitation. In this way, the CBR-CRC³ acquires a way of externalizing hospital actions and decentralization at the local level of the rehabilitation systems, more than a process of inclusion and community work, in which the community is understood as a stakeholder.

CBR has been valued by the World Federation of Occupational Therapists (2018) reaffirming the importance of the work of occupational therapists based on the possibilities of intervention with people with disabilities in the community. However, despite the aspects identified earlier, some authors pointed out that it is still necessary to advance the discussions about community practices (Pino et al., 2015; Guajardo-Córdoba et al., 2015).

For a better theoretical understanding, they argue that it is necessary to develop public policies for community work in specific contexts, as is the case of rural populations, for example. Guajardo-Córdoba et al. (2015, p. 49) summarized that:

[...] the reconceptualization of the community is imperative and it is necessary to establish distinctions based on the contemporary reconceptualization of rural territories and communities in the design of public policies that remain

³ Community rehabilitation centers.

linked to the categories of the sociology of modernization of the 50s, the urban and the rural as opposing ideal types.

3.2.2 Community practices as described in Portuguese

Interestingly, Brazilian authors showed a very unique perspective regarding practices carried out outside of the individual scope. Articles in Portuguese showed theoretical references linked to the field of social occupational therapy to justify their actions in the socio-community sphere (Costa, 2012; Lopes et al., 2011a; Barros et al., 2013; Paiva et al., 2013; Lima et al., 2009; Castro & Silva, 2007). In fact, the term social occupational therapy is used frequently in the articles examined. Community occupational therapy practically does not appear in the literature in Portuguese, although the two expressions seem to describe something conceptually similar.

Malfitano (2005, p. 3) described “[...] the constitution of interventions in the social field is composed of a diversity of areas that have discussions internally to offer their contributions”. When proposing to work in this field, regarding the limits and possibilities of the occupational therapist's actions, the author revealed that this professional “[...] must debate some key points of her performance, such as the limits of the clinic, the possibilities of promoting coexistence, walking between the individual and the collective and between the technical and the political” (Malfitano, 2005, p. 3).

However, some authors (Correia & Akerman, 2015; Costa, 2012; Macedo & Barros, 2010) advanced in defining the fundamentals of the work of occupational therapists in interventions based on a community perspective, as is the case of the study developed by Costa (2012), which adopts the concept of community based on the field of psychosociology. The author conceived the “meanings of the community” as identity construction: “[...] the work of the social occupational therapist with traditional peoples and communities is based on the principle of occupation, understood as a social right, in which collectively means and produces social meaning” (Costa, 2012, p. 44). In this perspective, the community is understood “[...] not as a spatial delimitation, but as a collective construction of identity [...]” (Costa, 2012, p. 47).

Another foundation found in articles based on collective practices, which agrees with the collective construction of “community”, is the concept of *participatory local development*:

[...] in everyday life, the structures and values of the macro social-political dimension are expressed. The subjective and objective dimensions, marked by historical, cultural, political and social issues imply the processes of local, educational and training development of the actors involved (Correia & Akerman, 2015, p. 160)

In this case, the authors supported a concept of the community situated as the knowledge that emerges from the individuals' engagement in collective practices.

Regarding specific social groups, only two of three papers that discussed the theme of people with disabilities were carried out with adults (Aoki & Oliver, 2013; Aoki et al., 2014), aiming at community participation, and one focused on children with disabilities

(Brunello et al., 2006). However, they were paying more attention to working in groups, within institutions, such as family and the school.

The use of the Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) approach also appears in Brazilian texts, although less frequently during the period of this review, being an important resource for the work of some occupational therapists (Aoki et al., 2014). In this excerpt, the authors evaluated the construction of collective practices:

The reflection on the living conditions and needs presented by this population has been essential for the maintenance and development of the group and for the implementation of other care alternatives in health and rehabilitation within the territory (Aoki et al., 2014, p. 151).

The review showed that a challenge for the community practices in rehabilitation is favoring centralized care in the development and functional restoration of the individuals (motor and sensory aspects, above all). Aoki & Oliver (2013) warn that, in most cases, interventions offer little or no consideration to emotional, family and socio-cultural issues, both to the people with disabilities and their families, sometimes neglecting the development of comprehensive care practices. Thus, these practices are carried out at the community level but aim at aspects other than the construction of community bonds and/or social engagement.

3.3 The concept of *territory* in occupational therapy

The territory is the place where all actions, all passions, all powers, all strengths, all weaknesses flow, that is, where man history is fully performed from the manifestations of existence. Geography becomes the subject much more capable of showing the dramas of the world, of the nation, of the place (Santos, 1999, p. 7).

Although it is not always properly detailed, the concept of territory seems to be central to studies in Portuguese (Araujo et al., 2013; Baldani & Castro, 2007; Barros et al., 2013; Castro & Silva, 2007; Gomes & Brito, 2013; Jardim et al., 2008; Lopes et al., 2011a; Paiva et al., 2013; Silva & Menta, 2014; Tszesnioski et al., 2015). Ten of 23 studies used the concept of territory to some degree of detail, or at least mention it. These authors observed territory based on a political perspective, examining, above all, aspects related to inequalities, but also to social interactions. This involves not only the notion of territory as a geographical space but as a locus that presupposes relationships and exchanges (Oliver & Barros, 1999 apud Lopes et al., 2011a, p. 235). When deepening this discussion, the authors clarify that the territory means:

The geographical delimitation of a given region, occupied by a community, including in its concept, necessarily the local historical constitution, and the socioeconomic and cultural relationships developed there, where different forms of life, of social exchanges, are observed (Lopes et al., 2011a, p. 235).

The way in which the construction of collective spaces is described to achieve meaningful activities for the lives of the people involved, promoted by occupational therapists, showed some similarity:

Spaces and activities in which people and groups can weave their pieces and design their circuits, emphasizing that meaning can only be manifested if activities keep the socio-political, cultural and affective dimension of people, groups and communities inseparable (Barros, 2004, p. 11-12 apud Barros et al., 2013).

The physical and affective space in which the individuals' daily social relationships take place, marked by living together. Such shared territories participate in the construction of the memories of this collective, a fundamental element in the production of their traditions (Costa, 2008 apud Costa 2012, p. 48).

In this case, the levels, forms, and meanings of engagement of individuals, linked to historical contexts, seem to interest the authors. However, the transfer of traditional spaces of intervention by occupational therapists to a new locus, such as the street, the public spaces, everything that Milton Santos calls "places of the world performance" (1999, p. 7), seems substantially transform the practice of professionals, as seen in the following examples:

Other spaces of culture and art of the city of São Paulo were visited, presenting possibilities for the participation of people and their productions, to effect social and affective exchanges, in a territory that made the circulation of participants and their works via sales, exhibitions, attendance at fairs, artistic training, among other actions for the social participation and cultural production of the participants (Castro et al., 2013, p. 166).

Seeking to expand the universe of relationships of the persons assisted, enriching daily life, redefining social roles by promoting group constitution and coexistence and social circulation. For this to happen, our practical actions also take place in the city (Lima et al., 2009, p. 146).

The identification of an area and/or population that is vulnerable or at risk for the Family Health and Family Health teams (NASF) to develop effective actions in the production of health in a territory, focusing on the articulation of health services with other services and social policies (Silva & Menta, 2014, p. 245).

The work at the interface between occupational therapy and the arts generates power when moving the action to the field of invention and producing new agencies for technicians and users. The bet is that new sociability and new forms of resistance to the processes of exclusion can be generated from this proposal (Lima et al., 2009, p. 147)

Milton Santos, one of the greatest geographers in the world bequeathed to researchers in the health field a solid instrument in the concept of territory. As Faria & Bortolozzi (2009, p. 39) showed: “[...] the use of the concepts of space and territory in Milton Santos allowed to change the focus of attention, previously centered on the disease, to the social determinants of health conditions”. This led to a redesign of epidemiological analyzes, with an immediate impact on production in various fields of health and the promotion of well-being: “[...] the category - space - in Milton Santos allowed Epidemiology to change the usual focus of analysis centered on the disease to the analysis of the conditions of their occurrence” (Faria & Bortolozzi, 2009, p. 35). However, it is necessary to consider that although the practices developed by occupational therapists often appropriate the concept of territory, we were unable to identify Milton Santos' contribution in the models described in the articles included in the review. This intrigues us since, in other fields of social interventions, this legacy is quite clear (Faria & Bortolozzi, 2009).

4 Gaps in the Literature

Only four of the studies examined (56) are experience reports that aim to outline an overview of teaching, research, and community outreach activities, carried out for educational purposes (Castro et al., 2013; Coutinho et al., 2009; Lopes et al., 2011b; Lima et al., 2009). For Freire (2011), university extension is characterized as a field of communicative practices between the Higher Education Institution and the socio-community context. Although important, the educational training of new professionals does not seem to be a topic sufficiently investigated in the field of community practices, which certainly brings losses to the development of the field, especially for new professionals.

Also, this review did not identify specific and detailed theoretical definitions of community occupational therapy practices. In the Spanish texts, only one author approached the occupational therapy community (Paganizzi, 2015b), considering it based on three categories: a practice that expands the field of action, strategy in the field of mental health and fundamentals of practices.

Thus, coinciding with Guajardo-Córdoba et al. (2015), Pino et al. (2015) and Paganizzi (2015b) seems to be clear that it is imperative to increase the theoretical elaboration and the discussions on the concepts that underlie the idea of community, as well as the practices that develop. Also, the fact that we did not detect articles with themes on traditional, indigenous peoples, first settlers, in the texts in Spanish is important.

In the case of articles in Portuguese, although some authors used the term *community*, they started from different theories, methodological and political perspectives, which are only mentioned. Other terms found, such as *territory* (Araujo et al., 2013; Barros et al., 2013; Castro & Silva, 2007; Gomes & Brito, 2013; Jardim et al., 2008; Lopes et al., 2011a; Paiva et al., 2013; Silva & Menta, 2014), and CBR (Aoki et al., 2014), certainly expanded the scope of practices carried out in the community, but, although they characterize community work in a different way, they still demand better theorizing. This is because we believe that the problems identified here, as well as their links with community practices, need to be examined and made

available, including the training of future occupational therapists. Not only the professional debate but also curricular spaces dedicated to the subject will obviously result in professionals better prepared to face the challenges imposed by contemporary social issues.

5 Study Limitations

We recognize there are limitations despite the care in the design of this review. Only articles in Spanish and Portuguese were examined. Evidently, searches in other languages could have broadened the scope of the studies found. Of course, it is possible for Latin American professionals to publish articles in other languages, but it seemed to us that in this first approach to the problem, it would be interesting to centralize the study in the two main languages of the region. It is also important to consider that the difficulties in indexing studies and scientific communications, but also the search, inclusion and exclusion criteria may have influenced the final selection of articles, as well as having caused the loss of some relevant material. Although we combined three search strategies: searching the databases, searching the Latin American occupational therapy journals in Spanish, collecting material with key informants, materials from several Latin American countries were not found, in which occupational therapists work such as Mexico, Uruguay, Peru, among others. Furthermore, the communication established by e-mail to occupational therapy associations proved to be unproductive due to the lack of answers (with the exception of the Colombian association). Of the electronic correspondence sent to professionals requesting studies on the subject, only 55% (21/38) of the occupational therapists answered. Thus, several Latin American countries are not represented in this literature review.

Also, there was the occurrence of the so-called CBR in searches in Spanish. This expression, which had not been previously included in the search terms, appeared in seven articles found and was then, further detailed. Evidently, future studies should deepen this aspect, notably by identifying the local conditions that have caused the expression to be adopted more frequently in Hispanic countries.

Nevertheless, 56 articles from the decade of 2006-2016 were examined, which leads us to assume that the data obtained are relevant to produce a first overview of the practices in the area.

6 Final Considerations

In the set of articles analyzed, there was great diversity of interventions performed by occupational therapists, who are denominated or conceived as community practices. This shows the circumstances in which occupational therapy can generate social inclusion, autonomy and better living conditions for groups that are in a situation of vulnerability. This also reveals that there is still no consensus on the use of specific terminologies within the scope of these practices, as well as in the concept of community.

Some scientific productions lack clear and systematic structures since the research strategies, objectives and theoretical foundations are not always explicit. However, there is a growing concern among occupational therapists about working with collectives.

Therefore, the review allowed us to conclude that the community practices developed by occupational therapists, although more frequent today, have not yet been systematically investigated in Latin America, which suggests further theoretical and methodological development.

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Author's Contributions

Valentina Vinzón prepared and wrote the text, organized, collected and analyzed the data. Maitê Allegretti wrote the text, collected and analyzed the data. Lilian Magalhães guided the work and final revision of the text. All authors approved the final version of the text.

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