

Original Article

“No foreigner feels part of the country they live in”: everyday life of migrants and refugees in Brazil through the lens of occupational therapy and embodiment processes

“Estrangeiro nenhum se sente parte do país em que mora”: cotidiano de pessoas migradas e refugiadas no Brasil a partir de diálogos com a terapia ocupacional e os processos de corporeidade

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How to cite: Cirineu, C. T., Assad, F. B., & Braga, I. F. (2025). “No foreigner feels part of the country they live in”: everyday life of migrants and refugees in Brazil through the lens of occupational therapy and embodiment processes. *Cadernos Brasileiros de Terapia Ocupacional*, 33, e3996.
<https://doi.org/10.1590/2526-8910.ctoAO408239962>

Abstract

Introduction: Migration is a complex economic, political and social phenomenon that impacts the daily life and corporeality of people. **Objective:** To analyze the daily life of migrated and refugee people in Brazil based on the dialogues with occupational therapy and the processes of corporeality. **Methodology:** Qualitative method and analysis of the life stories of 14 migrant and refugee people in the city of São Paulo, Brazil, through the Collective Subject Discourse (CSD). **Results:** Two CSDs were constructed: cultural differences and identity transformations; and subalternization and racialization of bodies, from which aspects of differences and cultural transformations, belonging, prejudice and discrimination were addressed, which cross the daily life of the migrant and refugee person. The migratory process causes transformations and confrontations of identities and corporealities, indicating propositions of occupational therapy that consider the cultural contexts and the rupture of daily life. The concept of "body-territory" explores the relationship between identity, migration and customs, in which the body (of the) migrant becomes a space of cultural and identity negotiations. The subalternization and racialization of the bodies of migrants hinder their integration and belonging, evidenced by structural racism. **Conclusion:** The migratory phenomenon implies the re-signification of identity, corporeality and daily life. Through the concept of

Received on Nov. 20, 2024; 1st Revision on Mar. 1, 2025; Accepted on Mar. 20, 2025.



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body-territory and intersectionality, it is possible to understand how social markers, such as race, gender and class, structure inequalities. In this context, critical and emancipatory occupational therapeutic practices strengthen support networks and promote social inclusion, enabling the reconstruction of lives, in addition to contributing to fairer and more humanized public policies.

Keywords: Migration, Activities of Daily Living, Occupational Therapy, Culture.

Resumo

Introdução: A migração é um fenômeno econômico, político e social complexo que impacta o cotidiano e a corporeidade das pessoas. **Objetivo:** Analisar o cotidiano de pessoas migradas e refugiadas no Brasil a partir dos diálogos com a terapia ocupacional e os processos de corporeidade. **Metodologia:** Método qualitativo e análise das histórias de vida de 14 pessoas migrantes e refugiadas na cidade de São Paulo, Brasil, por meio do Discurso do Sujeito Coletivo (DSC). **Resultados:** Foram construídos dois DSCs: diferenças culturais e transformações identitárias; e subalternização e racialização dos corpos, a partir dos quais foram abordados aspectos das diferenças e transformações culturais, pertencimento, preconceito e discriminação, que atravessam o cotidiano da pessoa migrante e refugiada. O processo migratório provoca transformações e confrontos de identidades e corporeidades, indicando proposições da terapia ocupacional que considerem os contextos culturais e a ruptura do cotidiano. O conceito de "corpo-território" explora a relação entre identidade, migração e costumes, em que o corpo (do) migrante torna-se espaço de negociações culturais e identitárias. A subalternização e racialização dos corpos dos migrantes dificultam sua integração e pertencimento, evidenciadas pelo racismo estrutural. **Conclusão:** O fenômeno migratório implica a ressignificação da identidade, da corporeidade e do cotidiano. Por meio do conceito de corpo-território e da interseccionalidade, é possível compreender como marcadores sociais, como raça, gênero e classe, estruturam desigualdades. Nesse contexto, práticas terapêuticas ocupacionais críticas e emancipatórias fortalecem redes de apoio e promovem a inclusão social, possibilitando a reconstrução de vidas, além de contribuir para políticas públicas mais justas e humanizadas.

Palavras-chave: Migração, Atividades Cotidianas, Terapia Ocupacional, Cultura.

Introduction

The migratory phenomenon, intensified by globalization and economic and political transformations, is configured as one of the central issues of contemporaneity. Migration is not limited to geographical mobility but also involves a continuous process of re-signification of daily life and identity reconstruction, encompassing complex dynamics of belonging and recognition. Agnes Heller (2008) emphasizes that daily life occurs in social interactions and is permeated by historical and sociocultural structures. Thus, understanding the daily life of migrant individuals is essential to analyze the challenges and possibilities of their inclusion in host territories. This process involves experiences of adaptation to the new culture, acquisition and/or development of new

skills, and overcoming linguistic, social, and economic barriers (Salles, 2011; Imilan et al., 2015).

Beyond identity and belonging issues, migration is permeated by structural inequalities that affect certain groups more intensely than others. In the Latin American context, for example, historically subalternized groups, such as Black and Indigenous populations, face structural barriers that limit their social mobility and restrict their full access to citizenship rights (Loango, 2020). Structural racism, by historically hierarchizing, inferiorizing, and objectifying these groups, is articulated with territorial violence and the erasure of their cultural contributions, directly impacting their migratory trajectories.

Occupational therapy plays a fundamental role in analyzing and acting professionally with migrant populations, as it contributes to expanding their social participation and strengthening their processes of belonging. Since the 1990s, the field has incorporated the concept of daily life as a central axis, breaking with positivist approaches and introducing new methodological and theoretical perspectives (Galheigo, 2020; Salles, 2011). This incorporation suggests the reading that it is in daily life that life expresses itself, and that occupational therapy needs to position itself in a critical and emancipatory action in the face of power dynamics marked by hegemonic, colonialist, and colonizing standards of normality, capability, productivity, and legality (Galheigo, 2020), through which the migratory process is traversed. Thus, by considering migration as a dynamic and situated process, occupational therapy can contribute to creating strategies that promote autonomy and the construction of new support networks for migrant populations in contexts of vulnerability.

The reasons for migrating, the decision, the journey, insertion into the receiving society, and maintaining ties with the society of origin are different dimensions of this experience (Arellano et al., 2016). International data indicate that 52% of migrants are men and 48% are women; however, the female migratory experience presents particularities that differentiate it from the male trajectory, and despite the increase in women's participation in migratory flows, this differentiation of experiences remains largely invisible (Organização Internacional para as Migrações, 2018, 2019; Vicente Torrado, 2014). According to Tonhati & Macedo (2020), there is a process of feminization of migrations in Brazil, driven by the increase in migration of women from Global South countries, characterized by labor precarization, overload of care work, and exposure to intersectional violences (Hirata, 2016).

Migration can be classified into various forms, each with its own motivations and characteristics, reflecting the diversity of experiences. Sayad (1998) discusses economic migration by describing the immigrant as a foreign worker and highlights the transient nature of this condition. The author suggests that the immigrant's identity is intrinsically linked to work and that their presence tends to be tolerated only as long as their labor force is needed by the host. This migration is considered one of the most common forms of human displacement and generally occurs voluntarily. Castles and Miller (2009) explain that this type of migration is predominantly carried out by young and economically active individuals who move in search of better salary opportunities and living conditions. Additionally, there is social migration, characterized by the pursuit of access to better healthcare, education, and security systems.

On the other hand, forced migration occurs when individuals are compelled to leave their countries due to conflicts, persecutions, or other threats that make their stay in the country of origin impossible or unsustainable. This group includes internally displaced persons, asylum seekers, and refugees (Castles & Miller, 2009). The 1951 International Refugee Convention defined a refugee as someone who, due to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside their country of origin and is unable or unwilling to return (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 1951).

To understand migratory flows in Brazil, especially between 2010-2019, it is essential to consider the impact of the 2007 international economic crisis, which deeply affected Europe and Japan, also influencing migratory movements in Latin America (Cavalcanti et al., 2015). During this period, there was a significant increase in migrants from the Global South, such as Senegalese, Congolese, Angolans, Haitians, and Venezuelans (Cavalcanti et al., 2022). Brazil became a viable destination due to the Refugee Statute - Law 9.474/97 (Roguet, 2009) and the new Migration Law - Law 13.445/2017, which facilitated the entry and stay of foreigners (Brasil, 2021).

In the Brazilian labor market, Latin American migrants predominated in the first half of 2020, with a significant growth in the formal sector between 2010 and 2019 (Cavalcanti & Faria de Oliveira, 2020). However, inequalities persist: men occupy about 70% of formal positions, although the number of work permits issued for immigrant women has increased. According to the International Migration Observatory (OBMigra), immigrant women, mostly young with completed high school and from countries like Haiti, Venezuela, Cuba, and Paraguay, primarily seek employment opportunities (Tonhati & Pereda, 2021). Despite this, they face wage disparities, earning about 30% less than men – this disparity is also evident in racial terms, as Black migrants earn less than their white counterparts. Refugees and asylum seekers have the lowest earnings (Hallak & Simões, 2020).

Women's participation in migration records has increased, especially among Venezuelans, Haitians, and Cubans, but they occupy less than 30% of formal jobs, and when they do, they are often in low-paying sectors (Tonhati & Macedo, 2020). The rise in forced migrations and the number of refugees in Brazil has intensified conditions of exploitation and wage inequalities (Silva, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated these inequalities, highlighting the precariousness faced by migrants and refugees (Oliveira, 2020; Hallak & Simões, 2020; Tonhati & Macedo, 2020; Silva, 2020; Cavalcanti & Faria de Oliveira, 2020). Moreover, migrants face discrimination based on their customs, native language, race, but also skin pigmentation and origin, directly affecting their social participation and exercise of rights (Garuti, 2016).

The condition of non-nationality intersects with markers such as race, class, gender, and sexuality, generating overlapping discriminations and multifactorial inequalities, especially affecting those whose corporealities do not align with the Western standards of racist and classist cis-heteronormativity. These intersections highlight how the aforementioned markers influence ways of life and demarcate social positions, resulting in exclusion and violence, while simultaneously reinforcing hierarchies and power dynamics that perpetuate social injustices (Gomes, 2003; Crenshaw, 2002; Brah, 2006; Ambrósio, 2020). Thus, intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989) is a fundamental analytical

tool for understanding how different social markers are classification categories that organize social life.

From this perspective, the identification of corporealities enables individuals to recognize themselves and rediscover previously unperceived understandings (Saito & Castro, 2011). It is based on the assumption that the body is what gives us shape, contour, reveals us, brings us closer, and enables us to understand the world; it is what allows us to operate, occupy, (re)think, (re)signify, reflect, act, live, exist, but also segregates us, compares us, isolates us, excludes us, makes us ill, places us in differences, disputes, wars (Cirineu & Assad, 2022). The processes of corporeality consider the body in space and time, formed by historical, cultural inscriptions and lived experiences (Saito & Castro, 2011). In the case of migrants and refugees, the difficulties in accessing social rights and participating socially highlight the importance of the occupational therapist understanding the multiple axes of social insertion, which intersect to shape the experiences of these individuals (Galheigo, 2012; 2014; Crenshaw, 2002; Brah, 2006; Bezerra & Trindade, 2014).

In this context, support networks can contribute to the (re)construction of migrants' corporealities, promoting autonomy, empowerment, and the re-signification of their trajectories, now with more dignified contours (Gomes, 2003; Merleau-Ponty, 2011). The phenomenon of migration or refuge, beyond implying territorial changes, also brings about everyday transformations that can impact the health, well-being, and sense of belonging of these individuals. Thus, it becomes essential to develop intersectional and culturally situated actions that consider the specificities of different experiences, so that inclusive policies and practices can be implemented effectively and equitably.

Therefore, it is essential to analyze the phenomenon of migration and refuge from the perspective of people's daily lives, exploring and valuing their life stories from the moment of arrival in the new country. This perspective interfaces with the concept of interculturality, which offers a broader understanding of interactions between different cultures, highlighting the dynamics of power, identity, and belonging that emerge in these processes. This concept does not seek to obstruct cultural differences, but rather proposes a space for dialogue and exchange, in which these differences can intertwine and coexist constructively. In this sense, interculturality recognizes both conflicts and possibilities for understanding and collaboration between cultures, promoting enriching and respectful coexistence (Weissmann, 2018).

In this way, the present article aims to analyze the daily lives of migrants and refugees in Brazil based on dialogues with occupational therapy and the processes of corporeality, considering the dynamics of social inclusion and exclusion, as well as the strategies developed by individuals and collectives in the context of migration or refuge.

Method

This descriptive study (Fernandes & Gomes, 2003) and exploratory research (Gil, 1999), of a qualitative nature (Minayo, 2008), was conducted with 14 migrants or refugees residing in the city of São Paulo, Brazil, affiliated with a philanthropic institution, in December 2022. With an approximate population of 12.3 million inhabitants (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística, 2020), São Paulo is a financial hub in Latin America and an attractive destination for migrants and refugees,

with a history of intense migration since the colonial period (SciELO, 2013). Missão Paz, founded in 1939 by the Missionaries of Saint Charles, provides support to migrants and refugees, including the Casa do Migrante and Centro de Estudos Migratórios (Missão Paz, 2021a, 2021b).

Participants were selected based on specific criteria: being a migrant or refugee residing in São Paulo for at least two years, being at least 18 years old, and having been referred by the philanthropic institution – excluding those with cognitive deficits, mental illnesses, or language barriers that would hinder the study.

All participants who agreed to participate in the research were initially invited for a brief individual interview, during which sociodemographic data were collected, including information on age, gender, marital status, education, occupation, income source, family arrangement, number of people residing in the household, type of housing, race, and country of origin.

Subsequently, individuals participated in an in-depth semi-structured individual interview, conducted through open and guiding questions regarding the migratory process, its bodily impacts, and daily life. The average duration of the interviews was fifty minutes; they were digitally recorded after obtaining formal consent from the participants through the signing of the Informed Consent Form (ICF) and later transcribed. It is noteworthy that, of the fourteen interviews conducted, two were conducted in Spanish and twelve in Portuguese.

The theoretical foundation of the research was based on Agnes Heller's Theory of Everyday Life (Heller, 2008), suitable for qualitative analysis. Sociodemographic data were organized in an Excel spreadsheet and used to characterize the participants. The interviews were qualitatively analyzed using ATLAS.ti software, version 23 (ATLAS.ti Scientific Software Development GmbH, 2023), revealing various analytical axes from the transcribed narratives.

For the analysis of the transcribed material, the Collective Subject Discourse (CSD) was adopted, as it is a methodology that allows for the organization and systematization of discourses from methodological figures that represent the meanings expressed by participants as a significant whole. This method enables an in-depth exploration of narratives, highlighting not only linguistic structures but also the underlying meanings of individual statements. Through this approach, the aim was to identify points of convergence, divergence, and complementarity among the discourses, facilitating a more comprehensive understanding of participants' perceptions and experiences. Thus, CSD contributes to constructing an analytical framework that clarifies, more precisely, the objectives outlined in the research, ensuring greater fidelity to the diversity of perspectives presented in the study (Lefèvre & Lefèvre, 2012).

According to Lefèvre & Lefèvre (2012), CSD is particularly suitable for opinion research, social representations, or, more broadly, social assignments of meaning, which use as their basis testimonies or other types of verbal material, such as magazine and newspaper articles. CSD is characterized as a quali-quantitative method, preserving, throughout the entire process, the discursive and qualitative nature of the opinion or social representation, in addition to considering the quantitative dimension, related to the representativeness and generalization of the results obtained.

The application of CSD serves as a strategic tool to identify and consolidate common elements in the discourses of a specific group, allowing for the construction of a

meaningful representation of individuals who share a particular experience. In this context, the method employs operators and methodological figures, such as Key Expressions (KE), Central Ideas (CI), and the Collective Subject Discourse itself (CSD) (Lefèvre & Lefèvre, 2012).

CSD organizes excerpts from individual discourses to compose a collective narrative, highlighting the social thought of groups by gathering key expressions (KE) with convergent meanings. KE are relevant excerpts from testimonies, selected for their representativeness, while CI synthesize more clearly the meaning of these expressions. Based on these CI and KE, CSD is constructed as a synthesis discourse, written in the first-person singular –as if creating, from it, a collective subject even, unified –, which reflects the perceptions and opinions shared by a group on a specific topic (Lefèvre & Lefèvre, 2012).

The process of constructing CSD, for this study, began with transcribing the interviews and subsequently identifying the KEs. Then, each KE was associated with a CI, which described the central content expressed by that statement, i.e., the main theme or idea that the excerpt represented. After defining the CIs, the construction of collective discourses began, which involved drafting texts that group the KEs from different statements under the same CI, respecting the participants' language and preserving their perspectives, even if anonymized.

The CSD methodology enabled the understanding of collective thought by gathering and expressing, in an organized manner, the diversity of individual experiences and perceptions in a discourse that is both unique and representative of the collective. In the present study, CSD was used to interpret the transcribed materials, complemented by field notes to provide a broader and contextualized analysis of the study's object. Below, a table will be presented to exemplify how the Collective Subject Discourses (CSDs) were organized according to the KEs and CIs proposed by Lefèvre & Lefèvre (2012):

The inclusion of Table 1 with the organization of the CDs, the KEs, and the CIs allows for a more comprehensive visualization of the dimensions analyzed, encompassing not only an isolated perspective but the totality of manifestations, highlighting discursive patterns that reflect the complexities of migration. In this way, the structure presented illustrates the different forms of experiences of the participants in relation to the migratory process, cultural differences, belonging, and the challenges faced in the host country. Furthermore, it highlighted the intersectionality of the experiences, showing how factors such as culture, gender, race, and migratory status influence the experiences of migrants due to the prejudices they face.

Thus, the CDs enabled the analysis of the social representations constructed by migrant and refugee individuals in Brazil, revealing aspects such as subalternization, identity, culture, and customs. The methodology thus made it possible to capture the complexity of the social interactions of the new daily life and the subjective perceptions of the participants, offering a robust tool to explore social phenomena from a qualitative and intersectional perspective. Field notes complemented the analysis, providing a broader understanding of the object of study.

The project was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the 'School Health Center of the Ribeirão Preto Medical School – University of São Paulo (USP),' under opinion No. 5.682.699.

Table 1. Organization of Collective Subject Discourses (CSDs) according to the ECHs and ICs proposed by Lefèvre & Lefèvre (2012).

CSDs	KEs	CIIs
CSD-1	"The hardest part is the language, right?"	Cultural differences and transformations
	"I had three months to learn the language..."	
	"In my country, we don't eat many beans."	
	"[...] in my country it's not common to eat the same thing every day."	Culture and Customs
	"I saw people putting shorts, very short, [the] children go to schools."	
	"In my country, everyone wears a uniform."	
CSD 2	"Now it's good, [...] because there are a lot of African women now, right? They're selling cassava leaves."	Belonging
	"No foreigner feels part of the country they live in."	Belonging
	"I don't belong."	
	"[...] I recently had a conversation with a social worker who told me 'you should be back home!!'"	Prejudice and discrimination
	"I wasn't getting the money I should have because of that [being a migrant]."	
	"When my children went to school, they were also discriminated against because they weren't from here."	
	"Then they said 'you don't deserve it, you don't have documents, you don't have this!' and I felt very discriminated against."	Knowledge of rights and duties

Results and Discussion

The sociodemographic data presented represent the complexity and diversity of the experience of migrants and refugees in this research. The detailed analysis of these aspects allows for various reflections and important implications, as can be observed below.

According to Table 2, the variation in the ages of the participants, ranging from 20 to 69 years, indicates the presence of different generations and, consequently, different needs and experiences. The proportion of women among the migrant participants in this study (57.14%), although slightly higher than that of men (42.86%), suggests a possible correspondence with trends identified in studies such as that of Tonhati and Pereda (2021) and in data from the International Migration Observatory (Cavalcanti et al., 2022). These studies indicate a growth in the number of female migrants in Brazil, especially among young people with completed secondary education coming from countries in the Global South. However, due to the small number of participants in this study, these findings should be interpreted with caution, as we do not intend to generalize them, dissociating from their local character. The data on marital status and education indicate that 50.0% of the participants completed high school, which reflects part of the socioeconomic reality of this group. Furthermore, the employment situation reveals significant challenges: 28.57% of the interviewees were, at the time, unemployed, and 21.43% were engaged in volunteer work, which highlights difficulties in the integration of these migrants into the Brazilian labor market and the need for strategies that promote greater employability and economic security for this group.

Table 2. Characterization and sociodemographic data of participants (n=14) – 2022.

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY (F)	PERCENTAGE (%)
Age		
20 to 29 years	2	14.29%
30 to 39 years	7	50.0%
40 to 49 years	2	14.29%
50 to 59 years	1	7.14%
60 to 69 years	2	14.29%
Sex		
Female	8	57.14%
Male	6	42.86%
Marital status		
Single	7	50.0%
Married	4	28.57%
Informal union with partner	3	21.43%
Education		
Incomplete elementary education	1	7.14%
Complete high school	7	50.0%
Technical education	1	7.14%
Incomplete higher education	1	7.14%
Complete higher education	4	28.57%

These findings align with data from the 2021 annual OBMigra report, which, when comparing data from 2011 and 2021, shows a significant shift in the educational profile of immigrant workers in Brazil. In 2011, the majority had completed higher education or more (51.9%), while 27.1% had completed high school. By 2021, this scenario was reversed: the proportion of immigrants with completed high school increased to 47.5%, while the share of those with higher education dropped to 21.2%. Moreover, there was a significant increase in the number of workers with education below high school, especially among those with no schooling or incomplete elementary education, whose proportion rose from 5.8% to 12.3% during the same period (Cavalcanti et al., 2022).

According to Table 3, the analysis of the occupational conditions of the participants in this study reveals a scenario marked by structural challenges in accessing the formal labor market and by the precariousness of working conditions. The data analyzed show that 28.57% of the interviewees are unemployed, which highlights significant challenges regarding labor market integration and the achievement of financial stability. Additionally, 21.43% resort to informal work, which serves as an alternative often adopted by this group in the face of a lack of opportunities in the formal market and specific barriers faced by immigrants, such as the lack of regularized documentation and unfamiliarity with local dynamics.

The participants' sources of income also reflect this precarious reality. Informal work is the main source of livelihood for 35.71% of the interviewees, which reinforces the dependence on unstable occupations with low social protection. Furthermore, 21.43% reported having no fixed source of income, suggesting a scenario of socioeconomic

vulnerability. In contrast, only 21.43% of the participants have access to formal employment, indicating still limited access to regulated opportunities.

Table 3. Occupation and source of income (n=14) – 2022.

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY (F)	PERCENTAGE (%)
Occupation		
Volunteer	3	21.43%
Unemployed	4	28.57%
Secretary	1	7.14%
Informal worker (on the side)	3	21.43%
Home (domestic)	1	7.14%
Civil engineer	1	7.14%
General services	1	7.14%
Source of income		
No income	3	21.43%
Bolsa Família	1	7.14%
Formal work	3	21.43%
Informal work (“odd jobs”)	5	35.71%
Family income (mother/spouse)	2	14.29%

The findings of this study are in line with the data from the OBMigra Migration Report (2021), which indicate a significant concentration of South American workers in the lowest income quintile (24.7%), with an average monthly salary of up to R\$ 1,254.00 (Cavalcanti et al., 2022). These results highlight the precarious labor conditions faced by this population and underscore the need for public policies aimed at promoting formal employability, migratory regularization, and ensuring greater economic security for immigrants.

Based on the data from Table 4, the housing situation, in which 57.14% of them live in rented houses or apartments, is an indication of the living conditions and challenges faced by the migrants and refugees participating in the study. These data align with a study conducted with 102 Haitian migrants in Caxias do Sul, in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, in which 98 of them (96%) reported paying rent and only 4 (4%) lived in donated housing (Rossa & Do Amaral, 2020). These precarious work and housing conditions often have implications in the daily lives of migrants and refugees, who frequently face various forms of insecurity and limited access to essential public services, such as health care and public transportation. This situation may become even more severe when discussing access to private services, which require financial investment.

The analysis of the participants’ housing conditions reveals a heterogeneous scenario, characterized by different residential arrangements that reflect both greater independence and situations of vulnerability. Notably, 28.57% of the interviewees live alone, while an equivalent proportion live with a spouse and children. Other arrangements include those who live only with children (7.14%), only with their mother (7.14%), and those who share their residence with other people (7.14%). Additionally, another 7.14% reported living in Casa dos Migrantes, a temporary shelter that indicates the absence of a family or community support network, as well as a fragile economic situation.

Table 4. Housing conditions (n=14) – 2022.

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY (F)	PERCENTAGE (%)
Who do you currently live with?		
At Casa dos Migrantes	1	7.14%
With spouse	1	7.14%
With spouse and children	4	28.57%
With children	1	7.14%
With spouse and spouse's family	1	7.14%
Alone	4	28.57%
With mother	1	7.14%
With other people in a shared house	1	7.14%
Number of people in the household		
1	4	28.57%
2	2	14.29%
3	1	7.14%
4	5	35.71%
6	1	7.14%
52	1	7.14%
Type of housing		
Rented apartment/house	8	57.14%
Casa dos Migrantes	1	7.14%
Pension	4	28.57%
Occupation	1	7.14%

Regarding the number of people in the household, the majority live in homes with four individuals (35.71%), followed by those who live alone (28.57%) or in households with two people (14.29%). Few people live with three (7.14%) or six (7.14%) individuals, in addition to one exceptional case of a residence shared by 52 people (7.14%), which refers to Casa dos Migrantes. Rossa & Do Amaral (2020) point out in their study that most Haitian migrants (34.31%) live with 3 people in the same house; 24.5% with 2 people; 14.7% alone; 12.75% with 5 people; 11.76% with 4 people; and 1.96% live with 6 people in the same house. Thus, most migrants live with other co-nationals, not necessarily relatives, which reflects the daily difficulties in acquiring their own house or even renting a property for each individual, in addition to highlighting the need for support from third parties to sustain themselves, given that most do not live alone, possibly due to shared household costs.

Regarding the type of housing, most interviewees (57.14%) live in rented apartments or houses, which shows that, despite the difficulties, many are able to access housing that requires a relatively stable financial condition. However, 7.14% live in Casa dos Migrantes, which suggests a situation of vulnerability and a need for housing support. Additionally, 28.57% live in boarding houses, a form of temporary housing often associated with more affordable costs and financial instability, which prevents them from renting regular properties. Only 7.14% of participants mentioned living in occupations, indicating a low tendency toward informal or collective housing arrangements.

As observed in Table 5, the research reveals a significant diversity of nationalities among migrants in Brazil, with a notable predominance of people from Haiti (42.86%) and a significant presence of migrants from countries such as Peru (14.29%), Angola (14.29%), Chile (7.14%), Democratic Republic of the Congo (7.14%), Bolivia (7.14%), and Paraguay (7.14%). This cultural plurality requires approaches that recognize and respect the specificities of each group, since factors such as mother tongue, traditions, and previous experiences directly impact how these individuals relate to health and social assistance services. In this context, interculturality becomes essential to promote inclusion and ensure that interventions respect the identities and unique needs of each migrant and refugee, creating spaces of dialogue, exchange, and mutual strengthening between cultures.

Between 2010 and 2021, data from the annual OBMigra report indicate that 57,028 people were recognized as refugees in Brazil. A milestone can be observed in 2019 and 2020, years in which 83.9% of the refugee grants during this period of more than 10 years were registered, with a peak in 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, when 26,577 refugee applications were granted. In regional terms, Latin America took on a central role in the dynamics of refuge in Brazil during this period, consolidating especially from 2016 onwards. In total, 85.6% of refugees in the analyzed period were Venezuelans, followed by people of Syrian nationality or residence, which indicates the centrality of the Venezuelan crisis in the refugee scenario in Brazil and reinforces the need for a structured and adequate response to this increasingly changing human mobility (Cavalcanti et al., 2022).

Table 5. Ethnic data (n=14) – 2022.

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY (F)	PERCENTAGE (%)
Country of origin		
Haiti	6	42.86%
Chile	1	7.14%
Democratic Republic of the Congo	1	7.14%
Peru	2	14.29%
Bolivia	1	7.14%
Angola	2 (refugees)	14.29%
Paraguay	1	7.14%
Skin color		
Black	9	64.29%
White	2	14.29%
Brown	3	21.43%

Among the participants of this study, two individuals of Angolan origin reported having applied for refuge in Brazil, each motivated by different circumstances of vulnerability. Both highlight the complexity of migratory trajectories and the multiple factors that motivate the search for refuge, such as violence, insecurity, and the political and territorial instability of the country of origin, which emphasizes the importance of public policies and reception services that ensure adequate support and protection for the integration of migrants into the host society.

This sociodemographic overview illustrates the living conditions of the migrant participants in this study and introduces the analysis of migratory experiences. By understanding the different origins, family arrangements, and occupational challenges, we can advance in the analysis of the migrants' experiences, which will be carried out through the Collective Subject Discourses (CDS), allowing a more detailed understanding of the dynamics involved in the migration process and in everyday life:

CDS1 – Cultural differences and identity transformations: body-territory and the migratory experience

Culture is a multiple and complex concept, which is conceived and discussed by many fields of knowledge. It is from the contribution of anthropologist Franz Boas that the concept is understood as the production and development of identities and meanings from social experience and its relations (Boas, 2005). It also starts from the idea of a vast, democratic, diverse, and contextualized field, which is defined as a process of existing, creating, and expressing ways of living, feeling, doing, building, and dreaming (Silvestrini, 2019).

In this sense, migration is understood as a sociocultural phenomenon (Bezerra & Alves, 2022), which involves cultural, social, and identity interactions between individuals and groups. The intense mobility of people around the world since the beginning of the 21st century marks the phenomenon of migration, in which the process of interculturality occurs, referring to the interaction and coexistence between different cultures within the same society, going beyond mere coexistence, as in multiculturalism. Interculturality presupposes dialogue and effective exchange between cohabiting cultures, promoting mutual respect and inclusion, so that cultural differences are not obstacles to social cohesion, but rather seen as opportunities for mutual enrichment (Caetano & Paiva, 2018). However, interculturality must be understood as a central element to promote the participation and inclusion of migrants (Samacá & Ortiz, 2020).

In the Collective Subject Discourse (CDS) below, it is possible to perceive how this phenomenon occurs, challenging the cultural dimension:

The hardest part is the language, right? I had three months to learn the language, right? I had to try really hard [...] [I'm] a person who changed a lot, who left the country because I had to adapt to be reborn in another place, to the customs, [to] the language and [to] the essence of life. [...] I really miss [...] the food! In my homeland, we eat beans only once a month. My body is not used to eating beans every day. I never ate rice and beans, and after I started eating rice and beans every day, the body feels heavy. [...] Let me tell you something, today I love beans [...]. I like vegetables, I like greens, I like meat, I like fish. [...] It's cassava leaves [...]. You can put cassava leaves there, fish, you can put cod [...] they are already selling cassava leaves [referring to Brazil], now it's good [...] Because there are a lot of African [people] already, right? They're selling cassava leaves. [...] The culture [is also different here] [...] I saw people wearing shorts, very short, [the] children go to school. In my country, everyone wears uniforms. Women [here wear] [...] anklets. In our culture, no! [...] in Haiti, there wasn't the habit of wearing sweaters [...] And you also won't want to live the same way. Because you already have your

customs. So, it's not the same customs you had when you lived with your parents. [...] The immigrant has to behave well, follow the country's principles. [...] To live well, one has to behave and follow everything the country needs.

Some fragments of the CDS highlight a dynamic process of transformation and identity reconfiguration, in which migrants and refugees build new practices and, at the same time, preserve elements of their cultural traditions. This CDS also illustrates how the adoption of new habits, initially marked by strangeness, becomes an experience of cultural integration.

The migrant's body, initially resistant to the new and the unknown, undergoes a reconfiguration by incorporating elements of the local culture. However, this adaptation does not occur completely, as the traditions of origin remain present, creating tension between what is to be learned and what is already known. This phenomenon can be understood through Frantz Fanon's theory (2008), who, in his studies on colonization and its psychological consequences for both the colonized and the colonizer, describes the body of the subject in contexts of cultural displacement as often objectified. For Fanon, the colonized individual lives a "double consciousness," in which they oscillate between the identity imposed by the colonizer and dominant culture and the identity built from their own cultural roots. In this context, the migrant experiences a fragmentation of identity, which is reflected not only in the adaptation to new habits but also in the constant tension between the desire for integration and the preservation of their primary identity.

Fanon's "double consciousness" helps to understand how the body, in its relationship with the new culture, becomes a space of transformation, in which the migrant does not give up their traditions but also seeks to adapt to the new context. Thus, by coming into contact with other cultures, migrants and refugees may experience not only a geographical change but also a symbolic one, which affects their relationship with their body and with their own identity.

From this perspective, through the concept of interculturality – which presupposes not giving up one's cultural identity but participating in a social dynamic that promotes justice and dignity for all (Caetano & Paiva, 2018), and that values dialogue, the will to interrelate, and the refusal of domination (Dantas, 2017) –, it is possible to promote the debate so that belonging can exist despite cultural differences, which refer to ideologies of belonging and their uses, even political ones, especially in contexts of inequality (Seyferth, 2011).

It is noticeable in the CDS that other ways of being and existing prevailed in the face of a new daily life, expressed in elements such as the mother tongue, food, clothing, children's entry into school, and daily customs. These are fundamental cultural elements that influence and are influenced by the environment in which they exist. Like any other cultural aspect, they can become so representative that they function as symbols of identification and distinction and thus form part of corporeality. In this way, migration/refuge as a sociocultural phenomenon challenges alterity in relationships, human activities, and how individuals experience their daily lives. However, this cultural difference, experienced by historically diasporic subjects, implies identity construction and the emergence of new subjectivities from daily experiences (Bezerra & Alves, 2022). This perspective is in line with research showing that cultural plurality and the formation of

new identities are constituted in cultural difference (Seyferth, 2011). In this sense, it is understood that human activities, through the migratory process, are mobilized to unfold in new existential, political, and life-creating spaces (Sato & Barros, 2016).

Taking as an example the excerpts from the CDS above that express the cultural element related to food, and considering that 69.24% of the participants in this study declared themselves Black, it is worth mentioning that Bezerra & Alves (2022) point out that African migrants in Brazil face financial challenges that directly impact their eating habits, requiring a constant rebalancing between the culture of origin and the conditions of the host country. This phenomenon is also observed in other migratory contexts, such as among African refugees resettled in Australia, where children and adolescents tend to adopt local foods, while adults seek to blend traditional ingredients with new elements (Barcelos et al., 2023). In this sense, the excerpt from the speech "In my homeland, we eat little beans. We eat beans once a month. [...] I'll tell you something, today I love beans [...]" shows that the acceptance of beans, a typical Brazilian food, does not merely represent a passive adaptation to the host country's culture, but rather an active process of re-signification and integration, in which individuals reconstruct their identities through the dialogue between their culture of origin and the local culture.

In this regard, inspired by the ideas of Leda Martins (2021) on the concept of crossroads¹, it can be inferred that migration and/or refuge may occupy a place of cultural intersections where diverse and marginalized bodies confront and recreate their place in the world, as new corporealities emerge.

Within this understanding of new corporealities, the concept of body-territory stands out as a fundamental theoretical tool to comprehend the experiences of migrants and refugees, especially regarding the relationship between identity, belonging, and everyday practices. Gago (2019, p. 107) defines body-territory as a "productive and epistemic political continuity of the body as territory", deconstructing the liberal notion of the body as individual property. Instead, body-territory is understood as a collective and relational construction, whose boundaries are constantly reconfigured through interaction with the material and symbolic world. In the context of migration and refuge, this perspective becomes especially relevant, as the bodies of migrants are crossed by physical, cultural, and identity displacements.

Migration does not only imply a geographical change, but also a profound reconfiguration of the body-territory. In crossing borders, migrants and refugees undergo a process of deterritorialization and reterritorialization, in which their bodies are redefined by new cultural, political, and social experiences. Food, clothing, language, as well as the rules and norms of the new country, as everyday and culturally significant practices become a central axis in this process. They function as a space of identity negotiation, in which migrants reinterpret their traditions and build new ties with the host territory. From Fanon's (2008) perspective, migration imposes pressures of conformity and assimilation, but also opens space for agency and cultural

¹ From the sphere of rite and performance, we have the idea of a crossroads as a locus of intersection, which maps the various movements of recreation, improvisation and settlement of cultural and social manifestations; a place of centering and decentering, intersections and deviations, confluences and alterations, influences and divergences, fusions and ruptures, multiplicity and convergence, unity and plurality, origin and dissemination.

reinterpretation. Migrant and refugee women and men exercise agency and reconfigure their identities, transforming experiences of strangeness and displacement into opportunities for cultural (re)affirmation. This process is crossed by multiple layers of oppression and resistance, especially when we consider social markers of class, gender, and race in the migratory condition. Haitian and Black women and men, in experiencing migration, not only face the structural racism present in Brazilian society but also carry histories of resistance and cultural preservation strategies that manifest in daily life. This agency is observed in the CDS when participants narrate how they incorporate new habits into their daily lives without abandoning practices and values that reaffirm their cultures of origin:

It's cassava leaf [...] You can put cassava leaf with fish, you can put codfish [...] I'm seeing it, they're already selling cassava leaf [referring to Brazil], now it's good [...] Because there are a lot of Africans already, right? They're selling cassava leaf.

The act of seeking and consuming foods that recall one's homeland goes beyond mere nourishment, becoming a political gesture of identity and cultural reaffirmation. In a context marked by cultural homogenization attempts and the devaluation of Afro-diasporic traditions, the right to traditional food acquires profound meaning: it is a way to preserve memories, strengthen networks of belonging, and resist hegemonic cultural imposition (Krone & Menasche, 2016). Therefore, it is essential to problematize the social dynamics and structural inequalities that permeate the daily lives of these populations, since migration policies and institutional practices often reinforce processes of exclusion and subalternization. From this understanding, the role of the occupational therapist is highlighted as a social articulator, capable of expanding support networks and promoting access to fundamental rights and initiatives that value cultural diversity (Barros & Galvani, 2016). The analysis of body-territory in the migration context reveals the complexity of identity and cultural experiences lived by migrants and refugees.

In this sense, by understanding that the daily life of migrants and refugees is shaped by different customs and another culture, it becomes clear that the cultural aspects of human activities are a dimension that must be considered in occupational therapy, as Lavacca & Silva (2023) remind us. By considering sociocultural contexts, occupational therapy engages with disrupted daily lives, conditioned by the colonial-capitalist world-system (Bezerra & Alves, 2022), within which the migration phenomenon occurs. Thus, it is in daily life that hegemonic and colonizing conditions and processes materialize, creating imprints in the fabric of each individual's life (Galheigo, 2020).

In this context, occupational therapeutic practice must consider the socio-historical context of the country, mobilizing resources and strategies for social participation (Bezerra & Alves, 2022). Starting from the analysis of daily life, occupational therapists can help these individuals and groups reinterpret themselves, enabling them to integrate their cultural traditions with new experiences, strengthening cultural identity and promoting a space of belonging and mutual agreements.

CDS 2 – Subalternization and Racialization of Migrant Bodies in the Search for Belonging

The Collective Subject Discourse (CSD) presents a critical analysis of the experiences of discrimination faced by migrants and refugees who participated in this study, mostly Black Haitian women. This CSD highlights how social vulnerability and subalternization manifest in various contexts, such as work and education, reinforcing dynamics of exclusion and inequality.

According to Castel (1994), social vulnerability can be understood as a condition of instability resulting from the weakening of the structural axes of the social support network: work and social bonds. When an individual loses security in one or both of these axes – either due to the precarization of working conditions or the fragility of social ties and support networks – they find themselves in a situation of vulnerability. Castel describes how this condition can evolve into a process of "disaffiliation," in which the subject is gradually displaced from a position of social inclusion (with access to social rights) into a state of marginalization, characterized by the progressive loss of rights and social ties.

This process is dynamic, as the boundaries between zones of inclusion, vulnerability, and disaffiliation are "porous" and can be expanded by economic crises, mass unemployment, conflicts, and other adverse contexts. In these circumstances, job precariousness and the breakdown of social bonds reinforce one another, making the individual more susceptible to disaffiliation and increasing their vulnerability in the face of social and economic circumstances (Castel, 1994).

The following CSD further highlights discrimination related to corporeality, origin, skin color, and documentation status, revealing how these factors contribute to economic and social marginalization. This CSD exposes dynamics of exclusion and inequality, emphasizing the intersection between racial prejudice and labor precarization, and reinforces the importance of better understanding the structures that perpetuate such marginalization:

No foreigner feels like part of the country they live in. I don't belong [...] I don't feel like I do, no, [I don't feel I belong]. [...] And the most interesting and sad thing was that I recently had a conversation with a social worker who told me: "you should be in your own land!" And I said: "ah, interesting!". And it stayed with me, like a little thing here, but I said "I won't take it seriously because I know what her ideology is, her way of thinking," but many times, even being positive through all of this, sometimes these little things crush you, they hurt your soul! [...] I am [...] a migrant [person] who didn't want to be a migrant. [...] Yes, I suffer, but deep down we don't carry any of this, right? Deep down we don't carry any of this. Because it's the person. Maybe they were raised like that, right? For them, it's okay, but for others, it's not okay. [...] As I said before, the issue of nepotism, people prioritize some more than others, right? That's part of it, right? I think it's more about skin color, where you come from, right? That plays a role too. [...] Yes, because before I entered here, since we weren't from here and I worked, I didn't receive the pay I should have received because of that. So when I said, no, but the salary was like that. Then they said, "no, you don't deserve it, you don't have documents, you don't have this!" I felt very discriminated against. My children also

faced discrimination when they went to school, because they're not from here [...] they also experienced a lot of prejudice. [...] It shows the rejection they have towards immigrants. There is rejection, yes, let's not deny it, there is rejection, yes, from all sides. Not everyone respects others equally.

The migratory experience involves multiple dimensions that go beyond geographic mobility and reflect discursive and political processes strongly influenced by globalization. In the case of migrants and refugees, the need to adapt to new contexts imposes a negotiation between "old" and "new" identities, which Stuart Hall (2014) defines as identity hybridity. This dynamic construction of identity is directly tied to power relations and representation, which shape forms of belonging and exclusion in host territories.

This Collective Subject Discourse (CSD) reveals these identity tensions by showing how migrants experience processes of racial and social exclusion. The statement "I don't belong" expresses not only a feeling of displacement but also the structural effects of marginalization and racialization of non-white migrant bodies. This perception resonates with Santos' (2007) analysis, which points to the invisibilization of racialized identities as one of the mechanisms that perpetuate inequalities in access to fundamental rights, such as work, housing, and education. In the migratory context, these inequalities are intensified by racial prejudice and xenophobia, which reinforce the social vulnerability of immigrants (Conselho Nacional de Justiça, 2024).

The racialization of non-white migrant bodies operates as a social marker that positions them as "others" within the host society. This process is not only symbolic but materializes in institutional barriers that limit their opportunities for inclusion, as discussed by Nogueira (2007). In Brazil, racial discrimination takes both subtle and overt forms, both naturalized, making it even more difficult to confront racism and deepening racial inequalities (Lima & Vala, 2004).

Sayad (1998) complements this analysis with the concept of "double absence," which describes the condition of the migrant as someone displaced from both their country of origin and the host country. This exclusion becomes even more evident in the labor market, where many immigrants end up accepting precarious and underpaid jobs, far from their qualifications and professional aspirations. This phenomenon, called "migration capital" by Sayad (1998), reinforces the precariousness and subalternization of these workers.

The history of migration cannot be analyzed solely from an economic perspective, as it involves complex dynamics of transformation that interact with factors such as race, gender, and social class. Crenshaw (2002) proposes that these social markers of difference do not operate in isolation but in an intersectional way, shaping inequalities and social positions in a deeply intertwined manner. In this regard, as Brah (2006) emphasizes, the theory of intersectionality offers an essential tool for understanding how these power structures reinforce each other, increasing the barriers and challenges faced by groups already at the margins of society.

These inequalities directly affect the possibility of recognition or invisibilization of migrants in urban spaces. The way the State and society treat these populations (as perceived through public policies and discourses about this group) directly impacts their access to essential services and their ability to fully exercise citizenship rights. Desrosiers

(2020) points out that the denial of identity recognition aggravates marginalization and hinders the construction of a socially integrated new life.

The bodily markers of migration also play a fundamental and foundational role in this process. The bodies of migrants, by carrying visible signs of belonging to certain racial or ethnic groups, are read and categorized by the host society, influencing their acceptance or rejection. Jiménez-García & Jiménez Vicioso (2019) discuss the relationship between migration, stereotypes, and xenophobia, showing how discrimination occurs in multiple spheres, such as the labor market and education.

This CSD reveals these discriminatory practices, as illustrated by the excerpt "I didn't receive the pay I should have received because of that", which exposes the devaluation of the migrant's work and the migrant worker themselves. This type of exclusion reinforces stereotypes that justify the marginalization of immigrants, linking their presence to informality and precarization. The relationship between racial discrimination and social exclusion is also reflected in the statement "more about skin color, where you come from", which highlights the racialization of xenophobia.

The devaluation of migrant labor is directly tied to the structures of structural racism, as discussed by Fanon (2008). In *Black Skin, White Masks*, the author analyzes how skin color becomes a social marker of difference that dehumanizes and subordinates certain groups, creating a hierarchical system that perpetuates their marginalization. This logic is reflected in how racialized migrants are treated in the labor market, often relegated to precarious jobs with no prospects for advancement.

This context aligns with Castel's (1994) analysis, which emphasizes social disaffiliation as a process that not only excludes migrants from the economic sphere but also undermines their social and political participation. The precariousness of working conditions, coupled with the absence of support networks, intensifies their vulnerability and hinders their full integration into society.

The exclusion of migrants also occurs intergenerationally, affecting their families and especially their children. Bertoldo (2021) discusses how xenophobia is not limited to nationality, but also incorporates racial and identity dimensions that reinforce the marginalization of these individuals. This phenomenon is evidenced in the experiences reported by study participants, who describe school rejection and difficulties accessing basic rights.

Mundim & Santos (2022) identify two central factors that explain prejudice against migrants in Brazil: economic competition and racial prejudice. The first refers to the perception that immigrants threaten the stability of the national labor market, while the second is tied to stigmas based on race and ethnicity. In the CSD above, this dynamic is made explicit in the experiences of discrimination at work and school, where xenophobia manifests both in wage devaluation and in social segregation.

The analysis of the CSD empirically confirms the mechanisms of exclusion, subalternization, and discrimination faced by migrants in Brazil. Studies such as those by Pauli et al. (2021) and Camargo & Herédia (2018) highlight that lack of documentation, racialization, and labor precarization contribute to maintaining structural inequalities, making the integration of migrants even more difficult.

In light of this scenario, the implementation of public policies that promote access to decent work and combat xenophobia and racism becomes essential, ensuring the genuine inclusion of immigrants and fostering a more just society.

In this sense, actions in occupational therapy can be understood as a transformative and liberating praxis (Farias & Lopes, 2022), aligned with the thinking of Freire (2013) and Lefèbvre (1991), who view everyday life as a fertile ground for resistance against oppression and alienation. Occupational therapy not only strengthens the sense of belonging but also challenges hegemonic narratives and practices that relegate these individuals to subaltern positions.

By creating spaces for migrants to express their cultural identities, develop skills, and expand their social support networks, occupational therapy becomes a powerful tool of resistance and emancipation. In this way, therapeutic-occupational praxis is instrumentalized for anti-oppression (Farias & Lopes, 2022), positioning itself alongside subjects as a facilitator of a permanent cultural revolution (Lefèbvre, 1991). This process transcends the individual and drives sociocultural and economic transformations, which are essential in contexts where power dynamics and exclusion perpetuate social vulnerability.

Final Considerations

The analysis of the migratory phenomenon from the perspective of occupational therapy, corporeality processes, intersectionality, and everyday life reveals the complexity of the experiences lived by migrants and refugees. These individuals, as they cross both geographic and symbolic borders, face challenges that go beyond adapting to a new territory; they involve the reconstruction of identities, the re-signification of their bodies, and the reconfiguration of everyday practices. The concept of body-territory offers a fundamental theoretical tool for understanding how the bodies of migrants are spaces of negotiation and collective cultural expression.

Intersectionality, also used here as an analytical lens, allowed for the identification of how social markers such as race, gender, class, and migratory status intersect to produce inequalities that resonate in the daily lives of these individuals. In the Brazilian context, the racialization of migrant bodies, especially of Haitian Black women, highlights how structural racism and xenophobia materialize in institutional barriers and discriminatory practices, limiting access to fundamental rights such as work, housing, and education.

Everyday life, as the space where life is expressed and reconstructed, is a central axis of occupational therapy. Migration imposes ruptures and transformations in daily life that range from food and clothing to language and social bonds. These changes, often marked by estrangement and resistance, can become opportunities for re-signification and cultural integration.

The Collective Subject Discourses (CSDs) highlighted how migrants negotiate their identities, preserving elements of their original cultures while incorporating new habits and practices. This dynamic of identity hybridity reflects the agency of these individuals, who transform experiences of displacement into processes of cultural (re)affirmation.

In this sense, occupational therapy plays a crucial role in promoting interculturality, by taking into account the sociocultural contexts and power dynamics that permeate migrants' everyday lives. Occupational therapists act as social articulators, facilitating the construction of support networks and social participation. Thus, occupational

therapeutic practice must be guided by a critical and emancipatory approach, one that recognizes structural inequalities and promotes social justice.

Although this study does not aim to generalize our data to the entire Brazilian context, it proved fruitful in dialoguing with national-level research, as referenced throughout the text. The fact that the proportion of women participants was 14.28% higher than that of men aligns with the trends pointed out by Tonhati & Pereda (2021) and data from the International Migration Observatory (Cavalcanti et al., 2022). Furthermore, the findings on education levels also match the 2021 OBMigra report, which states that 47.5% of immigrants in Brazil have completed high school. Our research also resonates with the study by Rossa & Do Amaral (2020), conducted in Rio Grande do Sul, particularly on the issue of housing, as most participants in this study pay rent. These correlations indicate the need for additional studies conducted in various locations to confirm and/or update this data, providing an increasingly comprehensive overview. While not aiming for generalization, our findings point to recurring patterns at different levels, which collectively may serve as a basis for creating or improving public policies for this group.

Finally, it is essential to emphasize the importance of public policies that ensure access to basic rights and actively combat xenophobia and racism, especially racialized xenophobia, through the implementation of intersectional and culturally grounded actions that value cultural differences and promote belonging.

Occupational therapy, by positioning itself as a discipline committed to social transformation, can contribute to the creation of spaces where migrants and refugees can rebuild their lives with dignity and autonomy, integrating their cultural traditions into new experiences and strengthening their identities and corporealities in a context of respect and inclusion.

Therefore, migration and refuge, as sociocultural phenomena, challenge occupational therapy to rethink its practices and act in a more engaged and sensitive way toward the demands of these populations, recognizing that everyday life is a space of struggle, resistance, and the possibility for transformation.

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