

What are the potentials of group occupations for adult asylum seekers?

Abstract

The article uses the scoping studies approach to explore the current literature on group occupation with adult asylum seekers. Two research questions related to this topic are addressed: whether group occupation has the potential to promote occupational engagement and whether it is meaningful for adult asylum seekers. In order to answer these questions, we referred to Canadian model of occupational performance and engagement (CMOP-E) model and its description of the interaction between environment, group occupations and asylum seekers. We conclude that group occupation both promotes occupational engagement and is meaningful for the participants, as the group is a regular occupation which provides relevant activities, a place to learn, create social bonds, experience happiness and a sense of being understood.

Norsk abstrakt

Tema for denne artikkelen er gruppeaktivitetar for vaksne asylsøkjarar. Forskingsspørsmåla som stilles er om gruppeaktivitet har potensiale til å fremme aktivitetsengasjement for vaksne asylsøkjarar, og om gruppeaktivitetar er meiningsfulle for vaksne asylsøkjarar som deltek. For å svare på desse spørsmåla, er det gjort ei litteraturstudie av typen scoping studies der me leita etter og analyserte publiserte forskingsartiklar. Canadian model of occupational performance and engagement (CMOP-E) er valt som teoretisk perspektiv, med særleg vekt på skildringa av interaksjonen mellom omgjevnader, gruppeaktivitetar og asylsøkjarar. Resultata viser at gruppeaktivitetar fremmer aktivitetsengasjement og er meiningsfull for deltakarane. Resultata viser òg at gruppe som aktivitet kan gje relevante læringsmoglegheiter, bidra til sosial inkludering og fremme fellesskap og glede.

Introduction

According to the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), there are currently 3.5 million asylum seekers in the world (UNHCR, 2019); the number has not changed since the end of 2018. Asylum seekers fled their country due to fears of conflict, persecution, violence or human rights violation (Trimboli & Taylor, 2016). Defined by UNHCR, an asylum seeker is a refugee claimant seeking protection under the 1951 United Nations Geneva Convention or waiting for their refugee status to be determined (UNHCR, 2020).

The following paper only includes studies performed in countries that signed the 1951 Refugee Convention and have the same responsibility towards treating refugees according to internationally recognized legal standards and promoting appropriate procedures regarding asylum applications (UNHCR, 2011).

Berg (2012) describes asylum life/existence as being in a transitional phase or kind of undefined intermediate position, characterized by uncertainty and unpredictability regarding the duration of the waiting period and the outcome. According to Smith asylum seekers experiencing wasting their time, while they “should be working, making solid friendship, getting married and having families” (Smith, 2005, p. 475). As Strijk, Van Meijel & Gamel reports, everything the asylum seekers want is “a normal life” and to “be like the others” (Strijk, Van Meijel & Gamel, 2011, p. 52). However, the adaptation to a new environment is often bounded by their legal status. Strijk et al. also emphasized that a significant number of refugees/asylum seekers experienced multiple traumatic situations that triggered complex psychiatric symptoms (Strijk et al., 2011). Together with the consequences of post-migration stress, it results in a high rate of PTSD, anxiety and depression among asylum seekers (Silove, Sinnerbrink, Field, Manicavasagar & Steel, 1997). The cause of stress could involve economic and social difficulties, poor housing conditions, uncertainty about their future, fear of discrimination, feeling of loneliness and lack of purposeful activities in their everyday life (Strijk et al., 2011). As for example a normal life including standing up in the morning and going to work, including regular meals and sleeping routine, is not an option for the majority of asylum seekers (Berg, 2012).

Despite the high percentage of asylum seekers suffering from stress and psychiatric symptoms, asylum seekers most frequently mention social and economic aspects rather than psychological aspects as the way to help them in their current situation (Strijk et al., 2011). Learning the new language, continuing with education, planning daily activities and work are some of the meaningful occupational preferences mentioned by asylum seekers (Strijk et al., 2011; Lintner & Elsner, 2017). However, they might be denied the choice of these activities in reception centers (Morville, Erlandsson, Danneskiold-Samsøe, Amris & Eklund, 2015).

Different aspects of being an asylum seeker and living in a reception center might lead to being subjected to various forms of occupational injustice (Trimboli & Halliwell, 2018). In their scoping review, Huot, Kelly & Park mark down the aspects of occupational deprivation and occupational imbalance within occupational injustice, both of which are of importance describing asylum seekers situation (Huot, Kelly & Park, 2016). Occupational deprivation is described as being excluded from engaging in necessary or meaningful occupations due to factors outside of the individual's control and applies to asylum seekers facing limitations in engaging in occupations in the time living at the reception center. While occupational imbalance prevents the individual from achieving the ideal mix of occupations, including the balance of work, rest, self-care and play (Huot et al., 2016).

As a response to occupational challenges, including a limited choice of activities that asylum seekers might meet, group activity is mentioned as a “medium for encouraging occupational engagement (...) and enhancing cross-cultural and cross-generational understanding within the community” (Huot et al., 2016, p. 193). Within this context, we ask ourselves what the literature says about group occupation with adult asylum seekers. The term “occupation”, defined in the Taxonomy Code for Occupational Performance (TCOP), is seen as a set of activities performed with consistency and regularity, that is given a value and meaning by individual and culture (Townsend & Polatajko, 2013, p. 19). For this paper, group occupation is defined occupation performed by a group of individuals, within the context of therapy.

The aim of this paper is to use scoping studies approach to explore the research material on group occupation and group activities available to asylum seekers. By doing so, we investigated the research questions of group occupation having the potential to

promote occupational engagement and whether group occupations are meaningful for adult asylum seekers. Referring to Canadian Model of Occupational Performance and Engagement (CMOP-E) model, the interaction between environment, person/ group and occupation was considered. The mentioned interaction results in either functioning or deteriorated occupational performance and occupational engagement.

As an occupational therapy model, CMOP-E is characterized by occupational perspective. There are two areas of occupational perspective that relate to asylum seekers' occupational challenges and appear to be especially relevant for the theme of asylum seekers engaging in group occupations. First is the understanding of humans as occupational beings, for whom occupation and engaging in occupation is a basic need. Second, the opportunities and resources to engage in occupations are something that should be available to everyone and a fundamental human right (Townsend & Polatajko, 2013).

The CMOP-E model incorporate “a vision of health, well-being, and justice through occupation” (Townsend & Polatajko, 2013, p. 27) and is defined as “the dynamic interaction of person, environment, and occupation conceptualizing occupational performance and engagement” (Townsend & Polatajko, 2013, p. 28). “Person” is placed at the center of the model and characterized by cognitive, affective and physical performance components and spirituality in its core. Spirituality is shaped and expressed through occupations, and it represents the essence of self, the place where purpose and meaning are drawn. “Environment” surrounds the person, divides into cultural, institutional, physical, and social environment, and is unique for each individual or group and it provides occupational possibilities. Lastly, “occupation” represents a bridge connecting person and environment, and it serves the purpose of self-care, productivity, and leisure.

CMOP-E model includes occupational engagement as an important concept. The concept we consider to be central in the attempt to answer this paper's research questions. Occupational engagement, meaning “involving oneself or becoming occupied, to participate”, goes beyond the concept of occupational performance that defines as “the execution or carrying out of occupation” (Townsend & Polatajko, 2013, p. 26). Due to the interdependent relation between person, environment and occupation, a change in one of the elements is going to result in a change of all the others. When one of the elements is limited, the outcome will be a deteriorated occupational performance and occupational engagement. When the relation

between a person, environment and occupation is in harmony, it results in a functioning occupational performance and occupational engagement. (Townsend & Polatajko, 2013). According to Townsend & Polatajko the meaning is both “*a driving force and the outcome of occupational engagement*” (Townsend & Polatajko, 2013, p. 60). It was therefore an important factor in our process of determining the harmonious/ non-harmonious relationship between adult asylum seekers, environment and group occupation that might result in occupational engagement.

Method

To answer the research questions, scoping study was chosen as research method. Scoping study as a method is particularly relevant to use within disciplines with emerging evidence (Levac, Colquhoun & O’Brian, 2010). As such, it is suitable to answer questions about the contributions of occupational science and other relevant scientific fields the topic of group occupation with adult asylum seekers. In addition to formulating conclusions based on “examining the extent, range, and nature of the research activity”, a scoping study also enables “identifying gaps in the existing literature” (Levac et al., 2010, p. 1). We wanted to investigate if group occupation had the potential to promote occupational engagement and whether group occupations are meaningful for adult asylum seekers. Due to the qualitative nature of the research questions, we especially wanted to explore research that included the experiences of asylum seekers. To limit the scope of the study we also decided to omit research that focused solely on the therapist’s experiences.

Arksey & O’Malley’s six-stage framework for scoping studies, elaborated by Levac et al. was used in this study, excluding stage “(vi) consultation” (Arksey & O’Malley, 2005; Levac et al., 2010). The research questions were used to develop search terms and keywords that could generate relevant articles. The Norwegian and English keywords that were used were: asylum seeker/ asylsøker, occupation/ aktivitet, group/ gruppe and meaningful/ meningsfull. We searched for articles that applied qualitative or mixed-method research approaches to ensure that the articles included descriptions of asylum seekers’ experiences. To perform a comprehensive literature search, both the systematic method and the chain-method were used simultaneously (Rienecker, Stray Jørgensen & Skov, 2013).

Searches were done in the University library homesite Oria, the international databases PubMed, SveMed+, Cinahl and article-database Journal of Occupational Science (Taylor & Francis Online database). Systematic search was conducted between 8.2.2020 and 12.2.2020. To ensure that the articles included for the final analysis were relevant, inclusion and exclusion criteria were developed (Table 1). The first author performed all searches, as well as the selection process, under supervision of the second author. The selection process is illustrated in Figure 1: Flow chart.

At the end of the study selection stage, we ended up with 6 research articles, which are listed in Table 2.

To report the findings in a thorough and careful way, we did as Levac et al. recommended, and broke this stage into three meaningful and systematic steps (Levac et al., 2010). First, we analyzed the articles, including descriptive numerical analysis and qualitative thematic analysis. Then we report the results, and finally we discuss the results by considering the meaning of the findings and how they relate to the overall purpose of this study. In doing so, the theoretical notions and concepts from CMOP-E was included to see if they could add to the interpretation/ meaning of the results of the analysis.

For the thematic analysis, we followed Tjora's suggestions, by developing codes directly from the discussion and result parts of the selected research articles, without limitations considering the quantity of codes (Tjora, 2017). The first author did the coding and discussed evolving themes with the second author. The coding allowed us to get well acquainted with the text. By applying "*clustering the codes*" step the codes were organized into thematical groups, which provided a structure for further analysis (Tjora, 2017). The first author distanced herself from previously explained theoretical frame and research questions, to enable the themes to develop from the material. There is an agreement among the authors about the themes that were developed during the analysis.

Results

Numerical analysis

The result of the numerical analysis is summarized in Table 3 and it includes activities such as theater, gardening, creating music, drop-in center with various activities, Culture-Sensitive

and Resource Oriented Peer (CROP) - Group and needs-driven group. The variety of group activities ranges from art related activities, stress- and trauma-treatment, to physical activity and a multi-activity related group. Among the groups included in the analysis, the theatre group, CROP-groups and needs-driven groups have a direct focus on mental health, while the others only indirectly refer to it. Groups are equally divided into those where only asylum seekers are the participants and groups that also include refugees and/or local citizens. In some studies, asylum seekers are the only participants, while others also include refugees. Half of the groups are closed and the other half are open. In a closed group the number of participants stays the same for the time the group is meeting, while in open groups new participants can join the group, and the membership changes over the time (Carson, 2013). Groups are used as an intervention in variety of disciplines such as occupational therapy, psychology and music therapy.

Thematic analysis

By clustering the codes into thematic groups, we ended up with five themes: “establishing and reestablishing habits and routines”, “generating positive feelings”, “a meeting point with a social purpose”, “platform for learning”, and “towards the future”. Even though the research participants in some of the researches were both refugees and asylum seekers, we continue by referring only to asylum seekers.

Theme 1: Establishing and reestablishing habits and routines

Describing their current situation as an unpredictable period of waiting and getting bored, several of the participants reported loss of routines and developing destructive habits.

They expressed the need to fill the time and to create a structure in their daily life. Groups provided a predictable and habitual occupation as one participant explained it: “To come here, to have a routine in life, you kind of get bored when just staying at home” (Spring, Howlett, Connor, Alderson, Antcliff, Dutton, Gray, Hirst, Jabeen, Jamil, Mattimoe, & Waister, 2019, p. 38).

Participants described daily struggles of “getting up in the morning, getting dressed in time and going to the bus station” (Horghagen & Josephsson, 2010, p. 172) in order to reach the group meeting. By regularly participating in the group occupation, they reported on developing new habitual patterns leading towards reestablishing their daily routines.

When discussing the establishing and reestablishing habits and routines, the participants related to occupations allowing them “being busy with a purpose”. The members of the group showed their commitment by regularly attending the group meeting. While the purpose for participation varied from being able to develop their capacities, providing freedom to be creative, experiencing community integration, feeling the responsibility to present performance that belongs to the whole group, or as Bishop & Purcell describe it: “the members attend the group every week in order to maintain their plot”, which resulted in “pleasure from eating the food they had grown” (Bishop & Purcell, 2013, p. 266).

Theme 2: Generating positive feelings

Participants experienced group as a place of comfort and safety, where they got to openly express their feelings and thoughts, and where negative feelings were encountered and processed. A participant described his experience of participating in group occupation as: “They interrupt us from sadness and turn it into happiness” (Sunderland, Istvandity, Lakhani, Lenette, Procopis & Caballero, 2015, p. 8).

Being able to perform activities in a group generates feelings of happiness, fun and enjoyment. Some connect these feelings with their past life occupations, as for example horticulture is described as an activity providing “feelings of enjoyment and satisfaction combined with memories of horticulture in their home countries” (Bishop & Purcell, 2013, p. 266). Group occupations also are described as fun in “contrast to a boring everyday life” (Renner, Bänninger-Huber & Peltzer, 2011, p. 10), and a space away from everyday stress. A group is a place where people meet, and some participants “expressed feelings of happiness simply by seeing people and spending time together” (Spring et al., 2019, p. 37).

The positive feelings do not only apply to the time physically spent in the group but are reported as having a lasting effect. Women participating in a needs-driven group report of less stress and restlessness after they finish with group meetings (Ekblad, 2019). Another participant described her experience as: “I was tired (...) I met this group again (...) we had a chat together and they sang music again, and then I completely forgot, every tiredness went

away from me (...) it changed to happiness. I am still having this feeling” (Sunderland et al., 2015, p. 8).

Theme 3: A meeting point with a social purpose

“People you interact with, talk with, and feel welcomed in the community” (Spring et al., 2019, p. 37). Being understood and accepted by the group and its facilitators contributed to creating a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere, as does the nature of some of the groups. For example, the allotment group or drop-in center make it less reliant on verbal communication and more inclusive for those lacking confidence in using local language. Groups are said to respond to the cultural needs for a community that might not be fulfilled in the wider society. The participants describe the transition from being alienated towards belonging to the group and feeling a sense of community. Accordingly, the group became a meeting point and “a venue to build social bonds” (Sunderland et al., 2015, p. 12).

To be given the possibility to meet people and build social bonds was expressed as valuable. One of the participants described it as “normally he would meet people through work, but because he hasn’t gotten his visa yet, he cannot work” (Sunderland et al., 2015, p. 9). Participants became well acquainted with each other and they described an equally important and valuable sense of connectedness and trust in the group. Therefore, participating in group and its activities not only creates a sense of community, but also supports building friendships. As participants in needs-driven groups described it: “getting new friends in the group, they can do things together and exchange the knowledge” (Ekblad, 2019, p. 91).

Meeting people and making friends in groups gives the possibility and creates the context to discuss everyday matters and difficulties. Discussing everyday matters was observed to be a good strategy in lowering stress, consequences of trauma and negative impacts during acculturation. The participants expressed the importance of meeting people with similar experiences, sharing their thoughts with people in the group and getting their confirmation.

Theme 4: Platform for learning

In the context of group occupations, learning stands as a continuous process. It occurs on different levels, starting by learning how to communicate within the group. Most of the groups are multicultural. The diversity is viewed as a positive fact, creating opportunities to

learn and share ideas. The participants named it as a good thing to know about each other's cultural background. As they said, knowing brings along understanding and respect for other cultures and cultural values.

Participants identified different outcomes of learning process in the group. Women in the needs-driven group learned about their bodies and human rights, participants in the allotment group learned new skills regarding horticulture, and participants in the theatre group learned how to take responsibility for themselves and others, to trust each other and to deal with physical proximity to both genders. The participants often saw the value of group activities as the opportunity to learn the local language. The example from theatre group says: "The act of turning narratives into a performance gave the participants ownership of the text and this motivated their language training" (Horghagen & Josephsson, 2010, p. 175).

Learning outcomes also have a broader meaning and a transferable value. Women from needs-driven groups described feeling safer by learning their rights, in addition to the benefits of passing on the newly obtained knowledge and "teaching their daughters about it" (Ekblad, 2019, p. 91).

Theme 5: Towards the future

The future perspective is indirectly associated with some of the previous themes, but here I focus on bringing up the resourcefulness of asylum seekers and the desire to make the most of the available occupational opportunities. Participants mention group as an occupation and group activities as a possible replacement for the absence of paid work.

Integration into society is named as an important future goal for participants. Therefore, the group occupations that focused on a broader societal integration stand out as meaningful. For example, participants of the music group mention how participation in the group encouraged them to access the resources, which in turn affected and increased their civic participation.

The project workers providing practical assistance and support are often mentioned as a valuable source of information. Their contribution might be seen from the current perspective as "they advise you on the way, how to handle things in the asylum-seeking process" (Spring et al., 2019, p. 40). Nonetheless they do also keep the perspective of

the future within their actions. For example, project workers often signpost members of the allotment group to other courses, groups and organisations.

Discussion

Overall, the results from the numerical and thematic analysis showed diversity in group activities, group types and the purpose of group occupation for adult asylum seekers.

We aim to answer the topic of what literature says about group occupation with adult asylum seekers, by discussing the questions of:

- whether group occupation promotes adult asylum seekers' occupational engagement
- and if group occupation is meaningful for adult asylum seekers

Person

Addressing psychological issues is a part of the holistic practice of occupational therapy (Trimboli & Halliwell, 2018). The results of the numerical analysis show it is also an important aspect of group occupations as the groups either directly or indirectly refer to mental health. In the context of CMOP-E, it might relate to the concept of spirituality that represents the essence of asylum seekers (*person*) and refers to the place where purpose and meaning are found (Townsend & Polatajko, 2013). The group as a regular meeting point with the purpose of building social bonds, sharing histories/experiences and including relevant activities, might be an important element in addressing psychological issues. They respond to some of the points that were previously exposed as the cause of stress for asylum seeker, e.g. lack of purposeful activities and loneliness (Strijk et al., 2011).

Feelings of happiness, enjoyment and satisfaction are often mentioned as the outcomes of being in the group and participating in group activities. These feelings have a lasting effect and are the opposite of what asylum seekers might describe as "*feelings of distress and worry about their cases*" (Morville & Erlandsson, 2013, p. 219). According to Townsend & Polatajko, these positive feelings of satisfaction, pleasure, self-worth and confidence offer the motivation and meaning needed for individuals to engage in occupation (Townsend & Polatajko, 2013).

Environment

The social environment seems to be of essential meaning for participation. Referring to the CMOP-E model, the asylum seekers' occupational participation in group activities and its meaning are influenced by the people they meet there. Confirmed by findings in theme 3, asylum seekers ascribe meaning to group participation with others who share similar backgrounds and experiences. It contributes to the connectedness and feeling of being understood by the group. The group occupation's meaning of satisfying asylum seekers social needs confirms Strijk et al.'s claim that asylum seekers frequently chose the social aspect over the psychological aspect of occupation as meaningful and helpful (Strijk et al., 2011).

The choice of group activities and expressing the outcomes of group activities in terms of positive feelings might apply to the cultural context/environment of human occupation. Stated by Townsend & Polatajko, the "*culture has an essential impact on occupational patterns and occupational choices that are indicative of cultural beliefs*" (Townsend & Polatajko, 2013, p. 52). The participants might not necessarily talk about mental health when describing the positive effects of the group activities (Ekblad, 2019) and incorporating fun activities and discussing everyday matters might result in a successful group method for treating trauma (Renner et al., 2011).

Occupation (connecting person and environment)

The lack of valued and meaningful occupations during the asylum application process is frequently mentioned (Lintner & Elsen, 2017; Horghagen & Josephsson, 2010). As described in theme 1, the shortage of purposeful occupations is closely connected to and can lead to a loss of routine and developing destructive habits. This might prevent asylum seekers from creating structure in their daily routines. Attending group meetings happened on a regular basis and represented a habitual and predictable occupation for asylum seekers, as noted in theme 1. Weekly meetings represented the occupational engagement happening over time and forming occupational patterns/habits (Townsend & Polatajko, 2013). Interesting enough, the participants from both open and closed groups expressed the importance of group meetings in order to establish and reestablish habits and routines. Creating a structure in asylum seekers' daily life seems to be more important than the open or closed nature of the group.

Establishing a routine of attending weekly meetings could also counteract what researchers describe as the asylum seekers' feelings of uncertainty due to their legal status and life they

might define as interrupted, on hold or blown off (Morville & Erlandsson, 2013; Morville et al. 2015). Participating in groups could be described in Townsend & Polatajko's terms of occupational development as causing gradual occupational change (Townsend & Polatajko, 2013). Occupational change, conditioned by asylum seekers regularly engaging in group occupation, is illustrated in themes 3, 4 and 5, and positively influences on creating social bonds, learning and future societal integration. Occupational change might thus in some respects prevent occupational loss. As the occupational engagement happens in time and over time (Townsend & Polatajko, 2013), it makes the groups existing over a longer period, more relevant in promoting occupational engagement among adult asylum seekers.

Presented in theme 4, learning has a supportive role in the integration of asylum seekers into the wider society. Similar activities have been identified as meaningful when designing an occupation targeting asylum seekers' needs (Morville & Jessen-Winge, 2019; Morville & Erlandsson, 2013). Asylum seekers identified learning the local language, the culture of the new country, new skills like gardening and theatre, and learning about themes related to health and human rights as relevant. They emphasized that learning outcomes have a transferable value and are meaningful for integration in the society and therefore their future.

The future perspective expressed by asylum seekers is described in theme 5 and appears also in the literature. Considering the indefinite future and feelings of uncertainty, Bishop & Purcell mention that asylum seekers might sometimes have difficulties in maintaining an optimistic outlook for the future (Bishop & Purcell, 2013). Besides the positive atmosphere created in the groups, that promotes talking about everyday problems and encourages developing problem-solving mechanisms, the participants also found the project workers and group leaders as a valuable source of information. This correspond with Mayne, Lowrie & Wilson's statement that it takes skills, resources and networks to function in a society (Mayne, Lowrie & Wilson, 2016).

Group occupation providing a habitual, supportive and positive social environment including relevant activities, is a seemingly meaningful intervention for adult asylum seekers. It counteracts their lower general health and well-being, as well as higher depression and stress levels resulting from a general lack of meaning and balance (Morville et al., 2015). If non-engaging activities decrease general well-being (Morville et al., 2015), then the group occupation and group activities engaging asylum seekers should have the opposite effect.

Conclusion

The relation between asylum seekers' occupational needs (person), the environment and the nature of group occupation (occupation) seem to be harmonious and therefore results in promoting asylum seekers' occupational engagement. The driving force for asylum seekers' occupational engagement in group occupation could be represented by the group as a regular occupation with purposeful and relevant activities, a place to create social bonds and friendship, a place to feel connected, safe and understood and a place of learning. The outcomes of the asylum seekers engagement in group occupation could be described as gaining new knowledge and skills, creating routines in everyday life, experiencing positive feelings, finding motivation to reach out and use the resources in the environment, and in some cases be more integrated and participate in their local communities. Group occupation and group activities are meaningful and valuable for asylum seekers as it leads in occupational engagement.

References

- Arksey, H. & O'Malley, L. (2005). Scoping studies: towards a methodological framework. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 8(1), 19-32.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1364557032000119616>
- Berg, B. (2012). Mottakssystemet – historikk og utviklingstrender. In M. Valenta & B. Berg (ed.), *Asylsøker: I Velferdssatens venterom* (p. 17-34). Oslo: Universitetsforlaget AS.
- Bishop, R. & Purcell, E. (2013). The value of an allotment group for refugees. *British Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 76(6), 264-269.
<https://doi.org/10.4276/030802213X13706169932824>
- Carson, N. (2013). Interpersonal Relationship and Communication. In J. Clifford O'Brian & J. W. Solomon (Ed.), *Occupational Analysis and Group Process* (p. 25-35). Missouri: Elsevier.
- Connor Schisler, A. M. & Polatajko, H. J. (2002). The individual as mediator of the person-occupation-environment interaction: Learning from the experience of refugees. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 9(2), 82-92.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2002.9686496>
- Ekblad, S. (2019). Behovsstyrda cirkelträffar i grupp för nyanlända kvinnor med barn minskar upplevd oro/stress om framtiden. En kvalitetssäkring på fem orter. *Socialmedicinsk tidskrift*, 96(1), 85-94.
- Horghagen, S. & Josephsson S. (2010). Theatre as Liberation, Collaboration and Relationship for Asylum Seekers. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 17(3), 168-176.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2010.9686691>
- Huot, S., Kelly, E. & Park, S. J. (2016). Occupational experiences of forced migrants: A scoping review. *Australian Occupational Therapy Journal*, 63, 186-205.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1539449216668648>

Morville, A.-L. & Erlandsson, L.-K. (2013). The experience of Occupational Deprivation in an Asylum Centre: The Narratives of Three Men. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 20(1), 212-223. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2013.808976>

Morville, A.-L., Erlandsson, L.-K., Danneskiold-Samsøe, B., Amris, K. & Eklund, M. (2015). Satisfaction with daily occupations amongst asylum seekers in Denmark. *Scandinavian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 22, 207-215. <https://doi.org/10.3109/11038128.2014.982702>

Morville, A.-L. & Jessen-Winge, C. (2019). Creating a bridge: An asylum seeker's ideas for social inclusion. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 26(1), 53-64. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2018.1500933>

Levac, D., Colquhoun, H. & O'Brian, K. K. (2010). Scoping studies: advancing the methodology. *Implementation Science*, 69(5). Retrieved [2020, 23. January] from <https://implementationscience.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/1748-5908-5-69>

Lintner, C. & Elsen, S. (2017). Getting out of the seclusion trap? Work as meaningful occupation for the subjective well-being of asylum seekers in South Tyrol, Italy. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 25(1), 76-86. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2017.1373256>

Mayne, J., Lowrie, D. & Wilson, J. (2016). Occupational Experiences of Refugees and Asylum Seekers Resettling in Australia: A Narrative Review. *OTJR Occupation, Participation and Health*, 36(4), 204-215. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1539449216668648>

Renner, W., Bänninger-Huber, E. & Peltzer, K. (2011). Culture-Sensitive and Resource Oriented Peer (CROP) - Groups as a Community Based Intervention for Trauma Survivors: A randomized Controlled Pilot study with Refugees and Asylum Seekers from Chechnya. *The Australasian Journal of Disaster and Trauma Studies*, 2011(1), 1-13.

Rienecker, L., Stray Jørgensen, P. & Skov, S. (2013). *Den Gode Oppgaven: Håndbok i oppgaveskriving på universitet og høyskole* (2. ed.). Bergen: Fagbokforlaget.

Silove, D., Sinnerbrink, I., Field, A., Manicavasagar, V. & Steel, Z. (1997). Anxiety, depression and PTSD in asylum-seekers: Associations with pre-migration trauma and post-migration stressors. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 170, 351-357. DOI: 10.1192/bjp.170.4.351

Smith, H. C. (2005). "Feel the Fear and Do in Anyway": Meeting the Occupational Needs of Refugees and People Seeking Asylum. *British Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 68(10), 474-476. <https://doi.org/10.1177/030802260506801006>

Spring, H. C., Howlett, F. K., Connor, C., Alderson, A., Antcliff, J., Dutton, K., Gray, O., Hirst, E., Jabeen, Z., Jamil, M., Mattimoe, S. & Waister, S. (2019). The value and meaning of a community drop-in service for asylum seekers and refugees. *International Journal of Migration, Health and Social Care*, 15(1), 31-45. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJMHS-07-2018-0042>

Strijk, P. J. M., Van Meijel, B. & Gamel, C. J. (2011). Health and Social Needs of Traumatized Refugees and Asylum Seekers: An Exploratory Study. *Perspectives in Psychiatric Care*, 47(1), 48-55. DOI: 10.1111/j.1744-6163.2010.00270.x

Sunderland, N., Istvandity, L., Lakhani, A., Lenette, C., Procopis B. & Caballero, P. (2015). They [do more than] Interrupt us from Sadness: Exploring the impact of participatory music making on social determinants of health and wellbeing for refugees in Australia. *Health, Culture and Society*, 8(1), 1-19. DOI: 10.5195/hcs.2015.195

Tjora, A. (2017). *Kvalitative forskningsmetoder I praksis* (3. ed.). Oslo: Gyldendal akademisk.

Townsend, E. A. & Polatajko, H. J. (2013). *Enabling Occupation II: Advancing and Occupational Therapy Vision for Health, Well-being, & Justice through Occupation* (2. ed.). Ottawa: CAOT Publications ACE.

Trimboli, C. & Halliwell, V. (2018). A survey to explore the interventions used by occupational therapist and occupational therapy students with refugees and asylum seekers. *World federation of Occupational Therapist Bulletin*, 74(2), 106-113. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14473828.2018.1535562>

Trimboli, C. & Taylor, J. (2016). Addressing the occupational needs of refugees and asylum seekers. *Australian Occupational Therapy Journal*, 63, 434-437.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/1440-1630.12349>

UNHCR – The United Nations Refugee Agency (2011). The 1951 Convention relating to the status of refugees and its 1967 Protocol. Retrieved [2020, 17. February]

from <https://www.unhcr.org/about-us/background/4ec262df9/1951-convention-relating-status-refugees-its-1967-protocol.html>

UNHCR – The United Nations Refugee Agency (2019, 19. June). Figures at a glance:

Statistical yearbook. Retrieved [2020, 12. February] from <https://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html>

UNHCR – The United Nations Refugee Agency. (2020). Asylum seekers. Retrieved [2020,

20. February] from <https://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c137.html>

Table 1: Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Article is included if:	Article is excluded if:
Aim and theme includes group occupation/ activity	
Target group: adult asylum seekers or adult asylum seekers and refugees	Target group are children or underage asylum seekers, or involves only refugees
Presents the asylum seekers' perspective	Presents therapists' perspectives only
Published between 2000 and 2020	Published before 2000
Research articles from peer-reviewed journals	
Article uses qualitative or mixed method	Article is a scoping- or literature review or uses a quantitative method

Table 2: Included papers:

Presentation of the articles

Article number	Reference	Country where the research took place
1	Horghagen, S. & Josephsson, S. (2010). Theatre as Liberation, Collaboration and Relationship for Asylum Seekers. <i>Journal of occupational science</i> , 17(3), 168-76	Norway
2	Bishop, R. & Purcell, E. (2013). The value of allotment group for refugees. <i>British journal of occupational therapy</i> , 76(6), 264-9	The United Kingdom
3	Spring, H. C., Howlett, F. K., Connor, C., Alderson, A., Antcliff, J., Dutton, K., Gray, O., Hirst, E., Jabeen, Z., Jamil, M., Mattimoe, S. & Waister, S. (2019). The value and meaning of a community drop-in service for asylum seekers and refugees. <i>International Journal of Migration, Health and Social Care</i> , 15(1), 31-45	The United Kingdom
4	Renner, W., Bänninger-Huber, E. & Peltzer, K. (2011). Culture-Sensitive and Resource Oriented Peer (CROP) - Groups as a Community-Based Intervention for Trauma Survivors: A randomized Controlled Pilot study with Refugees and Asylum Seekers from Chechnya. <i>Australasian journal of disaster and trauma studies</i> , 2011(1) 1-13	Austria
5	Ekblad, S. (2019). Behovsstyrda cirkelträffar i grupp för nyanlända kvinnor med barn minskat upplevd oro/stress om framtiden. En kvalitetssäkring på fem orter. <i>Socialmedicinsk tidskrift</i> , 96(1), 85-94	Sweden
6	Sunderland, N., Istvandy, L., Lakhani, A., Lenette, C., Procopis B., & Caballero, P. (2015). They [do more than] Interrupt us from Sadness: Exploring the impact of participatory music making on social determinants of health and wellbeing for refugees in Australia. <i>Health, culture and society</i> , 8(1), 1-19	Australia

Table 3: Descriptive numerical analysis

Mapping area		Number of articles
Participants in the group	Asylum seekers	2
	Asylum seekers and refugees	2
	Asylum seekers, refugees and citizens of the host country	1
	Newly arrived	1
Participants in the research	Asylum seekers	2
	Asylum seekers and refugees	3
	Newly arrived	1
Type of group (2)	Open group	3
	Closed group	3
Type of occupation/ activity (2)	Art related	2
	Stress and trauma treatment	2
	Diverse activities	1
	Physical activity	1
Discipline	Occupational therapy	3
	Psychology	2
	Music therapy	1

Figure 1: Flow chart

