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SCIENTIFIC PRODUCTION IN PALLIATIVE CARE AND OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY: A SCOPING REVIEW

Produção científica em cuidados paliativos e terapia ocupacional: revisão de escopo

Producción científica en cuidados paliativos y terapia ocupacional: revisión de alcance

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The study's main purpose has been to characterize the scientific production addressing palliative care and occupational therapy published in peer-reviewed open access journals available online, as well as identify the approaches used by such publications selected for this work. **Methods:** This is a scoping review, which performed a thorough search in the following databases: MEDLINE, LILACS, IBECs and INDEX PSI. Furthermore, it considered articles published over the period from 2000 to July 2019, eventually obtaining a sample of 29 studies. **Results:** The analysis resulted in six categories that addressed subjects on the profile, role, interventions, difficulties, information technology and home care of the occupational therapy in palliative care, where a predominance of English written articles was observed. **Conclusion:** The study findings have revealed rather small evidences on the occupational therapists' profile and their big challenges - such as updates related to the current practice and the educational curriculum. Hence, it is essential to promote new investigations aimed at demonstrating the effectiveness of interventions focused on improving the occupational therapists' performance and the patient's quality of life.

Descriptors: Occupational therapy, Palliative care, Quality of life, Rehabilitation, Review.

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RESUMO

Objetivo: Caracterizar a produção científica sobre os cuidados paliativos e a terapia ocupacional publicada em periódicos *online*, e identificar os enfoques abordados nas publicações selecionadas para o estudo. **Método:** Trata-se de uma revisão de escopo, cuja pesquisa foi realizada nas bases de dados MEDLINE, LILACS, IBECs e INDEX PSI, em artigos publicados entre 2000 e julho de 2019, cujas amostras contemplaram 29 estudos. **Resultado:** Da análise, resultaram seis categorias que contemplam temas sobre o perfil, papel, intervenções, dificuldades, tecnologia da informação e atenção domiciliar da terapia ocupacional em cuidados paliativos, com predominância de artigos em inglês. **Conclusão:** Os achados desta pesquisa revelam poucas evidências sobre o perfil dos terapeutas ocupacionais e grandes desafios — como atualizações na prática atual e no currículo educacional, sendo fundamental o desenvolvimento de novas pesquisas voltadas a demonstrar a eficácia das intervenções, à melhoria do desempenho ocupacional e à qualidade de vida do paciente.

Descritores: Terapia ocupacional, Cuidados paliativos, Qualidade de vida, Reabilitação, Revisão.

RESUMEN

Objetivo: Caracterizar la producción científica sobre los cuidados paliativos y la terapia ocupacional publicada en periódicos *online* y identificar las perspectivas abordadas en las publicaciones seleccionadas para el estudio. **Método:** Se trata de una revisión de alcance, cuya investigación fue realizada en las bases de datos MEDLINE, LILACS, IBECs y INDEX PSI, en artículos publicados entre 2000 y julio de 2019, de cuales las muestras contemplaron 29 estudios. **Resultado:** Del análisis, resultaron seis categorías que contemplan temas sobre el perfil, papel, intervenciones, dificultades, tecnología de la información y atención domiciliar de la terapia ocupacional en cuidados paliativos, con predominancia de artículos en inglés. **Conclusión:** Los hallados de esta investigación revelan pocas evidencias sobre el perfil de los terapeutas ocupacionales y grandes desafíos — como actualizaciones en la práctica actual y en el currículo educacional, siendo fundamental el desarrollo de nuevas pesquisas destinadas a demostrar la eficacia de las intervenciones dirigidas a la mejoría del desempeño ocupacional y a la calidad de vida del paciente.

Descriptor: Terapia ocupacional, Cuidados paliativos, Calidad de vida, Reabilitación, Revisión.

INTRODUCTION

The population experiences a progressive increase in life expectancy and, consequently, the prevalence of chronic diseases.¹ This prolongation of life raises questions about the provision of inadequate care to patients who have “life-threatening diseases” and the pertinence of postponing death at all costs, with the loss of Quality of Life (QOL) and well-being. Given this framework, Palliative Care (PC) comes along bringing concepts such as total pain, human dignity, and ethics, where the patient is sovereign.²

According to the World Health Organization (WHO),³ PC are an approach to patients and family members who face life-threatening diseases, which promotes QOL through the prevention and relief of suffering. Thus, it requires early identification, impeccable assessment, and treatment of pain and other physical, psychosocial, and spiritual issues.

In the treatment, spirituality is included as one of the dimensions of the human being and the welcoming of the family, even after the death of the patient, so that their family members are helped in the grieving process.³

A study⁴ accentuates the importance of the interdisciplinary team, in the context of PC, that dialogue in favor of the patient's QOL. Therefore, the performance of the referred team aims to meet the multiplicity of aspects involved in the illness, to contemplate the integrality of the human being.⁵

The professionals that make up the team are, as follows: medical doctor; registered nurse; physiotherapist; speech therapist; pharmacist; nutritionist; dental surgeon; occupational therapist; psychologist; social worker and spiritual assistant of the different religious beliefs professed by patients.⁶

According to the *Conselho Federal de Fisioterapia e Terapia Ocupacional (COFFITO)* [Federal Council of Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy],⁷ “the role of the occupational therapist in hospital contexts aims at the protection, promotion, prevention, recovery, rehabilitation and PC, of the individual and the community, based on the concept of integrality and humanization health care”.

Bearing the aforesaid in mind, the Occupational Therapy (OT) plays a fundamental role in maintaining occupational identity and autonomy, with an emphasis on their potential. Considering the context of PC, the specific role of this professional is to offer the patient the means to maintain the performance of significant tasks in daily life, to make necessary adaptations for the maintenance of physical, cognitive and sensory functions, as well as physical comfort, pain control, fatigue, and other symptoms, in addition to offering support, guidance and listening to family members.^{8,9}

Nevertheless, few published studies indicate the contribution of OT intervention in PC. Additionally, the scarcity of studies on the topic identifies a potential field for the performance of these professionals with this clientele. Given the aforementioned, this work meant to characterize the scientific production addressing palliative care and occupational therapy published in peer-reviewed open access journals available online, as well as identify the approaches used by such publications.

METHODS

It is a scoping review aiming to identify, analyze and systematize data addressing a broad and comprehensive subject, moreover, seeking to identify knowledge gaps. Although it has the steps of systematic review, such as being methodical, transparent and replicable, it does not propose to assess the quality of produced evidences.¹⁰

Accordingly, the demand to expand this type of study under the perspective of occupational therapy publications is rather noteworthy, allowing better visibility about the most

relevant topics in this area of knowledge. Consequently, the methodological steps of the scope review were followed: (1) identification of the guiding question; (2) search for relevant studies; (3) selection of studies; (4) categorization of relevant data; (5) summary and (6) reporting of results.¹¹

There was used the mnemonic strategy Population, Concept and Context (PCC), described as useful to guide data collection and identify key topics.¹² Therefore, the characterization of scientific publication (Population) addressing OT in PC (Concept) in both national and international scenarios over the last 20 years (Context) generated the following guiding question: “What is the characterization of the scientific production addressing PC in OT over the period from 2000 to July 2019, which is peer-reviewed open access journals available online?”

A thorough search was performed in the following databases: Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval System Online/PubMed (MEDLINE); *Literatura Latino Americana e do Caribe de Informação em Ciências da Saúde (LILACS)* [Latin American & Caribbean Health Sciences Literature]; *Índice Bibliográfico Espanhol de Ciências de Saúde (IBECS)* [Spanish Bibliographic Index of Health Sciences]; *Index Psicologia - Periódicos Técnico-científicos (INDEX PSI)* [Index Psychology - Technical-scientific journals]; chosen for their comprehensiveness in the international scenario based on the Health Sciences Controlled Descriptors (Decs) and Medical Subject Headings (MeSH), in Portuguese, English and Spanish: “Palliative Care”; “Palliative Care”; “Occupational therapy”; “Occupational Therapy”. It is noteworthy that the Boolean operator “AND” was applied to crossing the descriptors, then resulting in 411 publications.

The inclusion criteria previously defined were, as follows: articles published in indexed sources over the period from 2000 to July 2019 that addressed the subjects “occupational therapy” and “palliative care”, in English, Portuguese and Spanish. The exclusion criteria were, as follows: unavailable complete articles, paid or duplicates.

This work has chosen to use the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) methodology.¹³ Thus, the titles and abstracts of the articles found in the search were read and analyzed to identify those eligible for the research. After reading the articles, data extraction was done through a form to characterize the scientific production.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first search strategy used the descriptors “palliative care” and “occupational therapy”, resulting in 127 studies; in the second, the terms “palliative care” and “occupational therapy” were used, presenting a total of 411 articles. The screening covered the stages of analysis by titles and by summary. Based on the title, 24 duplicate articles were excluded, and 229 did not meet the inclusion criteria, leaving 158 for the analysis of abstracts. Considering this

amount, 129 either did not meet the objective of the study or were not available in full text. Hence, 29 studies were selected for this review.

Figure 1 shows the processes of search, exclusion and selection.

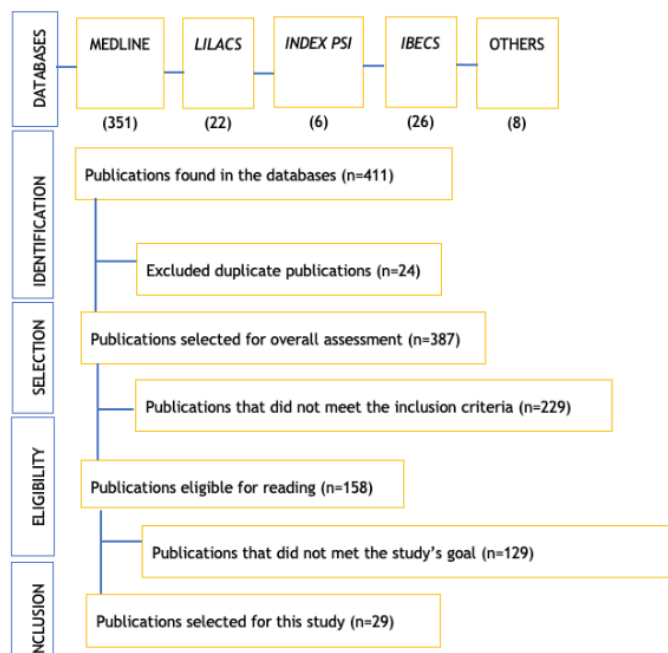


Figure 1: Flowchart for both identification and selection of publications. João Pessoa city, Paraíba State, Brazil, 2019.

Considering the 29 (100%) publications included in the study, 20 (69.0%) were identified in the MEDLINE database, and 9 (nine) (31.0%) in LILACS. Considering the articles’ vernacular, 20 (69.0%) were published in English, 7 (seven) (24.1%) in Portuguese, and 2 (two) (6.9%) in Spanish.

Regarding the publication year, it was found that the highest frequency of publications occurred in 2010, 2014 and 2018, with 4 (four) (13.8%) publications in each year; in 2008, 2012 and 2015 there were 3 (three) (10.3%) productions; in 2016, 2017 and 2019 (until July) accounted for 2 (two) (6.9%) studies per year; in 2011 and 2013 there was only 1 (one) (3.4%) publication each year; in between 2000 and 2007 and 2009 (0%) there were no publications, as illustrated in **Figure 2**.

The percentage and absolute amount of annual production over the last twenty years is described in **Figure 2**.

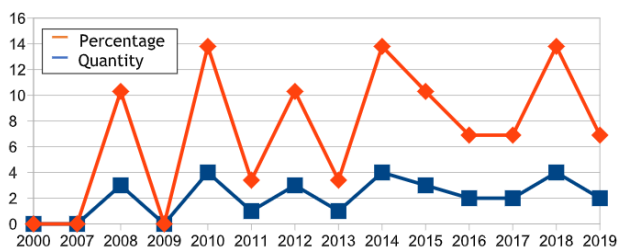


Figure 2: Scientific production addressing palliative care and occupational therapy that were published online from 2000 to July 2019. João Pessoa city, Paraíba State, Brazil, 2019 (n=29)

Observing the journals, Australian Occupational Therapy Journal and Palliative Supportive Care stood out with 5 (five) (17.2%), Occupational Therapy Notebooks with 4 (four) (13.8%) from the *Universidade Federal de São Carlos (UFSCar)*, Palliative Medicine Journal with 3 (three) (10.3%) %, Brazilian Notebooks of Occupational Therapy with 2 (two) (6.9%), and the other journals with 1 (one) (3.4%) article from the publications included in this review.

Concerning the methodological approaches (**Table 1**), most publications adopted a qualitative approach, using interviews as the main data collection instrument (n=6; 20.6%), followed by questionnaires (n=3; 10.3%), reflection groups (n=1; 3.4%) and focus groups (n=1; 3.4%). For the analysis of the studies, the most used technique was the content analysis, mentioned in 5 (five) (17.2%) publications.

Targeting to obtain the research data, a quantitative approach was used by 9 (nine) (31.0%) studies, scales in 1 (one) (3.4%) and questionnaires in 8 (eight) (27.5%). The remaining studies, 4 (four) (13.8%) have used a mixed approach.

The population of professionals and/or students in the sample covered in the studies was composed primarily of occupational therapists (34.4%) with clinical experience in PC. Some studies have also included other professionals, such as registered nurses, medical doctors, physiotherapists, social workers, nurse technicians and students.

Concerning the study participants who were represented by patients, those diagnosed with cancer (17.2%) and hospitalized in specialized clinics/hospitals in PC (17.2%) were found to be recurrent. There were also included caregivers of patients undergoing PC in 2 (two) studies (6.9%).

Table 1 - Distribution of scientific production according to methodological approach, research participants and thematic focus. (N and %) from 2000 to July 2019. João Pessoa city, Paraíba State, Brazil.

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH	N	%
Qualitative	16	55.2
Content analysis	5	17.2
Descriptive	3	10.3
Hermeneutics	2	6.9
Phenomenological	2	6.9
Reviews	2	6.9
Case study	1	3.4
Experience report	1	3.4
Quantitative	9	31.0
Scales	1	3.4
Questionnaires	8	27.5
Mixed (quantitative and qualitative)	4	13.8
RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS	N	%
Professionals/Students	26	89.6
Occupational therapists	10	34.4
Medical doctors	3	10.3
Registered nurses	3	10.3
Physiotherapists	1	3.4
Social workers	1	3.4
Nurse technician	1	3.4
Occupational therapy students	3	10.3
Nursing students	2	3.4
Medicine students	1	6.9
Physiotherapy students	1	3.4
Patients/Caregivers	15	51.7
Adults/young people/adolescents/advanced cancer child	5	17.2
Patients from specialized hospitals in PC	5	17.2
People with Parkinson's disease	1	3.4
People with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS)	1	3.4
Caregivers	2	6.9

By scrutinizing the 29 selected articles, it was possible to obtain a categorization according to the thematic focus and the main subjects addressed in each publication (**Table 2**).

Table 2 - Distribution of scientific production by thematic approaches. (N and %) from 2000 to July 2019. João Pessoa city, Paraíba State, Brazil.

THEMATIC FOCUS	ARTICLES	N	%
Occupational therapists' profile in PC	-Is occupation missing from occupational therapy in palliative care? ¹⁴ -Workforce profile of Australian occupational therapists working with people who are terminally ill ¹⁵ -Mapping the scope of occupational therapy practice in palliative care: A European Association for Palliative Care cross-sectional survey ¹⁶	3	10.3
Information and communication technologies	-Videoconferencing in occupational therapy in hospital contexts and palliative care ¹⁷	1	3.4
OT in home care	-Cuidados paliativos na atenção domiciliar: a perspectiva de terapeutas ocupacionais ¹⁸ -Terapia ocupacional na atenção extra-hospitalar oferecida pelo hospital ¹⁹ -Enabling occupation at the end of life: A literature review ²⁰	3	10.3
The occupational therapist practice in PC	-Ocuparse del bienestar de los profesionales de la salud: un desafío pendiente ²¹ -Atenção em CP ²² - Cuidados paliativos junto a crianças e adolescentes hospitalizados com câncer: o papel da terapia ocupacional ²³ -Utilizing participation in meaningful occupation as an intervention approach to support the acute model of inpatient palliative care ²⁴ -Exploring occupation roles of hospice family caregivers from Māori, Chinese and Tongan ethnic backgrounds living in New Zealand ²⁵ -Enabling activity in palliative care: focus groups among occupational therapists ²⁶ -A prospective study of unmet activity of daily living needs in palliative care in patients ²⁷ -Multidisciplinary team contributions within a dedicated outpatient palliative radiotherapy clinic: a prospective descriptive study ²⁸	8	27.6

<p>Interventions of OT in PC</p>	<p>-Contributo da intervenção da terapia ocupacional nos cuidados paliativos²⁹ -A intervenção do terapeuta ocupacional junto às pessoas hospitalizadas: adotando a abordagem dos cuidados paliativos³⁰ -"It's not about treatment, it's how to improve your life": the lived experience of occupational therapy in palliative care³¹ -Running water won't freeze": how people with advanced Parkinson's disease experience occupation³² -Improving quality of life through rehabilitation in palliative care: Case report³³ -Systematic review of the effectiveness of occupational therapy-related interventions for people with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis³⁴ -Palliative care rehabilitation survey: a pilot study of patients' priorities for rehabilitation goals³⁵ -A retrospective audit exploring the use of relaxation as an intervention in oncology and palliative care³⁶ -The 'Cancer Home-Life Intervention': a randomized controlled trial evaluating the efficacy of an occupational therapy-based intervention in people with advanced cancer³⁷</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>31.0</p>
<p>PC-related difficulties for the occupational therapist practice</p>	<p>-Has undergraduate education prepared occupational therapy students for possible practice in palliative care?³⁸ -Occupational therapy in palliative care: is it under-utilized in Western Australia?³⁹ -Terapia ocupacional en oncología: experiencias en prácticas académicas y revisión de literature⁴⁰ -A abordagem da morte na formação de profissionais e acadêmicos da enfermagem, medicina e terapia ocupacional⁴¹ - Knowledge of the Andalusian legislation on dignified death and perception on the formation in attention to terminally ill patients of health sciences students at Universidad de Granada, Spain⁴²</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>17.4</p>

The data obtained in this research verified relevant information vis-à-vis what has been addressed by the published studies about OT in the scope of PC.

Considering the articles' vernacular, it is worth mentioning that the highest scientific production occurs in English. It is justified due to a tendency to establish the English as the international language of science, allowing researchers from all over the world communicate, cooperate and share knowledge.⁴³

With regard to the publication year, it is important to underline that the larger production, starting in 2014, might have been driven by the publication of the WHO, in the Global Atlas of Palliative Care at the End of Life, in 2014, spreading worldwide the importance and the deficit in the supply of PC around the world.¹²

Regarding the methodological approaches used, it is important to highlight that one of the studies²¹ applied two scales for data collection, namely: (1) the "Maslach Burnout Inventory" (MBI) instrument, whose function is to measure work wear; and (2) the "Questionário para a Avaliação dos Riscos Psicossociais no Trabalho, SUSESO - ISTAS 21" [Questionnaire for the Assessment of Psychosocial Risks at Work], which is used to measure psychosocial risk factors.

The thematic focus "Profile of occupational therapists in PC", verified in three (10.3%) articles, demonstrated that there is little evidence about the work profile of these therapists, the type of clients served, their practice contexts and for how long therapists are planning to remain in that clinical role (on average another seven years).

A report¹⁵ highlights the profile of Australian occupational therapists who work with patients under PC, reveals a workforce predominantly employed in the public service (81%), female (93%), full-time dedication, with an average of six years of experience in this scenario. Most of

these professionals attended to patients in the community (49%), and slightly less (40%) worked in a hospital environment. Neoplasms of various types represented the dominant category of clinical diagnosis.

Similar results were found in another survey¹⁶ that was performed to mapping the activities of occupational therapists in PC across Europe, verifying that the majority were female (95.8% in the United Kingdom; 83.7% in the rest of the Europe population), and that UK therapists tend to be older (75% in 40 years compared to 50.4% in Europe) and more experienced (70% have more than 5 years of practice compared to 55.5 % in Europe). A larger number of European therapists held masters and doctoral qualifications (28.2% in Europe, 15% in the United Kingdom).

It is worth noting that studies in Brazil were not identified in the databases selected for review, which portray the profile of OT professionals working in PC. Nonetheless, the use of information and communication technologies, such as videoconferencing, has allowed the progressive creation of an OT collaboration network in general hospitals, specialized units and similar institutions, enabling interaction and active participation between professionals from different institutions and services located in different parts of the country. Furthermore, this tool has enabled the improvement of clinical practices and the encouragement of social actors involved in teaching, assistance and research in OT.¹⁷

Still concerning the national scenario, the thematic focus "OT in home care" emphasizes that its performance follows the trend of PC services, focusing on specialized levels, however, with potential for implementation in primary and home care, but which still requires study and discussion about its limits and conditions of supply, particularly within the scope of the *Sistema Único de Saúde (SUS)* [Brazilian Unified Health System].¹⁸

As a particular study points out,²⁰ providing care at the end of life can be complex and challenging, however, occupational therapists can facilitate the fulfillment of client-centered occupational goals. Bearing this in mind, the focus of the therapist's intervention in home care may include the following: guidelines for discharge; assessment and adequacy of the home environment; rescue of significant activities; promotion of autonomy and independence; cognitive rehabilitation; sensory stimulation; positioning; making and prescribing assistive devices; in addition to guidance to family members and caregivers.¹⁹

Among the obstacles to the practice of OT in this scenario, there are the following: complexity of "being at home"; peculiarities of PC with high-cost demands; lack of infrastructure and failure to implement current public policy.¹⁸

Regarding the "The role of occupational therapists in PC", it appears that, worldwide, little is known about the services provided by OT or the needs of people who are

dying and their caregivers concerning these services.²¹⁻⁸

In PC, OT helps the patient and caregiver to deal with difficulties, to obtain greater comfort, dignity and QOL, in the hospital or at home, and to promote the maximum level of independence and/or autonomy in occupational performance, despite the functional, cognitive, social and emotional losses.²²⁻⁴

As such, these professionals must be part of the team in PC,²⁶ seeking to achieve the following objectives: strengthen bonds; assist in coping with hospitalization, worsening illness and death; favor occupational performance and stimulate performance skills.²³

Concerning the occupational therapist's role in PC, the professional must include an approach to the family, taking into account the differences, as well as helping them to identify important activities, such as food preparation, the expression of spirituality, among others.²⁵

In regard to the interventions adopted by OT in PC, the main ones were as follows: promotion of the therapeutic relationship; people's embracement; information sharing; counseling; education; guidance and importance of the active role of family members/caregivers in the entire process, as well as the importance of assessment, education, training, promotion of involvement in meaningful activities, adaptation/graduation and use of specific intervention techniques with the client.²⁹⁻³⁶

Observing the interventions performed directly with the patients, these include prescription/provision of assistance equipment to optimize the patient's independence in activities of daily living and to assess the functional needs, postural positioning and patient comfort.¹⁶

Another type of direct intervention with the patient is the relaxation technique. A study³⁶ highlights that occupational therapists are in an ideal situation to provide information and practical relaxation sessions. Although, in numerical terms, the result of relaxation interventions is small, the functional result related to QOL and independence in activities of daily living is immeasurable.

It is important to underline that while OT care services towards PC might potentially fit the emerging paradigm, in Western Australia, most of these services are still within the mechanistic paradigm, with some variation due to the health care scenario.¹⁴

It should be noted that a study³¹ found that OT interventions in PC were aimed at providing specific services related to comfort and safety, instead of helping patients to participate in significant occupations. A research³² also adds that the interruption of participation in the occupation causes, to the patients, anguish, and frustration, highlighting that the access to the therapy focused on the occupation significantly improves the QOL of the people undergoing PC.

It is important to highlight that there are numerous challenges faced by occupational therapists to develop PC, such as the complexity of the organization of assistance;

insufficient government funding for specialized PC services; bad pay; interdisciplinary work; the construction of support networks; the educational/professional training curriculum; confidence in your skills; the development of research and scientific publications on the role and effectiveness of OT in PC.^{34,38-42}

It has been argued that OT in PC deserves dedicated attention in undergraduate programs to improve the confidence of graduates to work in this scenario, given that an international study found that universities that offer the Occupational Therapy Graduation Course only use 2-10 hours of specific content about PC, in their curriculum matrices. Likewise, in addition to educating OT undergraduates, it would be also beneficial to provide better information among health professionals about the role of OT in PC.³⁸

Given this framework, it appears that OT is often not introduced in the early stages of PC, limiting the planning of future services based on anticipated needs; instead, OT is often called upon to manage crises only when they arise, and generally to address issues of access and self-care function. So, the opportunity for patients and their families to have their needs met becomes eventually compromised.³⁹ Bearing in mind the aforementioned considerations, it becomes evident that occupational therapists have a valuable contribution to make in the PC team; nonetheless, it is necessary to make changes in the current practice and in the educational curriculum, and it is essential to develop more research, in order to demonstrate the effectiveness of OT interventions in improving the patient's function, comfort, occupational performance, and QOL, thus, proving the unique role of these professionals in PC.

CONCLUSIONS

The study findings have revealed rather small evidences on the occupational therapists' profile working in PC in Brazil. It is characterized by a very recent performance in PC (5-6 years on average). It is not by chance that a significant number of studies emphasize both the interventions and difficulties (9 and 5 articles, respectively) of OT in PC.

It is an environment on which the foundations that guide the practice are still being built. Therefore, the use of information technology resources, such as videoconferencing, has been of great contribution to the exchange of knowledge among professionals.

Studies also point to the little knowledge on the world level about the role of the occupational therapist, whose interventions range from relaxation, through significant activities, to the training of activities of daily living and approach to the family. In this scenario, the main focus should always be the customer and their occupational performance, which, when properly applied, produce

immeasurable results for QOL, as they promote their participation and engagement in daily activities.

Among the challenges to be faced by occupational therapists in this process of consolidating their performance, it is possible to list as the main issues, the difficulty of government funding for specialized services in PC; low-paying jobs; interdisciplinary work; the construction of support networks, and the insufficient educational curriculum on this approach (2-10 hours on the international scenario curriculum).

It should be noted that the main limitation of this study was the reduced number of publications available in the databases. This fact reflects a practice in PC performed mostly by empirical professionals. Hence, it is essential to promote new investigations aimed at demonstrating the effectiveness of interventions focused on improving the occupational therapists' performance and the patient's quality of life, particularly of those being inserted in PC.

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