

Abstracts

(in alphabetical order of last names)

Andres Linda **(June 2025)**

Making Occupational Transition Visible

Background: Burn injuries represent a traumatic event that disrupts daily life and initiates an occupational transition. This process begins in the acute phase, where people experience major changes in their ability to engage in daily occupations. While research often focuses on physical recovery, less is known about how people reconstruct everyday activities during hospitalisation and rehabilitation.

Introduction: This study retrospectively examines how people with mild to severe burn injuries in Switzerland experience occupational transitions during acute hospital care, transfer to rehabilitation, and the early rehabilitation phase.

Methods: Five male participants took part in two individual Body Mapping Storytelling (BMST) sessions. This qualitative, arts-based method combines narrative and visual expression to explore embodied experiences. Participants created life-sized body maps and shared personal recovery narratives. Interviews were recorded, transcribed verbatim, and managed with MAXQDA. Reflexive thematic analysis identified key themes across the multimodal data.

Findings: Three themes emerged. First, Returning to the Everyday describes the shift toward independence in daily tasks. Second, Doing Differently reflects emotional changes that alter the meaning of occupations. Third, Support and Beyond shows how family and friends facilitate engagement and identity. These themes reveal the complex nature of occupational transition after burn injury.

Conclusion: Occupational transitions involve more than physical recovery. They are shaped by changing environments, shifting personal values, and social relationships. Supporting meaningful activity can foster rehabilitation, well-being, and identity. These insights may inform a more responsive, person-centred burn rehabilitation.

Keywords: burn injury, occupational transitions, acute care, rehabilitation, body mapping, lived experience

Badstuber Nataša (June 2025)

'I wouldn't say "food insecurity". I would say that women are going hungry in the city of Mozart.' A Community Photovoice Study on Food (In)Security in Austria

Background: Food insecurity in high-income countries like Austria is not caused by food scarcity, but by poverty, rising living costs, and structural exclusion. It disproportionately affects women, children, single households, people with migration background yet its everyday implications remain underexplored. This thesis frames food insecurity as an issue of occupational justice and investigates how it shapes daily life, participation, and well-being.

Methods: Using a qualitative, community-based Photovoice approach, the study was conducted in collaboration with three co-researchers with lived experience of food insecurity. Through photography, group dialogue, and interviews, they shared insights into daily routines, coping strategies, and challenges. The data were collaboratively and thematically analysed.

Results: Food insecurity shaped co-researchers' daily decision-making, emotional well-being, and social participation. Their stories, structured around four themes, acknowledged and critically examined how everyday life is marked by constraint, adaptation, and emotional strain. Practices such as cross-border shopping, food rationing, intentional eating before sleep, and navigating fragmented aid systems emerged as forms of resource-seeking—survival-based occupational responses that reflect both resilience and ongoing negotiation under precarity. Despite their creativity and persistence, co-researchers faced recurring fatigue, shame, and social isolation. All co-researchers identified as women living alone, highlighting gendered patterns of vulnerability shaped by unpaid care work, low income, and long-term structural marginalisation.

Conclusion: The study calls for trauma-informed, user-centered, and multiprofessional responses that acknowledge the complexity of survival-based occupations. Occupational therapy and science can help make visible the lived realities of food insecurity and contribute to socially responsive research, advocacy, and service design. A key implication is that people directly affected by food insecurity must be included in the development of support systems through participatory processes. While change may be slow, such approaches can foster recognition, dialogue, and more inclusive understandings of those affected.

Keywords: food insecurity; occupational justice; resource seeking; occupational struggles; photovoice

Berkenbos Rhodé (June 2025)

Balancing the Unseen. Exploring Occupational Balance Among Significant Others of Persons with Chronic Pain: A Photovoice Study

Objectives: To explore how significant others of persons with chronic pain experience occupational balance in everyday life.

Methods: Using a Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) approach, this qualitative study engaged four Dutch women (aged 21-32) as co-researchers. They participated in five group sessions using Photovoice, combining participant-generated photos with reflective dialogue. Data included photographs, group discussions, written reflections, and field notes. Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA) was conducted with active participant involvement.

Findings: Four themes emerged:

1. Ongoing Shift of Roles and Priorities: Participants adjusted routines and responsibilities, balancing support with their own needs, often expanding personal boundaries and reshaping goals.
2. The Comprehensive Toll No One Sees: Emotional, mental, and physical strains were often hidden, participants lived in constant alertness and experienced fatigue.
3. Strategies for Meaning Making and Balance: Participants employed coping strategies such as focusing on control, reframing limitations, and engaging in meaningful activities.
4. The Need to Be Seen and Supported: Participants expressed a strong desire for recognition and practical help, highlighting invisibility and unmet needs in social and healthcare systems.

Conclusion: This study contributes to an expanded understanding of occupational balance as a relational experience, showing chronic pain reshapes both individuals and their social networks. The often-invisible experiences of significant others call for inclusive healthcare that recognizes their emotional labor and supports their well-being alongside those with chronic pain.

Keywords: Occupational Balance, Chronic Pain, Significant Others, Everyday Life, Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR), Photovoice

Franssen Veerle (June 2025)

Between Two Worlds: An Occupational Transition in the Shadow of Incarceration

Aim: This qualitative study used semi-structured interviews to examine how formerly incarcerated individuals in the Netherlands experience transitions in meaningful occupations from before incarceration to life in prison.

Results: It revealed significant restrictions on occupational choice and autonomy, and highlighted the personal meaning found in both sanctioned and non-sanctioned occupations. Participants faced occupational deprivation but also discovered new, meaningful activities within prison, indicating potential for occupational enrichment despite constraints.

Conclusions: The abrupt, involuntary nature of incarceration caused complex occupational transitions impacting identity and well-being. The study recommends integrating occupational therapy in prisons and calls for further research on non-sanctioned occupations, occupational transitions, and inclusive enrichment strategies.

Lindner Judith (June 2025)

Shaping practice together. A Critical Participatory Action Research process to enhance Occupational Therapists' Engagement with Social Determinants of Health in Primary-Care-Centres in Austria

Background: Social determinants of health (SDH) significantly impact the health status of Austrian citizens. Primary-care-centres offer a setting where occupational therapists can address SDH and health inequities, but literature shows that they still face challenges to define their roles in addressing SDH. Cultural humility as a reflective practice may provide a foundation to address SDH in primary care.

Aim: This study aims to enhance occupational therapists' engagement with SDH in Austrian primary-care-centres by engaging in cultural humility.

Method: The study was guided by critical participatory research principles to co-create practical knowledge with occupational therapists in Austrian primary-care-centres. In an initial focus group, the participants defined a shared concern and action plan to address SDH in practice. After four weeks of enacting their plan, participants reflected on the process in individual interviews. Data collected during the focus group, interviews and action phase were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis.

Results: Participants identified community resources and developed Community-Asset-Maps (CAM) to improve healthcare access for socioeconomically disadvantaged groups. The process led to increased awareness of strengths and healthcare gaps and fostered collaborations. The application of CAM was limited by financial and structural barriers in the setting.

Conclusion: Focusing on the broader social and structural context through CAM can be a first step to blend primary care with community services. The findings further underscore the importance of cultural humility and structural competence in addressing SDH. Future efforts should implement the perspectives of community members to ensure the relevance of the assets.

Keywords: Social determinants of health, primary care, action research, cultural humility, community asset mapping

Pinter Christina

(June 2025)

Yoga as ecopation. From inner to social transformation for Planetary Health. An occupation-focused research using interpretative phenomenological analysis

Introduction: Environmental degradation and climate change are among the most serious global threats of the 21st century, largely driven by human occupation. Therefore, human occupation - and with it, occupational scientists and therapists - must be part of the solution to help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and promote Planetary Health for human`s and planet`s well-being.

Aim: The study investigated how yoga practitioners experience the impact of yoga in relation to choosing eco-occupations and maintaining a sustainable lifestyle within their community.

Methodology/Method: Using interpretative phenomenological analysis, six yoga practitioners with birth origins in Europe, America, and Africa, currently residing in Europe, were interviewed.

Findings: The study revealed that yoga as ecopation, meaning the alignment of everyday occupations with eco-ethical values, may support sustainable lifestyles and eco-occupational choices within their community. This occurs especially when yoga is approached as a holistic philosophy fostering inner transformation that results in occupational and social transformation.

Conclusion: Yoga as ecopation may promote ecological, social and economic sustainability at individual, community and society levels, highlighting the need for further research on inner transformation as a catalyst for occupational and social transformation.

Keywords: yoga, sustainability, Planetary Health, occupational ecology, ecopation, transformative occupation

Seppälä Henriikka (June 2025)

“Nature, Language and Occupation Shaping Spousal Experiences in Transnational Relocation” - Finnish Expats’ Spouses’ View

Background: In occupational therapy and -science, human occupations are naturally related to cultural-, institutional-, social- and physical environment. Each environment potentially offers opportunities and resources, demands, and constraints. In the globalised world, people increasingly move for work. Employees posted abroad are usually referred to as expatriates. The phenomenon of expatriates’ transnational relocation has generated the researchers’ interest. The expatriates’ work-performance and willingness to relocate are influenced also by factors of personal life, e.g. whether families follow, engaging opportunities for the spouse and children, but little is known about the spousal experience and the factors affecting it.

Aim: This thesis aimed to understand the lived experiences of the spouses in relocating abroad. To gather nuanced information on spousal insights, five in-depth interviews were performed.

Method: In concurrence with the chosen phenomenological approach spouses reflected on what it was like to experience relocation to a new living environment including the possible shifts in their daily occupations?

Findings: The findings focus on the essences evolved from the data: courage, language, engaging occupations and nature. The thesis concludes the importance of having occupational choices and the courage to trust one’s capacities for occupational adjustments.

Keywords: relocation, accompanying spouses, expatriate, engaging occupations

Walter Sarah (June 2025)

Enjoying health in everyday occupations. Occupational patterns and occupational experience of people at risk for stroke

Background: Stroke is a leading cause of disability in Europe, resulting in a societal and healthcare burden. Primary prevention strategies address modifiable stroke risk factors by lifestyle changes. Understanding occupational patterns and experiences of persons at risk may increase effectiveness of such interventions. Additionally, subjective health perception influences health-promoting behaviour and plays a key role in stroke prevention.

Aim: This study aims to describe the occupational pattern of people at risk of stroke, including associated occupational experiences and subjective health perceptions. Also, to present differences in subjective perceptions of health based on gender and whether the occupation is solitary or performed with others.

Methods: An explorative cross-sectional analysis of quantitative data from the Pleasure, Productivity, Restoration and Health Profile (PPR-H Profile) was conducted. Occupational patterns and related subjective health perceptions were examined descriptively. Spearman's rho was used to assess correlations between PPR-H dimensions, and Mann–Whitney U test to compare gender and social factor.

Results: Work, Eating, and Consuming Media were the most frequent occupations but rated low across all PPR-H Profile dimensions. Creative activities, Enriching/Learning, Gardening, and Walking were associated with the highest positive experiences across all dimensions. In terms of health benefits sport, gardening, sleep, and walking ranked highest. Health ratings were higher during social interactions and in women.

Conclusion: The study suggests integrating occupational pattern and associated experiences to stroke prevention programs. Most frequent occupations, such as work and media consumption require greater attention because of low experience and health levels, while occupations that foster high levels of positive experience should be promoted for stroke prevention.

Keywords: Stroke prevention; occupational pattern; occupational experience; subjective perception of health.