Displaced children's experience of places and play: a scoping review

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Abstract: There is a lack of understanding about displaced children's experiences of places, place attachment and play in the field of children's geographies and the built environment. This paper contributes to emerging knowledge in the fields of displacement, place and play by summarising and identifying gaps in the most relevant research literature regarding displaced children's experiences of place in temporary and/or informal settlements, or in new environments. The scoping review deployed a combination of search terms related to displacement (displaced, informal settlement, temporary settlement, refugee) and themes related to place and play (child friendly places/spaces, experience of place, place attachment). Databases used were ScienceDirect and Proquest, and a total of 1,001 studies were identified, with 33 studies included in the review. From the limited number of relevant studies, it was found that place attachment provides a sense of stability amidst change, contributes to wellbeing and identity, and supports the cognitive, physical and social development of displaced children. Overall, play and opportunities for play can help children to adapt to a new place following displacement. The review concludes that more research is needed to explore displaced children's experience of place in both their original and new environment, as well as comparing the experiences of place for 'placed' and 'displaced' children.

Keywords: displaced children; experience of place; informal settlement, temporary settlement, children's play, child friendly spaces

Introduction

In 2020, over 82 million people globally had been forcibly displaced from their homes (UNHCR, 2021) of whom 42% were children. A person is said to be displaced when forced to leave their home or place of habitual residence without their free choosing (UNICEF, 2021). Conversely, a person is said to be 'placed' when they are able to remain in their home and have not been forced to move. Of all displaced children, 19.4 million have been displaced by violence or conflict, 2.1 million have been displaced as a result of natural disasters, and 12.6 million are refugees (UNICEF, 2021). Children currently account for around half of all refugees globally, and around 40% of those who have been internally displaced by violence or conflict. Many of these children have been separated from their parents as well as from their known, familiar environment (UNOCHA, 2019).

It is known that the experience of displacement, loss and violence can have long-lasting negative effects on children (O'Kane, 2015; Masten & Narayan, 2012). Many children are at risk of remaining in exile for a large proportion of their childhoods (UNHCR, 2021). This scoping review seeks to improve understanding and awareness of the impacts of the physical environment on displaced children, with children defined as under the age of 18, as set by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (UN General Assembly, 1989). The review focuses on those of 3-13 years old, while also drawing on the experiences of youth within the 14-18 years old age range). The review considers how opportunities for play in the built environment may help children to deal with the trauma of displacement.

The development of place attachments in forming a self-identity is of particular importance for displaced children living in a new environment and surrounded by new people, often without parents and family. Some effects of displacement on children are

well discussed, such as the increased risk of malnutrition and disease, and their vulnerability to forced marriage, forced labour and child trafficking (UNOCHA, 2019). Yet little attention has been paid to how children experience the place to which they have been displaced, and how this may impact on their health and well-being.

It is increasingly understood that 'place matters' when it comes to children's health and well-being (Sampson and Gifford, 2010). A sense of place is an affective bond that develops between people and places over time (Relph, 1976; cited in Matthews, 1992). Having a sense of place and an attachment to a place can provide an individual with a sense of stability amidst change. The term 'place attachment' is used to refer to how people bond to a particular place (Altman and Low, 1992). This is particularly relevant when a person is displaced from home and former place attachments are disrupted or broken (Scannell et al, 2016). Childhood place experiences, in particular, are often remembered into adulthood. They may begin to shape a child's identity, informing their understanding of their current and future place and how they view the world (Proshansky et al, 1983; Altman and Low, 1992). Involuntary disruptions and displacement can therefore have negative impacts on psychological well-being and identity (Browns and Perkins, 1992).

The importance of experience of place has been extensively demonstrated for the general development of children, specifically in the context of 'placed' children and their exploration of the environments in which they live (Ward, 1978; Hart, 1979; Moore, 1986; Matthews, 1992; Hillman et al, 1990). It is well understood that the way in which children experience a place can impact their cognitive development, as well as social and motor skills. Children who are able to move freely around their environment develop skill and confidence in navigating a place (Mackett et al, 2007; Carver et al, 2008; Rissotto and Tonucci, 2002; Ahmadi and Taniguchi, 2007; Rissotto and Giuliani,

2006), particularly if able to do so independently (Tranter and Pawson, 2001). They develop an increased appreciation of the environment in which they live (Rivkin, 1995), and are more likely to build social relationships with other children and adults (Spilsbury, 2005). Individuality and social competence are developed when children have autonomy to experience places on their own, particularly 'in between' places between home and other settings (Mitchell et al, 2007). In a review of transport and child well-being, for example, it was found that walking and active, independent travel have positive effects on children's well-being (Waygood, Friman and Olsson, 2017).

Children who are able to take advantage of opportunities in their environment for play are more likely to build place attachments and to develop their self-identity. Piaget (1962) and Vygotksy (1978) highlight cognitive processes involved in play and suggest that play can help children to respond to stresses and be prepared for future challenges. Play contributes to the cognitive, physical, social and emotional well-being of children (Ginsburg, 2007), and has been recognised by the United Nations as a right for every child (UN General Assembly,1989). A review of the literature by Brussoni et al (2015) on the relationship between risky outdoor play and children's health found that numerous developmental and health advantages are linked specifically to children's outdoor risky play. These include increased physical activity and social health, improved social competence, creativity and resilience. Play has also been shown to have restorative powers and to improve adaptability to stressful conditions (Nijhof et al, 2018; Scarlett et al, 2005).

Interactions with natural and green spaces and perceptions of safety and security are factors affecting children's place experiences. Spending time in natural environments has been found to have a positive impact on the development of place attachments and improved feelings of control over the environment (Chawla, 2015).

How nature is defined and how children relate to it, however, is complex, linking to discussions within children's geographies on the importance of considering, and even challenging, child-nature relations (Arvidsen, 2018; Hadfield-Hill and Zara, 2019; Malone, 2016). Similarly, if children feel safe and secure in a place and free from possible risks, they are more likely to feel confident in investigating and exploring their environment (Chawla, 1992). This is supported by evidence showing that time spent moving around their neighbourhood increases in both amount and quality with a child's feeling of safety. (Martin et al, 2021; Hino et al, 2021; Timperio, et al., 2004; McMillan, 2007;Carver, Timperio and Crawford, 2008). When given opportunities to experience a place, children also tend to build social capital, meaning social connections at the neighbourhood level (Weller and Bruegel, 2009). Places with more social capital facilitate more mobility in children by reducing safety concerns (Crawford et al, 2017; Chawla, 1992). The importance of the social aspects of mobility for children and young people, particularly for girls, are highlighted by Waygood, Friman and Olsson (2017).

How children experience places in 'placed' settings is addressed in a growing and varied body of literature, with the most common themes relating to how children develop place attachments through their experiences of places, and identifying the dominant factors that affect these experiences. Clear links have been shown between children's place attachment and their general health and well-being (Low and Altman, 1992; Scannell and Gifford, 2017). Less clear is the applicability of these ideas for displaced children. This scoping review aims to address this gap by reviewing published evidence on the impact of built environment on displaced children's experiences of place and play.

The broad research questions that this review focusses on are:

- What are displaced children's experiences of place?

- What factors affect displaced children's experiences of place and places for play?

Methodology

The study adopts a scoping review approach, which is generally used for 'mapping' a research field. This was best suited to provide an overview of the existing evidence on displaced children's experience of place and play and highlight where more research is needed. The review follows the six methodological stages set out by Levac, Colquhoun and O'Brien (2010) of 1) identifying the research question, 2) identifying relevant studies, 3) study selection, 4) charting the data, 5) collating, summarising and reporting the results. Stage 6, stakeholder consultation, took the form of an online workshop with participants from several countries. The review was guided by the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) scoping review extension checklist (Tricco et al, 2018). Given the broad scope of the study and relative lack of existing work, the research study started by identifying the two broad research questions stated above that then guided the selection of the inclusion/exclusion criteria and search terms for electronic searches. The term 'displaced children' was used to allow identification of children living in a range of settlement types, including informal or temporary settlements, or holding refugee status in a new country.

Search criteria were established to identify relevant studies keeping the initial inclusion/exclusion criteria broad in order to allow a more holistic consideration of the literature. The searches used the terms 'displaced,' 'informal settlement,' 'refugee,' 'experience of place', 'places for play,' 'child-friendly places,' 'child friendly spaces,' 'learning,' and 'disaster,' and excluded the term 'injuries.' Studies that focussed on children of any age under 18 were included. 14 of the studies included both younger

children and those over 14 years old (often termed 'youth') in their assessment. Two studies included in the review worked with adults to explore their experiences of displacement as children. No limits were placed on geographical location or the timing of the study. Searches were conducted for published papers up until April 2021. Publication formats included review articles, research articles, doctoral dissertations, reports and guidelines published in English. Science Direct and Proquest were the search databases used. A reference check was made on key papers from the initial search to yield further linked articles. Full details of the searches completed can be found in Appendix A. A summary table of the papers selected for review is available as supplementary material.

From the initial searches, 1,001 studies were identified. After duplicates were removed, 963 were screened at title and abstract level, from which 67 were retained for full text assessments. After an assessment of the full text, 25 further studies were excluded as these were not about experience of place. Five studies were excluded for a focus on school/education, one study was excluded as it was purely methodological, and three studies were excluded for not meeting the inclusion criteria of having a focus on children. Studies that did not specifically consider play but included consideration of experience of place were included in order to draw out important place-based themes relevant to displaced children. 33 studies that met the inclusion criteria were selected for this review after full text assessment. Figure 1 displays the PRISMA study flowchart. A total of over 3,500 children were involved in the studies that were reviewed.

>> Figure 1. Flowchart of the search process << [Figure 1 near here]

Data from each of the selected studies was tabulated, identifying: the country in which the study took place; the date of the study; the study type; sample size; age range of participants; study design, objectives and methodology; the framework for analysis (where relevant) and a narrative summary of the main findings as they relate to the research questions. Given the qualitative nature of all of the studies selected, a narrative summary was considered to be the most appropriate way to summarise the data.

Seven key themes emerging from the studies and relating to the research questions were identified: place, play, place attachment/identity, safety, friendship, nature, imagination, and each study was then placed under one or more of these themes. These themes were also used for further analysis of the selected studies in terms of their relation to place, to form the focus of the findings below. Analysis focused on mapping existing knowledge and identifying knowledge gaps, rather than assessing the quality of the studies or extracting quantitative data.

Findings

The selected studies all contain reflections on how displaced children experience places and considerations on places for play. They cover a broad range of geographical locations, with studies including data from all five continents (Africa: n=5; Asia: n=11; Australia: n=1; Europe: n=3; North America: n=6; South America: n=2). Nine of the studies focussed solely on children and 14 focused on both children and young people. The remaining studies were either reports (n=8) or focussed on the childhood experiences of adults (n=2). Types of displacement covered in the reviewed articles included both displacement due to violence or conflict (n=18) and displacement due to natural disaster (n=9). The studies reviewed used a wide range of methods with a predominantly qualitative focus, including interviews, focus groups, observation, participatory arts, photo elicitation, drawings and walking tours. Seven of the studies

discussed gender differences, while none of the papers that were reviewed addressed disability. The place-based themes emerging from the selected studies are summarised below, with the main themes identified being place attachment and identity construction (n=10), and experiences of place, broken down into playable space (n=9), child-friendly space (CFS) (n=7), natural spaces (n=6), and social spaces and connections (n=9).

Place attachment and identity construction

10 of the studies reviewed considered children's place attachments and how they affected their identity when displaced. Children's past experiences as well as the features of the previous place in which they lived, are shown to be an important consideration in understanding the impact of displacement. Displacement can cause place attachments to be disrupted or broken, as highlighted in explorations of children's place-based loss following flooding in the UK and Southern Alberta, Canada (Mort et al, 2018; Scannell, Cox and Fletcher; 2017). A study of Somali refugee families in the UK (Allport et al, 2019) considers how place affects experiences, revealing the difference in play experiences of children within the Somali community in the UK and Somalia. In Somalia, children were given more freedoms and opportunities for play and interaction than in the UK, highlighting the importance of considering a child's previous home and situation in exploration of how they might experience a new place.

The theme of place attachment and how it can affect self-identity is shown in a study of Turkish Cypriot refugees (Bogac, 2009). While the study methodology did not involve directly speaking to children, the findings are relevant as they consider the impact of displacement as children grow into adulthood. The paper describes how adults who were forced to leave their homes thirty years prior, still had not developed a strong place attachment to their new place of residence. This lack of place attachment appeared to be driven by an uncertain future and a sense that they may one day return to their

previous homes. The uncertainty was also reflected in the attitudes of their own children, who, despite being born and raised in the new location, still felt a sense of belonging and identity to their parents' homeland. Nho, Yoon and Ko, (2018) in their study with refugee children in Korea also highlight how children struggle to settle in a new country or location, often feeling socially marginalised and sensing discrimination This was also identified by De Silva (2018) who researched children forced to relocate within Sri Lanka. However, a study with refugee pre-school children in Canada demonstrated play as important in supporting young children in building an identity and settling into a new cultural context, as it enabled them to mediate and negotiate a different culture (Dachyshyn and Kirova, 2008).

Those who chose to flee their countries of origin and separate from their parents to live in Canada as unaccompanied children, often due to war or conflict, still reported that their country of origin remained a part of their identity, with one child stating that they could 'never feel at home in Canada' (Denov and Akesson, 2013). In the case of Palestinian refugees living in Jordan, however, children seemed to accept a hybrid identity as both Palestinian and Jordanian (Levine, 2007). The idea of a hybrid or 'fluid' identity is also reflected in an Australian study of refugee youths (Sampson and Gifford, 2010). In this study it was found that the youth gradually shaped their hybrid identities over time, as they continued to feel connected to the places they had left behind, and the associated traumas, but they also embraced the possibility of constructing new connections to their new place. Another study revealed how refugee children's experiences and attachments to a new place were also affected by how settled they were before the displacement (Fothergill and Peek, 2015). Those who were less settled before moving, appeared more vulnerable on being displaced.

As well as play, creative processes such as photography can help with the process of identity construction within the context of children's displacement, as found by Guerrero (2008). Myths and stories from both the children's original culture and their new setting were also found to help children feel more settled (Rousseau et al, 2004). The study highlights how by linking the myths and legends from their own communities to their current lives, children began to feel proud of their cultural heritage and this in turn helped to support their emotional wellbeing.

Experiences of place

The sense of loss of place that displacement often provokes can lead children to seek new spatial affordances. Chawla (1992) categorises places and the subsequent attachments made to places into three themes: exploration and creative expression; security and belonging; and social affiliation. These themes are largely reflected in the other studies reviewed. The most significant features of a place that are discussed in relation to children's experiences in these settings are playable space (n=9), child-friendly space (CFS) (n=7), natural spaces (n=6) and social spaces and connections (n=9).

Playable spaces

Nine of the studies reviewed considered playable space. There is an increasing awareness that children's play and recreation have a particularly important and restorative role for children in refugee camps, in addition to the material needs of food, shelter and medicine (Naudeau, 2005).

How play fits into a displaced child's wider neighbourhood experiences and environment is reflected in detail in two studies. In a multi-country research project designed to understand children's play needs in situations of conflict, not only was the

importance of places for play highlighted, but also time and permission for play, even in situations of crisis (Chatterjee, 2018). The paper reveals that children can be inventive in finding places for playing creatively and freely, even if none are formally provided, and despite an inadequate environment. This may vary depending on the child's age and gender.

Play emerges as a strong theme in papers by Swart-Kruger (2000, 2002) and Chawla (2000) in findings from the *Growing Up in Cities* project, focussing on a squatter camp in Canaansland, South Africa. When children were asked what the best place to live would be, they noted that they would like a place with soccer and netball fields, and parks with swings and merry-go-rounds (Swart-Kruger, 2000). Differences between boys and girls were also noted in this study. The children mentioned a grass football pitch and an area with play equipment that they used, as well as playing games on the street, with girls generally playing closer to home than boys, and showing a greater appreciation of the natural environment (Swart-Kruger, 2002; Chawla, 2000). When asked to draw their favourite places, one of the girls in the study drew a local garage for fixing cars, where there was also room to play and hang out (Swart-Kruger, 2000).

Five further studies capture different aspects of children's play experiences. In a study with children in Bangladesh, play facilities were lost following a natural disaster, and it was this that most influenced the children's experience of place (Akhter, 2015). The loss of play facilities impacted on the children's wellbeing, making them unhappy. They were no longer allowed outside and were not allowed to meet friends. Aside from the fact that the physical structures for play were gone, the children's freedom to be allowed to play was also lost. Another paper draws on the differences between found and constructed spaces for play (Woolley, 2021). Constructed places for play are those

places that are designed and built solely for play, such as playgrounds. Found spaces for play, conversely, are spaces that children themselves find to play in, such as spaces between buildings, footpaths and alleyways. Woolley (2021) highlights the importance for displaced children of found spaces for play close to home.

The role of place in disaster recovery is also highlighted in a paper exploring places that are important to youth (13-22 year olds) in four communities affected by natural disasters in the USA and Canada (Cox et al, 2017). The youth in the study often talked about places beyond their homes and school, that were central to their recovery. These were places where they could be themselves, such as formal and informal youth gathering places, parks, recreation places and community centres. This study suggests how facilities for play and recreation can help to strengthen or regain identity in an otherwise changing period. Another study primarily working with youth in Canada shows how the loss of a park led to feelings of instability as it was a place that the youth had always known (Scannell, Cox and Fletcher, 2017). Not having an alternative place to go affected their resilience and recovery following a natural disaster. Following relocation to a new country, another study shows how being involved in play in the new setting helped refugee children to mediate and negotiate a different culture (Dachshyn and Kirova, 2008). Although it does not mention specific features of place, it shows how play can help children and their carers to build an identity in a new setting.

Child-friendly spaces (CFS)

Seven of the studies reviewed consider child-friendly spaces. Humanitarian agencies use the term CFS, child-friendly spaces, to describe spaces that provide children with protected environments where they can participate in organised activities to play, learn and socialise (Save the Children, 2008). Many humanitarian agencies have tried to address children's needs during and after humanitarian crises through CFS. A

CFS typically engages 25-35 children in play, as well as helping to support social interaction and informal education, within a safe setting and under the supervision of trained workers. CFS are one of the most widely used interventions for supporting vulnerable children who have been displaced from their homes (Wessells and Kostelny, 2013).

A range of guidelines have been produced to support the development of CFSs. A handbook for staff on designing and working in CFS in Emergencies has been produced by Save the Children (2008) and UNICEF (2009). Save the Children has also produced a report 'Making Space for Children' (Bartlett, 2007), that considers the wider play needs of children in post-disaster contexts. It focuses on the importance of considering children's needs in the rebuilding of settlements following disaster, and highlights the importance of taking a child's perspective, not just of buildings and play spaces, but more holistically, for all decision making around the built environment. It includes consideration of children's mobility, and how they move around; children's accessibility to shops, schools and play facilities; the importance of nature; and the relevance of good urban design in making places that provide a positive sense of place where children want to spend time. The report also notes that there may be differences between boys and girls, with girls preferring quieter, more private places and being closer to home.

The International Play Association (IPA) has also produced a toolkit aimed at supporting every day, community-based play opportunities for children in crisis situations (King-Sheard and Mannello, 2017). The toolkit focuses on practitioners creating a child-friendly play environment by offering guidance on how to make the most of a given space for children's play, rather than considering how children interact and engage with the wider place. Further to the IPA initiative, BRAC (2019) has

developed its Humanitarian Play Lab model, with the aim of enhancing early childhood

development, child protection and psychosocial wellbeing. These are play-based

learning centres for children under six years of age, designed for displaced Rohingya

children, based on their memories of home.

Two studies assess the effectiveness of CFS in the context of humanitarian

emergencies and in slum areas where children's rights are at risk. These focus

exclusively on the spaces themselves without considering wider impacts. Islam (2019)

produced an assessment of the role of CFS in providing a protective environment for

children at risk in slum areas. The study found that CFS were benefitting vulnerable

children and communities by providing a safe environment in which children could

spend time and reducing other risks, such as getting involved in criminal activity or

child labour. Hermosilla et al (2019) evaluated the impact of CFS on children's

development and well-being in humanitarian emergencies. They also found that CFS

can provide a protective environment for younger children that promotes and helps to

support their psychosocial well-being, although no impact was identified for older

children between 12 and 17 years.

Natural spaces

Six of the studies highlighted the benefits of displaced children having a relationship

with nature, although only two focussed specifically on explorations of the natural

environment (Sampson and Gifford, 2010; Winterbottom, 2008).

The therapeutic benefits of particular landscapes and their links to restoration

and recovery was highlighted in a study with refugees in Australia where children often

described places based on aesthetic qualities, such as greenness and tranquillity

(Sampson and Gifford, 2010). Many of the children had previously lived in places

without much nature, which led them to seek it out once they were relocated to a more

natural setting. In this research the natural environment is framed as a restorative place that promotes recovery in Winterbottom's (2008) research. She highlights how different features of the natural environment can be accommodated in rebuilding safe school playspaces for displaced communities in Guatemala. (Winterbottom, 2008).

The affordances of the natural environment can also create opportunities for play (Chatterjee, 2018). For children in India living in slums, the river and the riverbank provide the only large open spaces for children to play (Chatterjee, 2018). In this example the link to the natural environment appears to be more from necessity than choice, with few other play opportunities being available. For squatter children living in Canaansland, South Africa, the natural environment features strongly in the drawings that the children created as part of the *Growing Up in Cities* study (Swart-Kruger 2000, 2002; Chawla, 2000). The children appeared to notice features of the natural environment, with trees, grass verges and flowers frequently illustrated in the drawings that they created (Swart-Kruger, 2000), with children often exaggerating their frequency (Chawla, 2000). When offered the theoretical choice between a park with play equipment or a grassy area, they tended to choose the park.

Social spaces and connections

There is a clear link between how a person experiences a place and their social connections and experiences. Social ties can affect the recovery of children and youth following a disaster, and social support can help to counteract the losses of physical place (Scannell et al, 2016). While nine of the studies reviewed consider the importance of children's social connections and friendships and reveal how displacement disrupts them, only a few include the child's broader place experiences.

Children develop relationships with peers through play (Chaterjee, 2018; Swart-Kruger, 2002). The lack of opportunities for children to play affects their social

connections with other families from their country of origin as found in a study of Somali families living in Bristol (Allport et al, 2019). Mothers felt that there were better social connections in Somalia, where children enjoyed more freedom and older children and adults could connect.

Formal play facilities can also aid the development of social connections (Islam, 2019; Akhter et al, 2015). In an assessment of CFS, one of the benefits identified was the provision of a space for children to spend time with others (Islam, 2019). Conversely, a loss of play facilities following natural disasters in Bangladesh made children feel unhappy as they could no longer go out and meet friends, or were not allowed outside at all (Akhter et al, 2015). Similarly, gathering places following disaster are important for children to make friends and to socialise (Cox et al, 2017). The physical changes to place can also affect youth's social links and, subsequently, their wider place connections, as experienced by Canadian youth in a study by Scannell, Cox and Fletcher (2017). For children in Palestine, the importance of social spaces were noted, including places of worship, school, parks and community centres, as they enabled children to socialise and to feel safe, and because of the sense of control and ownership they felt within them (Veronese et al, 2020).

In their research comparing two refugee settlements in Lebanon and the existing resilience of social networks and peer support, Makhoul, Ghanem and Ghanem, (2003) found that the place with worse living conditions appeared to have a stronger social support network. The authors attributed this to the refugee's similar ethnic backgrounds and shared history (Makhoul, Ghanem and Ghanem, 2003). The need to socialise with people with a shared history or similar ethnic background is also revealed in a Korean study of child refugees (Nho, Yoon and Ko, 2018). The research revealed how refugee children from elsewhere struggled to make Korean friends and preferred to socialise

with their non-Korean friends whom they had met in the refugee shelter. Specific elements of place that may have affected their socialisation and experiences were not explored.

Discussion

The studies in this scoping review cover several different themes and experiences, in a wide variety of locations, cultures, populations and situations, and were explored mainly through qualitative methods. Two clear points for future consideration and research have emerged: holistic place experiences and the concept of placed versus displaced.

Holistic place experiences

Although some of the studies took a broader perspective to children's place experiences, very few focused primarily on place or on the holistic place experience of the child, and how their experiences of spaces within a place interact and influence each other. The studies reviewed highlight the importance of specific features of places, such as playable spaces, CFS, natural spaces and social spaces. However, not many of the studies provide a holistic assessment of a child's place experiences or attempt to link experiences of these spaces together. Particularly in the context of play, this tends to restrict analysis to consideration of intentional places for play, rather than those 'found spaces' and 'places in between' where children might still find play opportunities, the relevance of which are identified by Woolley (2021).

This focus on intentional places for play is particularly evident in the context of CFSs. Many CFSs, for example, are not functioning as well as they could, due to a lack of community consultation, and a poor understanding of how they are meant to work as part of a wider system of support for children (Wessells and Kostelny, 2013). Wessells

and Kostelny (2013), in their assessment of CFSs, also suggest that the CFSs may support boys better than girls. It is not disputed that there are benefits to children from CFSs and other similar models, particularly in terms of child protection and education. However, the studies and reports that have been reviewed rarely consider how these types of space function within the wider place.

It is clear that CFSs can provide a safe refuge for children from feelings of disaster and chaos, and that are likely to have an impact on the children's wider experience of place, but it is disappointing that this is rarely explicitly stated in the work on CFSs. In one of the studies reviewed considering Palestinian refugee children, it was found that children will spend time in places that they identify as sites of safety and protection (Veronese et al, 2020). In another study from Canada, children were found to search out similar spaces of safety and calm (Scannell, Cox and Fletcher, 2017). Although this principle of being able to go to a safe space appears to be an important element of how children use and experience a place, the links between safety and place are not often made explicit in the literature.

Two of the studies reviewed in relation to CFSs focus solely on children's play within them, rather than the wider context (Islam, 2019; Hermosilla et al, 2019). Indeed, in a review of CFSs in five humanitarian settings, it was the most secure setting with fencing and security that provided for the highest levels of child protection, though it also showed the most positive effects on child well-being (Hermosilla et al, 2019). In an assessment of CFSs in Bangladesh (Islam, 2019), this positioning is also reflected, with the review focussing strongly on children's education and safety, with only limited consideration as to how the CFS fits into the wider place, or how it impacts upon children's wider experience of place.

This lack of consideration of children's holistic place experiences contrasts with studies considering the themes of place attachment and identity construction more generally, that tend to focus more broadly on the children's experience (Freeman et al., 2022; Lim and Barton, 2010; Hernández et al., 2007; Scannell and Gifford, 2010). These studies highlight the importance of considering the wider context of a place and how it impacts on a child's well-being (Lewicka, 2011). They link to well-established evidence on the importance of place attachments for displaced children and the impact that disruptions can have on psychological well-being (Proshanksy et al, 1983; Altman and Low, 1992). Bringing together the evidence on place attachment and identity with an exploration of a child's wider place experience would provide further insights into the important features of place for displaced children, and how they might positively affect their experiences.

Placed and displaced

The importance of experience of place for children and the contribution that play makes to their well-being is increasingly well understood. Much of the evidence for these understandings is based on 'placed' children's experiences, meaning those children who have not been displaced or forced to move and have usually been settled in a place since birth (Weller and Bruegel, 2009; Brussoni et al., 2020; Brussoni et al., 2015). Limited links are made between this knowledge and the consideration of displaced children's experiences. The studies reviewed here tend not to draw on the literature on 'placed' children's experiences in any depth. Similarly, the studies and reports reviewed on CFS focussed on these spaces as unique to displaced children, rather than drawing upon what is already known within children's geographies.

A deeper understanding of displaced children's experiences of place could be further developed by considering the similarities and differences with 'placed'

children's experiences. In relation to the natural environment, for example, there is a wide range of evidence demonstrating the positive benefits that nature can have on children (see Chawla, 2015). Using this evidence to consider more carefully how the natural environment affects displaced children's place experiences could help to better understand what might work best for them in these settings. Exploring the links to 'placed' children's experiences could also help to improve understanding of the differences in gender and age that are highlighted in some of the studies in relation to displaced children (Khan et al, 2019).

It is acknowledged that the scope of research on displaced children's place experiences is broad and ranges over several themes, as demonstrated in the selected studies. The breadth of the topic makes it difficult to claim that the selected studies provide an exhaustive assessment. Different terms used regarding settlement type, such as informal and temporary settlements, and the use of the term refugees, have also made a comprehensive review of displaced children more challenging. The limited number of studies identified, however, suggests that a more focussed scoping review would not have yielded sufficient results.

Conclusion

This paper adopted a scoping review approach to explore the literature and research on the topic of displaced children's experiences of place. Given the growing number of displaced children throughout the world and global concerns about their health and well-being, there is currently an insufficient amount of relevant research. Overall, this review found very few studies that holistically explore displaced children's experiences of place. Much of the literature omits consideration of children's wider place experience. There is also limited knowledge of how children in displaced settings

experience places, as well as a lack of connection with the wider literature on 'placed' children's experiences of place.

Although a number of the studies reviewed consider how displacement can affect children's place attachment and their identity following displacement, more understanding is needed on how displaced children's wider experiences of places in temporary settlements may impact their everyday lives. It is recommended that future research should focus on how displaced children's experiences of place impacts on place attachment and identity, and the links between specific aspects of the built environment and their wellbeing.

Finally, only a number of studies mentioned gender differences and none addressed disability, which renders further studies necessary, to explore how age, gender and disability affect children's experience of place in temporary settlements.

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