ABSTRACT: This bibliometric study aimed to characterize the nursing scientific production and the use of thematic oral history as a method or technique in the Brazilian context, between January 2008 and September 2012, indexed in Brazilian and international databases. For the search, the term “thematic oral history” was used. A total of 32 articles was selected. The majority of the studies were concentrated in 2010, in the south-east and north-east regions of Brazil, and the most-studied thematic areas were women’s health, education in nursing, and mental health. It was observed that the fields of research in thematic oral history are mainly collective spaces, and the subjects of the studies are often vulnerable in relation to some unstable health and/or life condition. Giving “a time and a voice” to people in the health and nursing contexts is an important scientific path.

DESCRIPTORS: Nursing; History; Quantitative Research.

HISTÓRIA ORAL TEMÁTICA NA PESQUISA EM ENFERMAGEM: ESTUDO BIBLIOMÉTRICO

RESUMO: Estudo bibliométrico que objetivou caracterizar a produção científica da enfermagem e a utilização da história oral temática como método ou técnica no contexto brasileiro, de janeiro de 2008 a setembro de 2012, indexada em bases de dados nacionais e internacionais. Utilizou-se para a busca o termo “história oral temática”. Seleccionaram-se 32 artigos. A maioria dos estudos se concentrou no ano de 2010, nas regiões sudeste e nordeste do País, e as áreas temáticas mais estudadas foram saúde da mulher, educação em enfermagem e saúde mental. Observou-se que os campos de pesquisa da história oral temática são em sua maior parte espaços coletivos, e os sujeitos das pesquisas, muitas vezes, encontram-se vulneráveis em relação a alguma condição instável de saúde e/ou de vida. É um importante caminho científico de dar “vez e voz” às pessoas nos contextos de saúde e na enfermagem.

DESCRIPTORES: Enfermagem; História; Pesquisa Quantitativa.

HISTORIA ORAL TEMÁTICA EN LA INVESTIGACIÓN EN ENFERMERÍA: ESTUDIO BIBLIOMÉTRICO

RESUMEN: Estudio bibliométrico que tuvo el propósito de caracterizar la producción científica de la enfermería y la utilización de la historia oral temática como método o técnica en el contexto brasileño, de enero de 2008 a septiembre de 2012, indexada en bases de datos nacionales e internacionales. Para la búsqueda, fue utilizado el término “historia oral temática”. Treinta y dos artículos fueron seleccionados. La mayoría de los estudios se concentró en el año de 2010, en las regiones sudeste y nordeste del País, y las áreas temáticas más estudiadas fueron salud de la mujer, educación en enfermería y salud mental. Se observó que los campos de investigación de la historia oral temática son, en la mayor parte, espacios colectivos, y los sujetos de las investigaciones, muchas veces, son vulnerables considerando alguna condición instable de salud y de vida. Es un importante camino científico para dar “vez y voz” a las personas en los contextos de salud y en la enfermería.

DESCRIPTORES: Enfermería; Historia; Investigación cuantitativa.
INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, people generally and, in particular, intellectuals and historians, among others, have sought to understand the changes in the revolutions through which they passed in their own lifetimes. Oral history can be a way through which people can make/write and tell history, and transform both the content and the purpose of the history\(^1\).

Worldwide, oral history stands out as a growing, practical and convincing resource. It aims to grasp and record the experiences of people and groups who wish to witness, or who are invited to, through spoken accounts, transform their experience into written documents\(^2\). It seeks to produce historical and scientific knowledge, and not only to produce an ordered report of the experiences and lives of other people\(^3\).

In oral history, method and technique both have their own specific characteristics. As a method, it privileges interviews, these being the central location of the studies, focusing on the accounts as a fundamental point for the analyses; and as a technique, it supposes there to exist parallel documentation, to which the accounts are an additional resource. A method is a mechanism configured as a systematized and rigorous research process, while technique is a set of rules which guide the processes of investigations\(^2\).

Thematic oral history is based on a specific topic, and the objectivity is direct. The specific characteristics of the personal history of the person who is narrating are only interesting to the extent that one can identify aspects which may be useful to the central thematic information\(^4\).

In this regard, it may be observed that in Brazil, studies using the historical method are undertaken by nurses, revealing a little of what Brazilian nursing has been in its diversity, whether this refers to the beginning of the nurses’ knowledge of their own identity and importance, or to society’s recognition of the professional nurse, individually or collectively\(^5\). In this way, one can see the importance of this method of research from understanding the profession and its interface in society.

This study aimed to characterize nursing scientific production in the use of thematic oral history as a method or technique in the Brazilian context, in the period January 2008 – September 2012. Based on the results achieved, this study will contribute to the dissemination of thematic oral history as a methodological path for nursing research.

METHOD

So as to achieve this study’s objective, a bibliometric\(^6\) study was undertaken. Firstly, the researchers outlined the theme to be studied, the study objective, the term to be used in the search and the databases, and the research question was defined: “How does one characterize the scientific nursing production which uses thematic oral history as a method or technique in the Brazilian context in the period between January 2008 and September 2012?”.

Following that, a survey was made of the articles available electronically on the following databases: the Latin American and Caribbean Center on Health Sciences (LILACS), Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO) and the Nursing Database (BDENF). Access to the bases was obtained via the Virtual Health Library (BVS), using the search term “oral thematic history”. Seeking to ensure the reliability of the process, two reviewers undertook the search and the selection of scientific productions independently. Data collection occurred in the month of October 2012.

For selecting the scientific articles, the researchers read the titles and the abstracts of the publications which met the inclusion criteria established: articles with complete texts, available electronically in Portuguese, English or Spanish, as well as studies which presented the term “oral thematic history” in their abstracts, undertaken by nurses, in the period covered between January 2008 and September 2012, undertaken in the Brazilian context. The exclusion criteria were defined as: publications repeated in the databases, theses, and literature reviews.

A total of 215 abstracts were surveyed which, following analysis, resulted in 32 publications considered to refer to the theme under study. In the interpretation stage, a thorough reading was undertaken of the articles, during which the results which occurred were discussed.

Finally, a summary was made of the knowledge and the analysis of the data was presented, with
the current knowledge emerging regarding the use of thematic oral history as a method or technique in nursing studies in the Brazilian context.

It should be noted that ethical principles permeated the process through which this study was developed, in respecting authorship and the integrity of the articles which made up this bibliometric study.

RESULTS

The results demonstrated that the highest number of publications occurred in 2010 with 11, followed by the years 2009 and 2008, which had seven articles published each. Regarding the databases, it was observed that the majority of the studies is available simultaneously and in more than one research database. A total of 12 publications were found in LILACS/SciELO, nine in LILACS/SciELO/BDENF, and six in LILACS/BDENF. In relation to language, 31 studies were published in Portuguese, and one in Spanish.

Charts 1, 2 and 3 present the scientific productions in Brazilian nursing, which use oral thematic history as a method or technique in the period covered between January 2008 and September 2012.

Chart 1 - Titles of scientific productions in Brazilian nursing, south-east region, which used oral thematic history as the method or technique, between the years of 2008 and 2012. Florianópolis, 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The routine of students in the Alfredo Pinto School of Nursing (1949-1956).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing care at home or in a health institution: the decision process in a low-income community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The meaning of having urinary incontinence and being incontinent in the view of women.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiences of parenthood in the adolescents in a low-income Brazilian community. (Article in Spanish)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The humanization of nursing care: what is it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The process of care for the older adult undergoing Continuous Peritoneal Dialysis on an Outpatient Basis at home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The work of the nurse in the prevention of and progression of chronic kidney disease.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The perception and knowledge of patients with chronic kidney disease under conservative treatment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The prevention and progression of chronic kidney disease: the work of the nurse with diabetics and hypertensives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional training and exercising the profession: narratives of ex-students of the School of Nursing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The activities of daily living of patients undergoing intermittent peritoneal dialysis with a cycler.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation of the nurses in the process of implanting humanized obstetric practices in the Alexander Fleming School of Midwifery (1998-2004).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The perception of the nurses who qualified in the 1990s regarding their training process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An elderly couple and their long coexistence with their four schizophrenic children.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 2 - Titles of the Brazilian scientific nursing productions, southern region, which used thematic oral history as a method or technique between the years of 2008 and 2012. Florianópolis, 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The person with a mental disorder and family life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The therapeutic itinerary: an oral history of older adults with cancer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The autonomy of gerontological nursing, in Brazil, according to the pioneers (1970-1996).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chart 3 - Titles of the Brazilian scientific nursing production, Northeast region, which used thematic oral history as a method or technique, between the years of 2008 and 2012. Florianópolis, 2013

Therapeutic practices in the informal network, with an emphasis on mental health: carers’ histories.
Male infidelity and domestic violence: the experience of a group of women.
Possibilities and limits for catching up on sleep among nursing workers who work at night.
Coping with AIDS among infected women in Fortaleza, Ceará.
Maria Antoinette Blanchot School and the institutionalization of practical nursing education in Piauí.
Abandoning tuberculosis treatment and the family’s bonds with the health team.
Mental health and nursing, in the family health strategy: how are the nurses working?
Oral history: the experience of doulas in the care for the woman.
Changes in the lives of women with Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome in the light of the disease.
Nurses’ experiences with health management work in the State of Paraíba.
Feelings of guilt attributed by women with AIDS regarding their disease.
The relationship of the health-illness process and the work in mining.

In relation to the scientific journals, it was observed that the largest number of publications occurred in the Text and Context Nursing Journal, the journal of the Postgraduate Program in Nursing of the Federal University of Santa Catarina, followed by the Journal of the Nursing School of the University of São Paulo (University of São Paulo), both of which had five publications. The journal Acta Paulista de Enfermagem, the official organ for scientific publications of the Paulista School of Nursing of the Federal University of São Paulo, and the UERJ Nursing Journal (Federal University of Rio de Janeiro), a publication of the UERJ’s Faculty of Nursing, had four publications each. In relation to the Brazilian regions where the studies were undertaken, the South-east region and the North-east region stand out, with 15 and 13 works respectively.

Thematic oral history was used in the studies as a method or as a technique, in which the vast majority of the authors used semi-structured interviews for collecting the data. The method of content analysis was most used for analyzing the data. In six articles, in addition to the interviews, written documental sources were also analyzed.

Table 1 shows the areas of nursing studies which most used thematic oral history as a method or technique. Women’s health stands out with seven publications, followed by education in nursing, with five publications, and mental health, with four.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thematic area of the study</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women’s health</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education in nursing</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional identity</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective health</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worker’s health</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult health</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing processes</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older adult’s health</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health management</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolescent health</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>32</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DISCUSSION

The fact that the highest number of studies occurred in the South-east region of Brazil may be related to the appearance and strengthening of oral history in this region of the country. In relation to its appearance, in the 1970s, the Ford Foundation, in conjunction with the Getúlio Vargas Foundation, Rio de Janeiro, attempted – unsuccessfully, due to the absence of a democratic context – to structure an organization with national reach. This effort resulted in the CPDOC/FGV/RJ
program, the pioneer of Brazilian oral history. Regarding its strengthening, in 1992, during the America Roots and Trajectories International Congress (1992), in São Paulo, in the Department of History of the University of São Paulo (USP), the creation of a Brazilian Association of Oral History (ABHO, in Portuguese) was proposed, this being implemented in 1994.

This study’s data evidence that there is a broadening of the use of thematic oral history as a method or technique in nursing in other regions of the country, in this study, in the Northeast region.

The field of action of oral history has spread, not being limited to the domains of historians and other social scientists, taking into account that it is also used by some social groups who are interested in constructing their own versions of their historical happenings.

In relation to the areas found in the studies, the area of women’s health showed a concentration in relation to the infection caused by HIV/AIDS in women and the repercussions in their lives. This was followed by studies addressing the importance of the doula in accompanying childbirth, women who are victims of violence, the history of the implantation of obstetric practices in the context of a midwifery school, and the consequences of urinary incontinence in women’s lives.

Themes presented reinforce, and are in consonance with, Brazilian public policies. The principles of the National Comprehensive Women’s Health Care Policy emphasize that women must be attended in all their specific characteristics and life cycles, and is concerned with the different age ranges and distinct social groups. For this reason, documents produced under the Policy describe the components, among which one finds the guarantee of assistance with childbirth, confronting violence against women, and AIDS.

In relation to AIDS in women, the Ministry of Health has shown concern with the vertical transmission of HIV/AIDS, due to a proportional increase in cases of the disease in heterosexual relationships, principally among the women. This context involves the possibility of an increase in the number of children who are contaminated, if there is no specific care during the prenatal period, childbirth, and the puerperium.

The vulnerability to the adhesion regarding prophylaxis in the case of vertical transmission has caused concern. In this regard, the nurses should encourage dialogic spaces, so as to educate the population regarding HIV/AIDS.

The progressive acceptance of oral history by university historians in recent years is related to the increase in curiosity on the part of historians. In this context, the growing interest in women’s history has performed an important role, whether dealing with work, militancy, routine life, or their identity or affective life.

Regarding the area of education in nursing, studies referent to the history of schools of nursing stand out, as do studies related to the training of the nurse, and to the historical rescue of a rural university center.

History is re-made based on new questions elaborated by the historian, or through the discovery of other sources or documents. The elaboration of the history is directed towards what was expressed. This manifestation, on being treated historically, achieves a chronological or even thematic dimension. History always operates with what is said at a certain time in a certain place. It is from these elements that the historian constructs her narrative.

It is when one seeks to investigate the history of nursing that one perceives how much this cannot be separated from other activities of living and from the world of health, and that to undertake the historical researching of nursing is a growing challenge to be faced.

The use of oral history is perfectly applicable when the object of study is the gaps which time leaves in relation to the experiences undergone by a specific group, as is the case with works which address the surveying of the history of nursing. These are aimed to establish a link between the past and the present, aiming to construct the future.

Regarding the area of mental health, the issues addressed were: mental health and the family, mental health care in the Family Health Strategy, and therapeutic practices in the informal network with an emphasis on mental health. The publications analyzed seem to support the directives of the psychiatric reform, which proposes to reduce psychiatric beds in Brazil, and the inclusion of actions in the primary
Due to their closeness to families and communities, the Primary Care teams are presented as a strategic resource for facing important problems of public health, such as harm to health linked to the abusive use of alcohol and drugs, and various other forms of mental illness\(^{(29)}\).

As a result, the Ministry of Health has been actively encouraging, in its policies for expanding, formulating and evaluating Primary Care, directives which include the service users' subjective dimension, and the most frequent mental health problems\(^{(29)}\).

Oral history can be used to modify the focus of history itself, to throw light on new areas of investigation; it allows a fundamental place to be given back to the people who experienced the history, based on their own words; and it brings up the experiences of those people, whose existence is generally forgotten\(^{(1)}\).

Thus, it is believed that the relevancy of the studies in these areas describes the encouragement given to this theme, and the need to understand, through the history of the individual and the collective, the implantation, development and evaluation of public policies.

**FINAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The studies published in recent years depict the importance of oral history in explaining a phenomenon. Thus, this study involves reflection on these studies' importance for the construction of knowledge, in their use of thematic oral history, both as a method and as a technique for research, able to understand the construction of processes of care, training, of life and the community assisted by the nurses.

In the articles analyzed, there was a predominance of issues referring to women's health (guaranteeing assistance with childbirth, AIDS and violence), education in nursing (training of nurses and histories of schools of nursing) and mental health (families’ experiences with mental illness and therapeutic practices), demonstrating that these areas depict an affinity with the method or the technique of thematic oral history, which is a means for searching for explanations of the experiences undergone in different situations, which are therefore relevant to the above-mentioned areas.

It was observed in this study that the fields of research of thematic oral history in nursing, whether it is used as a method or as a technique, are mostly collective spaces, and the research subjects, often, are vulnerable in relation to some difficult health and/or life condition. These works, therefore, become relevant, as landmarks for the explaining of phenomena in order to improve nursing care, and to allow the subjects to feel themselves to be integrated in the historical process, and capable of reflecting on and transforming the reality, looking to themselves, and, consequently, becoming active subjects in the elucidation of these phenomena. It is an important scientific path to give “a time and a voice” to the people who continuously construct knowledge and doing in the health contexts in the area of nursing.

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