

QUALITY OF LIFE OF PEOPLE WITH CHRONIC WOUNDS AND NURSE'S PERFORMANCE

QUALIDADE DE VIDA DE PESSOAS COM FERIDAS CRÔNICAS E A ATUAÇÃO DO ENFERMEIRO

CUALIDAD DE VIDA DE PERSONAS CON HERIDAS CRÓNICAS Y LA ACTUACIÓN DEL ENFERMERO

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ABSTRACT

Objective: to describe the scientific production in nursing about the quality of life of patients with chronic wounds in Brazil. **Methods:** this is a descriptive study with a quantitative approach, a bibliometric review type study. The data collection was carried out between December 2020 and March 2021 through consultation on Virtual Health Library (VHL). The terms used, simultaneously, for the search were "Chronic Wounds" and "Quality of Life". **Results:** seven articles presented the inclusion criteria and were elected to compose the sample. This study pointed out some gaps in nursing production about the chosen theme, related to the number of studies, methodological approach and sample size. One verified difficulty was the diversity of instruments used to assess the quality of life. Pain was related to low quality of life. **Conclusion:** that therapeutic nursing plan must consider the integrality of the patient.

Descriptors: Quality of Life; Wounds; Nursing Care.

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RESUMO

Objetivo: descrever as características da produção científica em enfermagem acerca da qualidade de vida dos indivíduos com feridas crônicas no Brasil. **Método:** trata-se de um estudo descritivo com abordagem quantitativa, do tipo revisão bibliométrica. A coleta de dados foi realizada entre dezembro de 2020 e março de 2021, por meio de consulta na Biblioteca Virtual em Saúde (BVS). Os termos utilizados, de forma simultânea, para a busca foram “Feridas Crônicas” e “Qualidade de Vida”. **Resultados:** sete artigos apresentavam os critérios de inclusão e foram eleitos para compor a amostra. Esse estudo apontou algumas lacunas na produção de enfermagem acerca da temática escolhida, relacionadas à quantidade de estudos, abordagem metodológica e tamanho da amostra. Uma dificuldade verificada foi a diversidade de instrumentos utilizados para aferir a qualidade de vida. A dor esteve relacionada à baixa qualidade de vida. **Conclusão:** o plano terapêutico de enfermagem deve considerar a integralidade do paciente.

Descritores: Qualidade de vida; Feridas; Assistência de enfermagem.

RESUMEN

Objetivo: describir la producción científica en enfermería sobre la calidad de vida de los pacientes con heridas crónicas en Brasil. **Métodos:** el estudio es abarcado de forma descriptiva con abordaje cuantitativa, del tipo de revisión bibliográfica. La recopilación de datos fue realizada desde diciembre de 2020 hasta el mes de marzo del año de 2021, por medio de una investigación en la Biblioteca Virtual em Saúde (BVS). Los términos utilizados, simultáneamente, para la búsqueda fueron “Heridas crónicas” y “Cualidad de vida”. **Resultados:** siete artículos presentaban los criterios para inclusión y fueron elegidos con intuito de componer ese proyecto. Ese estudio apuntó algunos huecos en la producción de la enfermaría relacionada a la temática elegida, relacionadas a cantidad de estudios, abordaje metodológica y tamaño de la amuestra. Una dificultad verificada fue la diversidad de instrumentos utilizados para basar los parámetros de cualidad de vida. El dolor estuvo relacionado a la baja y poca calidad de vida. **Conclusión:** el plan terapêutico de la enfermaría debe considerar la integralidad del paciente.

Descriptor: Cualidad de vida; Heridas; Asistencia de la enfermaría.

INTRODUCTION

Chronic Wounds (CF) consist of lesions that do not heal spontaneously or that become recurrent, even after treatment for more than three weeks.¹ They are produced by internal factors, such as vascular and metabolic diseases, infections and neoplasms, and by external factors, trauma and pressure ulcers that result from long stays on bony prominences.^{2,3}

It is estimated that the prevalence of CF in the population is high, but in the

review carried out, we did not find studies in Brazil that accurately presented the overall prevalence of CF in the country. The studies are specific and carried out in some populations. A study carried out in a large hospital found a prevalence of 18.6% of CF among hospitalized patients.⁴ Another survey carried out in primary care, among the elderly population, found a prevalence of 11.8%.²

Despite the prevalence of CF in the Brazilian population varying between

published studies, in one aspect the studies are unanimous, CF has an important impact on public health.^{2,4,5} and for the affected individual.^{2,3}

CF can directly affect the quality of life, causing pain, loss of mobility and withdrawal from activities, generating disability retirement⁵, in addition to impairing social and family relationships.⁶

According to the concept of the World Health Organization (WHO), quality of life reflects the perception of individuals that their needs are being met or, even, that they are being denied opportunities to achieve happiness and self-realization, regardless of their physical health status or social and economic conditions.⁷

In Brazil, there are still few studies on the Quality of Life (QoL) of people with chronic wounds. This fact is worrying, as these studies are able to provide subsidies for the development of strategies that improve the relationship between professional nurses and users, for the preparation of professionals and for a preventive approach.⁶

Considering the importance of individuals with CF perceiving their QoL as good, despite their condition, it is necessary for nursing to delve deeper into this topic and to produce knowledge to

collaborate with strategies to improve the perception of QoL by this population.

Therefore, this study aimed to quantify and describe the characteristics of scientific production in nursing about the quality of life of individuals with chronic wounds in Brazil.

METHOD

Descriptive study with a quantitative approach, of the bibliometric review type, which consists of the quantitative analysis of scientific production on a specific subject.

The principle of bibliometrics is to analyze scientific or technical activity, through the quantitative study of publications, and its main objective is the development of increasingly reliable indicators, which can be defined as the parameters used in the evaluation processes of any activity.⁸

For the development of the study, five stages were followed: formulation of the problem, data collection, data evaluation, analysis and interpretation of data and presentation of results.

Data collection was carried out between December 2020 and March 2021, through consultation in the Virtual Health Library (VHL). The terms used simultaneously for the search were “Chronic Wounds” and “Quality of Life”.

As inclusion criteria, the following were adopted: scientific articles that had as the central axis of the research the assessment of the quality of life in individuals with chronic wounds, which were available in full and free of charge, those published in

Portuguese between 2000 and 2021. Initially the search resulted in 12 articles, after reading them, 7 had the inclusion criteria and were elected to compose the sample,

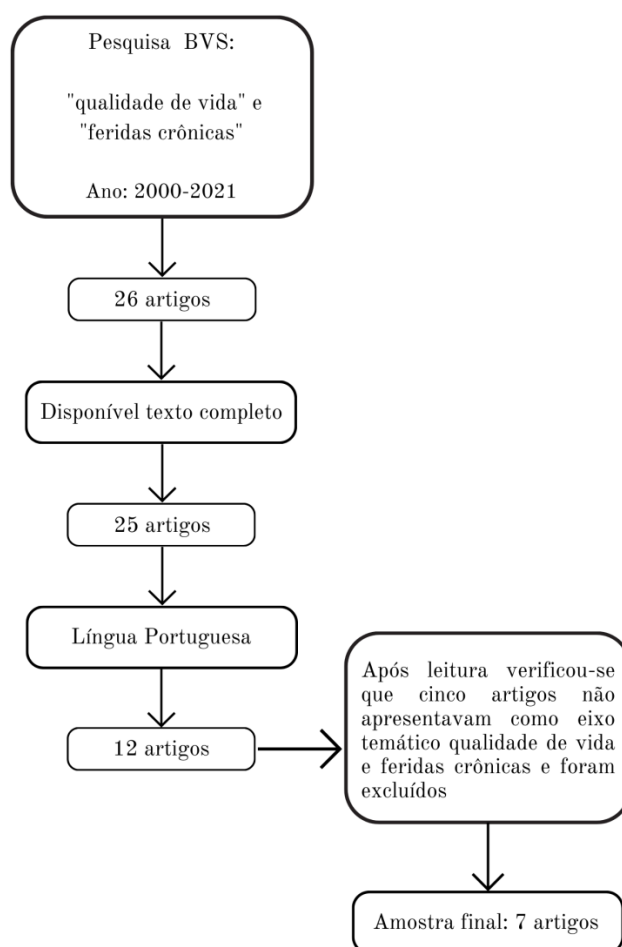


Figure 1- Flowchart of articles identification and selection for the bibliometric review

The information was organized based on the construction of two synoptic tables with data collected by two reviewers at different times.

The first box was completed containing the title of the study, type of study, sample size, region of the country, instrument used, year, and the second box with the title of the study, objective, result and conclusion of the research.

RESULTS

After reading the articles, 07 remained eligible to compose the sample.

From these articles, two tables were constructed with the results. In Table 1 it is possible to observe the main bibliometric data; title, type of study, instrument used, sample size, region of the country and year of publication.

Regarding the type of study, there was a predominance of cross-sectional and quantitative studies (n=05), only one retrospective study, and another with a qualitative approach. Of the instruments used by the studies to assess quality of life, it was found that each study adopted a different instrument.

Table 1. Summary of main bibliometric data

Title	Kind of study	Instrument used	Sample	Country region	Publication year
Impacto das feridas crônicas na qualidade de vida de usuários da Estratégia de Saúde da Família	Quantitative, transversal, descriptive.	WHOQOL-Bref	33	Midwest	2012
Pacientes internados com feridas crônicas: um enfoque na qualidade de vida	Quantitative, transversal, observational.	IQVFP-VF	71	North East	2019
Quality of life assessment in chronic wound patients using the Wound-QoL and FLQA-Wk instruments	Quantitative, transversal.	-FLQA-w -Wound-Qol	100	South	2020
Quality of life in patients with chronic wounds: magnitude of changes and predictive factors	Quantitative, descriptive, secondary, retrospective.	Ferrans & Pauers QoL Index (Wounds version)	27	North Southeast	2017
Qualidade de vida de	Quantitative,	CWIS	176	North East	2019

Qualidade de vida de pacientes hospitalizados com feridas crônicas	de vida de hospitalizados com feridas crônicas	transversal.	Quantitative, transversal, analytical.	FLQA-Wk	30	North East	2018
Qualidade de vida dos portadores de ferida em membros inferiores - úlcera de perna	de vida dos portadores de ferida em membros inferiores - úlcera de perna	transversal.	Quali-quantitative, descriptive.	Own questionnaire	15	South	2008

The sample size ranged from 15 to 176 patients, with most (n=04) of the studies using a sample of up to 33 individuals. Of all the articles analyzed, only 01 had a sample greater than 150 people.

Considering the region of the country in which the research was carried out, it was observed that the region with the highest number of studies was the Northeast region (n=03), followed by the South region (n=02), while the Southeast, North and Midwest regions had one study each.

Regarding the year of publication, the research was concentrated between the

years 2008 and 2020. Although the search began in the year 2000, no study was found between the years 2000 and 2007. There was one publication in the years 2008, 2012, 2017, 2018, 2020 and two publications in the year 2019.

Table 1 presents the summary of the studied articles containing: objective, results and conclusion. It was observed that, in general, all articles had the same objective, which was: to evaluate the quality of life of individuals with chronic wounds. However, the results and conclusions were different between the articles, due to the variety of instruments used to measure QoL.

Chart 1. Summary of the articles studied

Title	Objective	Results	Conclusion
Impacto das feridas crônicas na qualidade de vida de usuários da Estratégia de Saúde da Família	Evaluate the quality of life of patients with chronic wounds in lower limbs enrolled in the ESF of a municipality in Goiás	The domain with the best QL was environment and the one with the worst QL was social relationships	Patients need comprehensive and multidisciplinary care and easy access to health services.

Pacientes internados com feridas crônicas: um enfoque na qualidade de vida	Assess the QoL of patients with CF	The Health and Functioning domain had the lowest score.	The nurse must know the aspects involved in the QoL to guarantee comprehensive care.
Quality of life assessment in chronic wound patients using the Wound-QoL and FLQA-Wk instruments	Evaluate changes in the QoL of patients with CF	The variables gender, age and education were not related to QoL	The quality of life of patients with chronic wounds was considered poor
Quality of life in patients with chronic wounds: magnitude of changes and predictive factors	To assess health-related QoL, its predictors and magnitude of changes in health-related QoL in patients with CF receiving specialized outpatient care	Pain reduction constituted a change factor in total QoL	There was improvement in health-related quality of life after interventions
Qualidade de vida de pessoas com feridas crônicas	Evaluate the QoL of people with CF	The “well-being” QoL domain had a greater negative impact due to the presence of injury.	Clinical factors directly influenced the QoL domains.
Qualidade de vida de pacientes hospitalizados com feridas crônicas	Analyze the QoL of hospitalized patients with chronic wounds	The domain with the greatest interference in the QoL of hospitalized patients was social life and the one with the least interference, psychological well-being.	It is necessary to plan and implement nursing actions to improve patients' QoL.
Qualidade de vida dos portadores de ferida em membros inferiores - úlcera de perna	Understanding the meaning of QoL for individuals with lower limb CF	QoL was associated with three factors: being healthy; have good economic conditions and have the family always present	Health professionals need to know the client as a whole, paying attention to the aspects that involve QoL

Among the main findings and conclusions presented by the studies, we highlight that reducing pain improved the patients' QoL.

In addition to pain, aspects related to the wound such as; healing time, wound drainage and odor, wound appearance,

were also associated with QoL.^{10,11} Another dimension pointed out by some articles^{12,13} refers to social relationships, in these studies, worse QoL was associated with this domain.

DISCUSSION

The absence of longitudinal studies in the studied sample can create a gap in the production of knowledge about this topic, as this type of methodology can better clarify the strength of association between the studied variables.¹⁴ Qualitative analysis also becomes important given the subjectivity of the theme “quality of life”, despite this, only one study chose this approach.¹⁵ Studies with different methodologies^{1-3,5,6} respond to several and varied questions, for this reason they are important and should be encouraged.

With regard to the instruments used to assess quality of life, two issues are of concern, the first issue is that the difficulty of translating and validating instruments into the Portuguese language makes researchers adapt and use various instruments to measure QoL, thus “evaluating this index with non-specific instruments, neither adapted and validated for the Brazilian culture”. There is a need to validate an instrument that can measure the quality of life of patients with chronic wounds, adapted to the Brazilian reality.

Regarding the sample size, some of the analyzed studies^{3,6,13,14} did not explain how they defined the sample size. In quantitative studies, the sample size is essential, as an inadequate sample size can

compromise the final data analysis and interpretation of results.¹⁷

The region of the country that had the highest number of publications was the Northeast region, these data do not corroborate with most bibliometric research in the health area, in which the findings by region expressively highlight the Southeast region of the country.

With regard to the year of publication, when analyzing the results, we can say that despite the small number of publications, the interest in the subject was sustained over the years. Studying the QoL of individuals with CF is important, as it enables changes in care practices and the consolidation of new paradigms of the health-disease process.

An important finding in the studies was the presence of pain as an influencer of worse quality of life. Pain is a symptom that substantially interferes with the individual's routine, reducing it should be one of the objectives of the therapeutic plan.²⁰ The nurse needs to be aware of this symptom, and must adopt scales to assess the intensity of pain, taking measures to reduce it.

Other wound-related factors were also associated with quality of life. Corroborating these findings, a study carried out with 176 people with chronic wounds in outpatient and home follow-up

concluded that the duration of the wound, type of wound, depth, aspect of the exudate, odor and pain was associated with worse QoL.

Patients with CF can suffer in their social relationships, as verified by some studies, as the presence of the lesion can affect work, leisure, family and affective relationships. One article pointed out that patients with CF may exhibit self-isolation behavior.¹³ This is an aspect that cannot be overlooked in the care of this type of patient, nurses need to consider support actions for the patient's social relationships in their therapeutic plan.

The actions developed by nursing in the care of patients with CF must consider the individual's complexity and the most diverse aspects that can interfere with their QoL. A study carried out with 15 patients who performed dressings in Basic Health Units pointed out that for the patients interviewed, QoL was associated with being healthy, having good economic conditions and having the family present.¹⁵ These findings reinforce the various dimensions about QoL. Therefore, the nurse who cares for patients with CF needs to be aware of the various aspects related to the individual's health, and not just the healing of the lesion.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The results showed a lack of studies, in number and diversity of methodological designs, to address the quality of life of individuals with chronic wounds. It was observed that the studies were conducted in very specific populations, and that the measurement of QoL was verified by multiple instruments, making it difficult to compare the studies. It is suggested to deepen the theme, using longitudinal studies of an experimental nature, adopting an instrument validated and adapted to the Brazilian reality and population surveys in the five regions of the country.

Regarding nursing care, we highlight the importance of nurses considering the presence of pain as an important indicator of low quality of life. The therapeutic plan must include specialized care with the lesion, but also need to accommodate the social, emotional, economic relations, that is, the completeness of the patient.

Considering the limitations of the study, we observed those related to the nature of bibliometric research, such as the choice of data source, since only the VHL was used to search for articles, thus affecting the representativeness of the sample.

This study pointed out some gaps in nursing production about the chosen theme, it is expected that it can contribute to new studies that investigate the importance of quality of life for the bearer of chronic wounds.

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