




## CORRELATION BETWEEN CAREGIVERS AND THE ORAL HEALTH OF DEPENDENT ELDERLY: A BIBLIOMETRIC STUDY ON THE PRODUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE

 <https://doi.org/10.56238/levv15n43-008>

Submitted on: 03/11/2024

Publication date: 03/12/2024

**Simone Maria Vasconcelos Amorim<sup>1</sup>, Josineide Francisco Sampaio<sup>2</sup>, Priscila Nunes de Vasconcelos<sup>3</sup> and Ricardo Fontes Macedo<sup>4</sup>**

### ABSTRACT

The Brazilian population has shown accelerated aging, and a large portion of this elderly population is affected by chronic health problems that result in the loss of the ability to

---

<sup>1</sup> Master's student in Family Health Network - ProfSaúde/FIOCRUZ/ABRASCO/FAMED/UFAL. Graduated in Dentistry from the University of Pernambuco and specialist in Family Health Program from the Faculty of Medical Sciences of Campina Grande (FCM). He is currently a dentist at the Family Health Strategy by the Municipal Health Department of Maceió.

Prof. Dr. Josineide Francisco Sampaio (Sampaio, J.F.) - Professor at FAMED/UFAL and Coordinator of the PROFSAÚDE / UFAL Pole Master's Course

LATTES: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/5801732063133840>

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0003-6832-7907>

<sup>2</sup> Prof. and Dr.

Graduated in Social Studies from the Faculty of Teacher Training of Arapiraca, Specialist in Social Sciences, Master in Sociology from the Federal University of Alagoas and PhD in Sciences in the area of Public Health from the National School of Public Health Sérgio Arouca - ENSP/FIOCRUZ. She is currently Associate Professor I, with Exclusive Dedication at the Faculty of Medicine of the Federal University of Alagoas - FAMED/UFAL, Permanent Professor in the Professional Master's Graduate Program in Health Education - MPES/FAMED/UFAL and Permanent Professor and Coordinator in the Professional Master's Program in Family Health Network - ProfSaúde/FIOCRUZ/ABRASCO/FAMED/UFAL.

Professor at FAMED / UFAL and Coordinator of the PROFSAÚDE / UFAL Pole

LATTES: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/5392808108395010>

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4911-0895>

<sup>3</sup> Prof. and Dr.

Nutritionist graduated from the Federal University of Alagoas. Dr. in Public Health Nutrition at the Federal University of Pernambuco. He is currently a professor at the Faculty of Medicine (FAMED/UFAL) in the disciplines of Health Management, Medical Management, Health Education and Communication. Professor of the professional master's degree PROFSAÚDE/FAMED/UFAL. Extension Coordinator of FAMED/UFAL. Coordinator of the Specialization Course in Public Health offered by NUSP/FAMED/UFAL.

Professor at FAMED / UFAL and the PROFSAÚDE Master's Course / UFAL Pole

LATTES: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/7402783508759474>

<sup>4</sup> Prof. and Dr.

Physical Education Bachelor's degree from the Federal University of Sergipe, a Master's degree in Physical Education from the Federal University of Sergipe and a PhD in INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY SCIENCE from the Federal University of Sergipe. He is currently an Adjunct Professor at the Faculty of Medicine of UFAL, Coordinator of the IPSUS Research Group and vice-coordinator of the Human Cognitive Development Research Laboratory (LADEC). He has experience in the area of Management and Innovation in Health and Physical Activity. He is currently an Adjunct Professor, with Exclusive Dedication at the Faculty of Medicine of the Federal University of Alagoas - FAMED/UFAL and Permanent Professor in the Professional Master's Graduate Program in Family Health Network - ProfSaúde/FIOCRUZ/ABRASCO/FAMED/UFAL.

Professor at FAMED / UFAL and the PROFSAÚDE Master's Course / UFAL Pole

LATTES: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/1703474042844293>

ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-8316-630X>



perform basic activities of daily living, including oral health care, and they need a caregiver to assist them in this task. The present bibliometric study aimed to map the production of knowledge about the role played by the caregiver in the oral health of the dependent elderly. For this, the database of the VHL (Virtual Health Library) platform was used, from which 05 publications were selected, which were analyzed descriptively as to the main subjects most pointed out, the institution responsible for the study and the region where the study was carried out, in addition to the year and journal of publication. The results showed that there is a predominance of publications from the southeast and northeast regions of the country. Although oral health was the most frequently mentioned subject, the publications were carried out in journals of diverse interests, indicating a multiprofessional interest in the theme. The few studies found allow us to say that there is a research gap, going against the trend of growing demand pointed out by the demographic transition presented by Brazil, making it necessary to invest in research and dissemination of knowledge on the subject.

**Keywords:** Oral Health. Health of the Elderly. Carer.

## INTRODUCTION

Currently, the world population presents a growing increase in life expectancy and with it, the increase in the population range of elderly individuals. Brazil follows this trend at an accelerated rate, and according to the most recent data from the IBGE (2022), the total estimated population of the country in 2021 was 212.7 million (which represents an increase of around 7.6% compared to that found in 2012), in the same period the number of elderly Brazilians over 60 years old went from 11.3% to 14.7% of the population (going from 22.3 million to 31.2 million in absolute numbers, which means a growth of 39.8%) (IBGE, 2022).

This transition in the demographic profile of the population has as a direct consequence the aging of the population, which in Brazil occurs at an accelerated rate and brings challenges to the health sector, as it results in the emergence of new demands, such as the increase in the incidence of chronic and disabling diseases, which cause limitations in the daily life of the elderly, and is already considered a public health issue (Trad, 2014 and Lima *et al.*, 2022).

The lack of perceived autonomy causes the elderly to generally have poor oral hygiene, resulting in several disorders for the patient's health, not only at the local level but also in systemic repercussions of local and even nutritional diseases, related to the loss of chewing and feeding capacity, resulting in a decrease in the quality of life of the elderly (Barbosa, 2021; Costa, Silva and Silva Filho, 2024).

Therefore, these elderly people need the help of a caregiver to be able to effectively perform basic activities of daily living (ADLs), including oral health (Lima *et al.*, 2022).

When it comes to the quality of life of dependent older adults, one of the great challenges is precisely the provision of quality care (Barbosa *et al.*, 2021; Oliveira *et al.*, 2023), making it necessary to investigate the knowledge of caregivers of the elderly, whether professional or family, in relation to issues involving oral health, in order to better understand their knowledge and difficulties faced in the daily care routine.

One of the ways to obtain information about studies involving this topic is to use data obtained from platforms such as the Virtual Health Library (VHL). The VHL consists of a strategy of technical cooperation in scientific health information in the Latin American and Caribbean region and extendable to other developing regions, promoted and coordinated by the Pan American Health Organization / World Health Organization through the Latin American and Caribbean Center on Health Sciences Information (BIREME/PAHO/WHO) and aims to, through the sharing of information and scientific

evidence, to strengthen, among other things, the decision-making process of planning, education, services and health care (BIREME/PAHO/WHO, 2005).

The analysis of the state of the art of intellectual production on a given subject can be carried out through tools such as Bibliometrics, which uses quantitative data, aiming at the construction of indicators on the number of publications and their impact. Bibliometrics represents, therefore, an important tool for identifying trends and growing knowledge about a given theme, based on, among other things, the evaluation of scientific production, monitoring of areas, identification of main researchers and institutions that produce the most studies on the subject. (Rodrigues *et al.*, 2016).

The present work aims to investigate the production carried out on the topic of oral health correlated to caregivers of the elderly, published in the VHL, from 2019 to 2023.

## **METHOD**

This article is a bibliometric, descriptive study, with the purpose of identifying the studies currently carried out on the subject of oral health of the dependent elderly, with the caregiver of the elderly as the protagonist.

For this, the database available on the VHL digital platform was used, through inclusion and exclusion criteria. As inclusion criteria, we considered publications that used the descriptors Health of the Elderly (or Elderly) associated with the descriptors Oral Health and Caregivers, published in the last 05 years). The exclusion criteria were publications whose study did not present the selected descriptors listed in their main subjects or whose full text was not available.

The search was performed using descriptors and booleans following the following step-by-step: Search for the VHL health descriptor: health of the elderly, which returned in the search on 12/01/2023: 268,835 publications (tw:(health of the elderly) AND (collection:("06-national/BR" OR "05-specialized") OR db:("LILACS" OR "MEDLINE"))) AND (year\_cluster:[2018 TO 2023]). Adding the descriptor and the boolean: elderly health and oral health, returned in the search on 12/01/2023: 2334 publications tw:(elderly health AND oral health) AND (collection:("06- national/BR" OR "05-specialized") OR db:("LILACS" OR "MEDLINE"))) AND (year\_cluster:[2018 TO 2023]). Adding the descriptor and the boolean: elderly health and oral health and caregiver, returned in the search on 12/01/2023: 20 publications tw:(elderly health AND oral health AND caregiver) AND (collection:("06-national/BR" OR "05-specialized") OR db:("LILACS" OR "MEDLINE"))) AND (year\_cluster:[2018 TO 2023]).

Added filter: last 5 years, returned on 12/01/2023: 20 publications (tw:(elderly health AND oral health AND caregiver) AND (collection:("06-national/BR" OR "05-specialized") OR db:("LILACS" OR "MEDLINE"))) AND (year\_cluster:[2018 TO 2023]).

After exclusion, there were 5 articles left for analysis tw:(+id:("biblio-1416936" OR "biblio-1129779" OR "biblio-1413718" OR "biblio-973970" OR "biblio-906116")) AND (collection:("06-national/BR" OR "05-specialized") OR db:("LILACS" OR "MEDLINE"))

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In view of the selected descriptors, 20 publications were identified, however, after applying the exclusion criteria, 15 were eliminated, therefore, the sample was composed of 05 publications, of which 04 articles and 01 master's thesis.

As the main theme of the publications, 100% point to Oral Health (05 publications), followed by Caregivers with 80% (04 publications), the theme Elderly is indicated in 60% (03) while Health of the Elderly appears tied with Quality of Life, both with 40% each (02 publications). Parkinson's Disease, Teaching Materials, Health of the Institutionalized Elderly, Home Care and Long-Term Care Institution for the Elderly appear in 20% of the publications (01 publication) (Table 1).

Table 1 – Main Subject pointed out by the publications in the period from 2018 to 2023

| MAIN SUBJECT                            | NUMBER OF PUBLICATIONS |
|---|------------------------|
| ORAL HEALTH                             | 05                     |
| CARERS                                  | 04                     |
|   |                        |
| OLD                                     | 03                     |
| QUALITY OF LIFE                         | 02                     |
| HEALTH OF THE ELDERLY                   | 02                     |
| PARKINSON'S DISEASE                     | 01                     |
| TEACHING MATERIALS                      | 01                     |
| HEALTH OF THE INSTITUTIONALIZED ELDERLY | 01                     |
| HOME CARE                               | 01                     |
| LONG-TERM CARE INSTITUTION FOR SENIORS  | 01                     |
| TOTAL                                   | 21                     |

Source: The author

The fact that Oral Health appears as the main theme of the analyzed publications draws attention, given that only 01 appears in a Database directed to the specific sector of Dentistry, on the other hand, publications were also found in databases intended for nursing and psychology (Table 2).

Table 2 - Database of publications between 2018 and 2023

| DATABASE                    | NUMBER OF PUBLICATIONS |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| LILACS                      | 05                     |
| BDEFN – NURSING             | 02                     |
| BBO – ODONTOLOGY            | 01                     |
| INDEX PSYCHOLOGY – JOURNALS | 01                     |
| TOTAL                       | 09                     |

Source: The author

The analyzed publications are available in LILACS databases, 1 focused on nursing, 1 for dentistry and 1 for psychology. Such findings would be justified by the importance of the oral health theme not only from the dental aspect, but also its implications for systemic health and correlation with quality of life, directly reflecting on the health of the elderly, thus arousing interest in different areas of health (Table 2).

As for the year of publication, we have 40% published in 2018 (02 publications), 40% in 2020 (02 publications) and 20% in 2021 (01). These data are noteworthy because, despite the accelerated aging of the Brazilian population (according to IBGE data, the elderly population in Brazil rose to 15.1% in 2022) and the consequent significant increase in the percentage of dependent elderly people who need care, studies do not seem to follow this trend (table 3).

Table 3 – Distribution of publications according to year between 2018 and 2023

| YEAR OF PUBLICATION |    |
|---------------------|----|
| 2018                | 02 |
| 2020                | 02 |
| 2021                | 01 |
| TOTAL               | 05 |

Source: The author

The institutions responsible for the development of the research that originated the publications are distributed in the northeast (NE) with 03 publications (60%) and southeast (SE) of Brazil with 02 publications, both by UNESP/SP (40%). According to the IBGE, the Southeast is the Brazilian region with the highest number of elderly people (17% of the total elderly in Brazil), followed by the South region with 16.5% and the Northeast region with 14%; This age distribution of the population could therefore justify the greater interest of the institutions present in these regions in studying the theme (Table 4).



Table 04 – Distribution of publications by Brazilian Institution/Region

| INSTITUTION | NUMBER OF PUBLICATIONS |
|-------------|------------------------|
| UNESP (SE)  | 02                     |
| UFRN (NE)   | 01                     |
| UFPE (NE)   | 01                     |
| UFPB (NE)   | 01                     |
| TOTAL       | 05                     |

Source: The author

## CONCLUSIONS

The study points out that, although the sociodemographic context points to an accelerated aging process of the Brazilian population, leading to a considerable increase in the number of dependent elderly people who need help to carry out their daily activities, which highlights the role of the caregiver in maintaining the general and oral health of the elderly, there are still few studies dedicated to investigating these caregivers, to know their skills and difficulties in the practice of care and how such factors imply the oral health status of the elderly.

Apart from this, the bibliometric study proved to be an effective tool for analyzing the current research scenario in relation to the theme addressed, revealing patterns and trends of study, or even evidencing a gap, as in the study presented here.



## REFERENCES

1. BARBOSA, E. P., et al. (2021). Práticas de saúde oral em idosos com demência: Revisão sistemática. *Research, Society and Development*, 10(9), e59510918367.
2. BIREME/OPAS/OMS. (2005). Guia BVS. Acesso em: fevereiro de 2010.
3. COSTA, C. M. G., SILVA, M. E. S., & SILVA FILHO, M. A. P. (2024). Influência da saúde bucal na qualidade de vida dos idosos. *Brazilian Journal of Implantology and Health Sciences*, 6(10), 3818-3828. <https://doi.org/10.36557/2674-8169.2024v6n10p3818-3828>
4. IBGE. (2022). Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística. Agência de Notícias – Editoria Estatísticas Sociais. Disponível em: <https://agenciadenoticias.ibge.gov.br/agencia-noticias/2012-agencia-de-noticias/noticias/34438-populacao-cresce-mas-numero-de-pessoas-com-menos-de-30-anos-cai-5-4-de-2012-a-2021>. Acesso em: 06 set. 2023.
5. LIMA, V. S., et al. (2022). Estado cognitivo e funcional de idosos institucionalizados de Maceió, Alagoas, Brasil. *Revista Portal Saúde e Sociedade*, 7(único), e02207002. <https://doi.org/10.28998/rpss.e02207002>. Acesso em: 10 set. 2023.
6. OLIVEIRA, T. S. de, et al. (2021). Saúde bucal de pessoas idosas domiciliadas acompanhadas na Atenção Primária: Estudo transversal. *Revista Brasileira de Geriatria e Gerontologia*, 24(5). <https://doi.org/10.1590/1981-22562021024.220038.pt>. Acesso em: 25 mar. 2023.
7. RODRIGUES, L. A., et al. (2016). A bibliometria como ferramenta de análise da produção intelectual: Uma análise dos hot topics sobre sustentabilidade. *Biblionline*, 12(3), 34-47.
8. TRAD, L. A. B. (Org.). (2014). Família contemporânea e saúde: significados, práticas e políticas públicas. Rio de Janeiro: Editora Fiocruz.