

## Quality of Life: from general bibliometrics to the intersection of Person with disability

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**Abstract:** Quality of life involves conditions beyond health they also aggregate respect and dignity. In a knowledge society this condition includes accessibility and also public policies that provide inclusion. In this sense, the purpose of this article is to identify the intersection between the concept of quality of life and person with disabilities. For such, the methodology used in this research was systematic literature search. As a result of the intersection between quality of life and the person with disabilities is attached accessibility conditions, respect and inclusion within society. It can also be noted that this intersection branches in the area of health professionals, social sciences, psychology, engineering, nursing, biochemistry, genetics, arts and human.

**Keywords:** *Quality of life, person with disability.*

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### I. INTRODUCTION

In the knowledge society, quality of life is studied under two optics one related to a more general conceptualization and another linked to the health area. The first idea is wider, influenced by sociologists. Where quality of life (QOL) is understood as the individual's perception about their position in life, in the context of culture and value systems in which they live, and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns (WHOQOL, 1995, p. 1405). This concept is used by the World Health Organization (WHO). The concept connected with health and quality of life, in many cases are used as synonyms, they have a relationship among themselves, but each of them has their own specificity. BUSS (2000), specifies that health is important to the quality of life of individuals, but there are other components of everyday life in society that influence the quality of life of human beings. In the case of people with disabilities these concepts are linked to accessibility, respect and public policies that promote their inclusion in our society.

The concept of quality of life and person with disabilities differs due to the deficiency of each person, whether physical, visual, hearing and intellectual, according to decree 3298/99. However, it is common for all disabled people that quality of life is tied to inclusion, respect, values, the accessibility and the importance of being a participant and be politically and socially inserted within the context in which they live. Based on this contextualization, the purpose in this article is to identify the intersection between the concept of quality of life and person with disabilities. To do so, the article is planned in five sections. Introduction being the first. Search procedures the second. In the third section, is shown in details the bibliometric search result based on the scenario of scientific publications in this area. In the fourth section, final considerations. Finally, in the fifth section, the list of references used to build this article.

### II. METHODOLOGICAL PATH

To meet the problems of research proposed in this study, a methodology classified as exploratory-descriptive was used. This methodology aims to outline the topic and increase researchers' familiarity with the fact, in addition to clarify the concepts inherent to the topic under study (MARCONI; LAKATOS, 2010). As literature research method, we used the systematic search in an online database, followed by a bibliometric analysis of the results. Bibliometrics is a methodology derived from information science that uses mathematical and statistical methods to map documents and publishing standards from bibliographic records stored in databases (FEATHER; STURGES, 2003; SANTOS; KOBASCHI, 2009). Thus, bibliometric methodology

allows for the mentioned authors relevant counts as: production by region; timeline of publications; research by area of knowledge; literature count related to the quote from the study; impact factor of a scientific publication. These counts allow to view mathematical and statistical data that corroborate to the systematization of a search result and minimizing the occurrence of intersections when looking at a particular subject.

### III. DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

For the bibliometric analysis, the study was prepared in three distinct steps: planning, collecting and result. These steps have occurred synchronously to answer the central question of this research: what are the intersections between quality of life and person with disabilities?

**Planning** began in August of 2016, when the research was carried out. In the scope of planning, the database Scopus (<<http://www.scopus.com>>) was stipulated as relevant to the field of research due to its relevance in the academic world, its interdisciplinary character and also for being one of the largest bases of abstracts and bibliographic references of scientific literature reviewed by peers.

Considering the research problematic, the search terms were delineated in the planning phase, namely: "quality of life" and "people with disabilities". As a basic principle for the search, we opted for the use of the terms in the fields "title", "abstract" and "keyword", without temporal restriction, language or anything that can limit the result.

### IV. PROCEDURES FOR DATA ANALYSIS

Based on the research planning, **data collection** has recovered a total of 472 indexed works, with the first record dating back to 1982 and the latest in 2016.

The analysis of the **results** showed that they were written by 146 authors, linked to 161 institutions, from 53 different countries. 40 keywords were used to identify and index the publications, which are distributed in 24 areas of knowledge and 10 types of publication. Table 1 presents the results of data collection in a general bibliometric analysis of results obtained in the Scopus database.

Data base	Scopus
Search terms	"quality of life" and "people with disabilities".
Search fields	"title", "abstract", "keyword"
Total of recovered works	472
Authors	146
Institutions	161
Countries	53
Keywords:	40
Areas of knowledge	24
Publication types	10

Table 1 – General bibliometric data obtained in the Scopus database  
Source: Prepared by the authors (2016).

472 scientific papers make up the sample to a general bibliometric analysis of publications in the area of quality of life and person with disabilities, without specific limitations, which allows to compose the theme's state of the art from the consulted database. For assessing the results in a more thorough way in the bibliometric analysis, the result was exported to a bibliographic management software called EndNoteWeb (Web-based software that helps the researcher during the process of writing their research.). Thus, relevant information was ranked according to: time distribution; main authors, institutions and countries; publication type in the area; main keywords and most referenced works.

### V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

At first, the time distribution of work was analysed, which made it possible to identify that the first publication on the subject is dated from 1982 with only one work in that year. There were no publications in the years of 1983, 1986, 1989, 1990. There was only one publication in the years of 1984, 1986, 1988 and 1991. There were two publications in the years of 1984 and 1996. Four articles were published in 1992. In 1992 six articles were published. Five articles were published in 1994 and 1995, and seven were published in 1998 and 2001. Nine articles were registered in 1997 and 2003. In 1999 and 2002 ten articles were published. Fourteen articles were published in 1992. In 2003 there was a small drop with nine articles published. In 2004 there was a slight increase with sixteen works, in 2005 the rhythm of publications continued growing with 21 works, the

same thing happened in 2007 and 2008, with twenty-seven registered works. In 2006, there was a drop with eighteen publications. In 2009 another increase with twenty-four works. Thirty-six publications in 2010. Another drop in 2011 with nineteen publications. An increase in 2011 with fifty-three articles published. In 2013 there was little decline in the frequency of publications in relation to the previous year, with thirty-six articles, followed by a drop in the year 2014 with thirty-three articles. In 2015, there was again an increase with forty-seven publications. So far in 2016 twenty-one works have been published. For best viewing of the frequency of publications, chart 1 was elaborated.

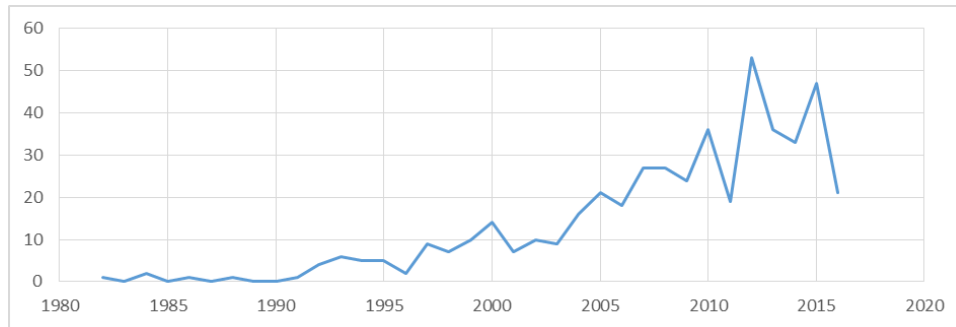


Chart 1 - Distribution of works per year  
Source: Prepared by the authors (2016).

A pioneer article was identified, published in 1982, since 1981 was declared by the United Nations the international year of the disabled person. The purpose of this meeting was to provide discussions on policy and actions that emphasized political publication and equal opportunities for people with disabilities. The article was titled "The international year of disabled persons: *A physically handicapped person's retrospective and outlook*" writing by Blaesig, W. In the article is discussed issues linked to people with disabilities, explaining that problems of people with disabilities are so complex that only a one-time event is not enough to make society aware of them all. The article shows that it is important to bring awareness to society in order to achieve what would improve the situation of persons with disabilities. Based on chart 1, which illustrates the frequency of publications on the topic under study in this article, one can realize that research in the area is relevant and that, in general, discussions related to person with disability and quality of life are still at the beginning.

Of the 472 works filtered on search, one can see a diverse list of authors, institutions and countries that stand out regarding the topic "quality of life and person with disabilities".

The United States stand out as the country that has more research in the area, with about 38% of total publications, that is 183 papers. The second country is Spain with 38 papers published, 7% of the publications, followed by Australia 36 papers, 6% of published works.

Chart 2 shows the distribution of papers by country, considering the minimum of 13 publications in the field.

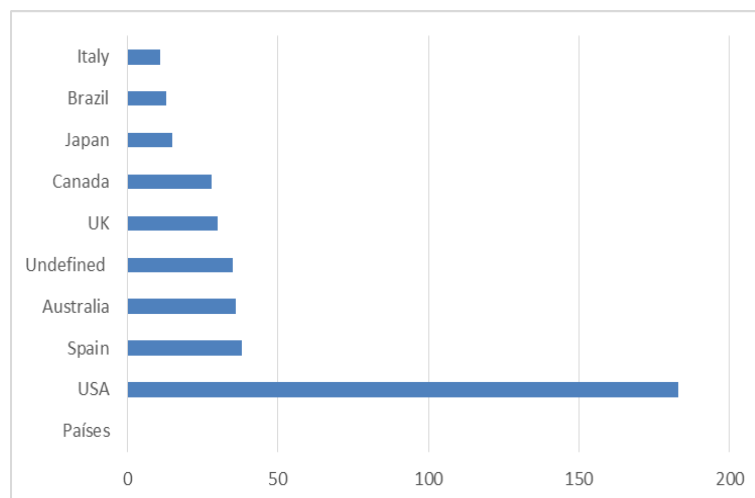


Chart 2 - Distribution of papers per year  
Source: Prepared by the authors (2016).

Brazil showed up with only 13 publications in the area, based on indexing of the database consulted, which infers in representation 3% of the total number of publications. This fact demonstrates that the discussion is still new in the country. Was also identified prominent authors in the area. It was observed that 9 authors can be considered reference in publications on the topic. For this, was taken into account the researchers that have more than 4 indexed publications in the area. Seeking to organize this data, figure 2 was made, with main authors in the area, number of published articles, institutions in which they are affiliated and country.

Author	Number of publications	Affiliation	Country
Andresen, Elena M.	8	Oregon Health and Science University, Portland	USA
Cooper, Rory A.	7	University of Pittsburgh, Department of Rehabilitation Science and Technology	USA
Grindle, Garrett G.	6	University of Pittsburgh, Department of Rehabilitation Science and Technology	USA
Wang, Hongwu	5	University of Pittsburgh, Department of Rehabilitation Science and Technology	USA
Chung, Chengshiu	5	University of Pittsburgh, Department of Rehabilitation Science and Technology	USA
Arango-Lasprilla, Juan Carlos Arlos	4	Hospital Universitario Cruces, Health Research Institute BioCruces	Spain
Cooper, Rory A.	4	University of Pittsburgh, Department of Bioengineering	USA
Wehmeyer, Michael L.	4	University of Kansas Lawrence	USA
Šimšík, Dušan	4	Technical University of Kosice Access Center and Faculty of Mechanical Engineering	Slovakia

Table 2 - Authors with the highest number of publications in the area, with their affiliations and countries  
Source: Prepared by the author (2016).

Relating table 2 with chart 2, we see that the United States is the leading country in number of publications and authors considered reference in the field. Based on the general survey, it was possible to analyze the type of document of researches in the area of quality of life and people with disabilities. The frequency is concentrated in articles published in journals, with 59% of the total number of publications, and conference review, with 19% of publications. For this study, 10 index categories were considered, as shown in chart 3.

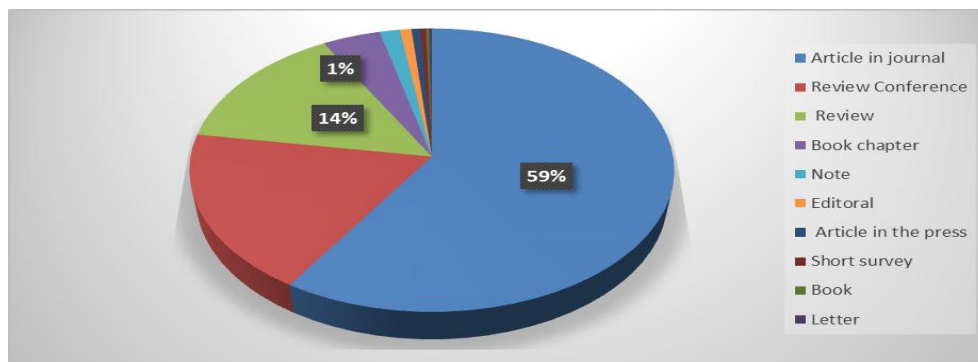


Chart 3 - Distribution of papers by type of publication Source: Prepared by the author (2016).

Among the 10 types of documents, there are: 279 articles in journals, 87 review conferences, 68 reviews, 20 book chapters. The other indexes are considered to be of low importance, as is the case with note and editorial. From the bibliometric analysis, based on the group of papers recovered from the Scopus database, it was possible to identify a total of 40 different keywords. The highlight was the keyword "quality of life", with 287 cases, then "human", mentioned 241 times. Followed by "human beings" (187), "article" (165), "disability" (156), "person with disabilities" (155) and "female" (116). In the analysis of the keywords, the discussion about person with disability and quality of life converges with the topics "human", "assisted technologies", "rehabilitation" and "disability". The debate involves concern with public policies for person with disabilities, bringing up areas such as social sciences and engineering, and includes issues such as rehabilitation, activities of daily life, psychological aspect and healthy aging in the knowledge society.

## VI. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Dealing with quality of life and person with disability implies discussing aspects related to accessibility, rehabilitation, aspects of daily life, respect about the knowledge society that provides subsidies for inclusion of person with disabilities. This action includes an intensive task in knowledge, whose main objective should be the promotion of public policies geared to the person with a disability and economic development that promotes quality of life in a knowledge society. The scientific mapping of production related to the theme "quality of life and person with disabilities", done in the Scopus database, allowed a bibliometric analysis of the theme that depicts the main discussions of contemporaneity and the intersection with areas with no time frame. As result, it was identified that research emerges in the multidisciplinary field intersecting discussions about medicine, psychology, computer science, nursing, biochemistry, genetics and molecular biology, mathematics, among others. Finally, it was detected that discussions about persons with disabilities linked to quality of life require studies, especially in Brazil.

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