Journal of Nursing
Revista de Enfermagem
UFPE On Line
ISSN: 1981-8963

INTEGRATIVE REVIEW ARTICLE

# WOMEN, VIOLENCE, AND NURSING: BIBLIOMETRIC STUDY

## MULHER, VIOLÊNCIA E ENFERMAGEM – ESTUDO BIBLIOMÉTRICO

## MUJER, VIOLENCIA Y ENFERMERÍA: ESTUDIO BIBLIOMÉTRICO

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**ABSTRACT**

***Objective:*** to assess the scientific literature with respect to the types of violence against women and the role of nursing. ***Method:*** bibliometric study with the following research question: What is the role of nursing in the face of the different types of violence perpetrated against women? The search for articles published from 2006 was carried out in LILACS and BDENF databases. The content of the nine studies selected was categorized with respect to the types of violence. ***Results:*** the institutional affiliation of the authors in the southern region, the prevalence of violence without specification, and the absence of the development of concrete actions stood out. ***Conclusion:*** the scientific literature on violence and women lies fundamentally in the social scenario at the expense of the subjects who suffer the perpetration. There is evidence of deficiencies with regard to assistance and care actions in the field of health. ***Descriptors:*** Women's Health; Nursing; Violence Against Women.

**RESUMO**

***Objetivo:*** analisar na literatura científica os tipos de violência contra a mulher e a atuação da enfermagem. ***Método:*** estudo bibliométrico, tendo como questão de pesquisa: Qual é a atuação da enfermagem frente aos diferentes tipos de violência impetradas contra a mulher? A busca de artigos foi realizada nas bases LILACS e BDENF a partir de 2006. O conteúdo dos nove estudos selecionados foi categorizado quanto aos tipos de violência. ***Resultados:*** destaca-se o vínculo institucional dos autores na região sul; predomínio da violência sem especificação; e ausência de desenvolvimento de ações concretas. ***Conclusão:*** a produção científica relativa ao tema violência e mulher localiza-se fundamentalmente no cenário social em detrimento do sujeito que sofre a ação. Reconhecem-se lacunas quanto às ações de atenção e de assistência na área de saúde. ***Descritores:*** Saúde da Mulher; Enfermagem; Violência Contra a Mulher.

**RESUMEN**

***Objetivo:*** analizar en la literatura científica los tipos de violencia contra las mujeres y el papel de la enfermería. ***Método:*** estudio bibliométrico con la siguiente pregunta de investigación: ¿Cuál es la actuación de enfermería frente a los diferentes tipos de violencia perpetrada contra las mujeres? La búsqueda de artículos publicados desde 2006 se realizó en las bases de datos LILACS y BDENF. El contenido de los nueve estudios seleccionados fue categorizado según los tipos de violencia. ***Resultados:*** se destacaron la afiliación institucional de los autores en la región sur, la prevalencia de la violencia sin especificación y la ausencia de desarrollo de acciones concretas. ***Conclusión:*** la literatura científica sobre el tema de la violencia y la mujer se encuentra fundamentalmente en el escenario social a expensas del sujeto que sufre la acción. Se reconocen deficiencias con respecto a las acciones de atención y asistencia en el área de la salud. ***Descriptores:*** Salud de la Mujer; Enfermería; Violencia Contra las Mujeres.

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## INTRODUCTION

The participation of human beings in the various segments of society determines the sexual distinction to which the individuals belong.[1] However, this is not a simple distinction, but rather a universe of inequalities which creates hierarchical patterns that "induce violent relations between the sexes and indicate that the practice of this type of violence is not the result of nature, but rather the process of persons' socialization.[1]

Since the dawn of humanity, the female gender has culturally been in a position of submission. Women are regarded as inferior beings. Their consequent subordination—culturally imposed—can be understood as the root of the so-called gender violence, because it faces resistance from those who want to maintain this subordination and those who try to deconstruct this image. Over the years, men and women that believe in gender equality have tried this deconstruction of roles, still with some resistance. Thus, in order to conduct this study, the term "gender' is regarded as the distinction between cultural attributes allocated to each of the sexes on the basis of the biological dimension of human beings.[2]

At the same time, gender violence is considered a specific pattern of violence grounded on hierarchy and inequality of sexual social places that subordinate the female gender. Such violence is increased and revitalized in direct proportion to the extent to which the male power is threatened.[3] Based on this statement, it can be observed that violence against women has reached highest rates due to the growing condition of female independence, triggering major conflicts between genders.

According to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, China, 1995), the term "violence against women" means "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life."[4]

Violence is regarded as an important public health problem. According to the World Report on Violence and Health, the World Health Organization (WHO) defines it as the use of physical force or power, as a threat or in practice, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community that results in, or may result in, suffering, death, psychological harm, and impaired development or deprivation. According to the nature of the violent acts, violence can be classified into: physical; sexual; psychological; and involving deprivation or neglect.[5] This typology provides useful structure for understanding the types of violence occurring worldwide, because it captures the nature of violent acts.

According to the WHO[6], the nature of violent acts can be:

1. **Physical violence**: also called physical maltreatment or physical abuse which are violent acts perpetrated by means of intentional use of physical force, non-accidental, aiming to hurt, injure, cause pain and suffering or destroy the person, leaving or not evident marks in the body.

2. **Sexual violence**: is any action in which a person, taking advantage of the position of power and making use of physical force, coercion, intimidation or psychological influence, with use or not of weapons or drugs, obliges another person of any sex to have, witness, or participate in any way of sexual interaction or to use sexuality in any way, for profit, revenge, or another intention.

3. **Psychological violence**: is every form of rejection, depreciation, discrimination, contempt, excessive demand, humiliating punishments, and use of the person to meet other's psychological needs. It is any action that endangers or causes damage to self-esteem, identity, or the development of the person. That kind of violence can also be called moral violence, as for example, moral harassment.

4. **Violence involving deprivation or neglect**: is the omission by which the needs and basic care for the physical, emotional, and social development of the person cared/victim are no longer met. Abandonment is an extreme form of neglect.[6]

There are policies to combat violence against women, such as the Law No. 11340 sanctioned on August 7th, 2006, known as Maria da Penha Law *(Lei Maria da Penha)*, and the National Policy for Combating Violence Against Women (PNEVM) of 2011.[7-8]

Maria da Penha Law was so called in honor to one more victim of domestic violence in Brazil. This law guarantees assistance to victims of domestic violence and is applied when women, of any age, suffer violence from relatives or any person close to the family or not, and women who suffer violence for another women.[7]

As classified by the WHO,[6] Maria da Penha Law[8] also presents a classification of types of violence against women, expanding its

perspective by including the patrimonial violence as can be viewed below:

IV – **Patrimonial violence**, understood as any behavior that configures retention, subtraction, partial or total destruction of objects, work instruments, personal documents, goods, values, rights, or economic resources, including those intended to meet needs.

The Women's Police Stations (DEAM) were created in 1985. This was a pioneering experience, contributing to the visibility of the problem of violence against women and allowing the institutionalization of the public policy for prevention, combat, and eradication of violence.[9]

With the creation of the Maria da Penha Law, there has been greater visibility of the DEAMs, contributing to the access of women victims of violence to protection services.[10]

The PNEVN was institutionalized in 2011 from the National Pact for Combating Violence against Women, which was established in 2007 as an initiative of the federal government "with the goal to prevent and tackle all forms of violence against women ".[8]

According to the PNEVM, the confrontation adopted concerns the implementation of broad and articulated policies that attempt to address the complexity of violence against women in all its expressions.[8] Therefore, it is not restricted to the issue of combating, but also concerned with the dimensions of prevention, assistance, and the guarantee of women's rights. The document focuses on: prevention, with educational and cultural actions that interfere in sexist patterns; the confrontation and combat, with punitive actions and Maria da Penha Law enforcement; assistance, with the strengthening of the service and training network of public agents; access and guarantee of rights, with legal compliance of national/international laws; and initiatives for women's empowerment.[8]

In summary, the general goal of the PNEVM is to "confront all forms of violence against women from a gender perspective and an integral view of this phenomenon".[8]

It is understood that nurses, endowed with knowledge about the policies that include this issue, become able to act with autonomy and professional competence in order to intervene and guide women in this situation so as to enlarge the knowledge regarding the services to be sought, thus contributing to a greater confrontation.

The importance of nursing performance in the face of the situation experienced by women who suffer violence led to assess the perspective of nursing regarding the nature of violence and the ways to prevent and address this important public health problem.[5]

Questioning in the light of what is being studied during academic training is part of the learning process and knowledge construction. Research arises in view of the need to exhaust what is being learned, seeking answers to questions, both for those who teach and learn.

The development of the present study is relevant, because violence is considered a social problem that presents higher incidence among women. This way, through this study, it is possible to locate the knowledge already published by nurses and find the types of violence, with a view to a better professional performance and, consequently, the implementation of future interventions in order to contribute to the confrontation and, eventually, the prevention of new cases of violence. Therefore, it will be also possible to promote and ensure women's sexual and reproductive rights.

## OBJECTIVE

- The goal of the present study is to assess scientific publications with respect to the types of violence against women and the role of nursing.

## METHOD

This is a bibliometric study[11] conducted through the following steps:[12]

The first step included the identification of the topic and the research question. The topic under study includes violence against women and the role of nursing, and the research question was: "What is the role of nursing in the face of the different types of violence perpetrated against women?"

The second step considered the criteria for the selection of the sample in the literature, they were: scientific articles indexed in the Virtual Health Library - Nursing database; articles that discussed the topic of violence against women; and articles whose authors were nurses.

The third step consisted in searching and selecting the studies. It was carried out in LILACS and BDENF databases (Figures 1 and 2). This activity was performed between August and September 2013. The selection was held in complete texts available in Brazilian Portuguese; available in complete versions; from August 2006—due to the institutionalization of the Maria da Penha Law—to December 2012.

The following keywords were used

according to the data base DeCS (Health Sciences Descriptors):

- Violence against women – "Any act of gender-based violence (female), whether occurring in public or private life, that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm, including threats, coercion, deprivation of liberty, genital mutilation and others."
- Nursing – "Field of nursing geared toward the promotion, maintenance, and restoration of health."
- Women's health – "Concept that includes women's physical and mental conditions."

After the search and selection of data, the matrix for the organization and analysis of the results was filled out. An assessment matrix was used to carry out the bibliometric study with the purpose of analyzing the results (Figures 4 and 5), The matrix presents the following items: institution of affiliation; year of publication; professional category; title of the journal; academic degree; method used; characteristic of the article; type of violence identified; and nursing actions, performed or proposed.

The last step consisted of the analysis of the results found. This analysis was carried out in order to identify the types of violence against women and the nursing actions according to the scientific literature in the light of the PNEVM.

## • Search and selection of the studies in the databases

| Keywords | Databases VHL Nursing | LILACS | | | | BDENF | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | 165 | Total | Available | Articles | From 2006 | Total | Available | Articles | From 2006 |
| | | 88 | 74 | 67 | 60 | 63 | 45 | 37 | 35 |
| B | 493,906 | 23,900 | 10,756 | 10,274 | 7,518 | 17,035 | 6,044 | 5,483 | 4,525 |
| C | 7,673 | 1,190 | 691 | 645 | 517 | 987 | 507 | 447 | 399 |

**Figure 1.** Number of publications by keywords in LILACS and BDENF databases
A - Violence against women; B – Nursing; C - Women's health

| Keywords | Databases VHL Nursing | LILACS | | | | BDENF | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A + B + C | 29 | Total | Available | Articles | From 2006 | Total | Available | Articles | From 2006 |
| | | 15 | 13 | 10 | 9 | 14 | 13 | 9 | 9 |

**Figure 2.** Number of publications by intersection of keywords in LILACS and BDENF databases
A – Violence against women; B – Nursing; C - Women's health

The following keywords were searched in the Virtual Health Library - Nursing (VHL Nursing): "Violence against women" (A); "Nursing" (B); and "Women's health" (C), with the search criteria "title, abstract, subject".

First, each keyword was searched individually (Figure 1). With respect to the keyword "Violence against women" (A), 165 publications were found. After filtering in the LILACS database as search criteria, 88 publications were found. Of these, the complete versions of 74 articles were available online, 67 were in the format of scientific papers and, of these, 60 were available from 2006. With regard to the BDENF database, 63 publications were found, of which the complete versions of 45 articles were available online, 37 were available in the format of scientific papers, and 35 were available from 2006.

With respect to the keyword "Nursing" (B), 493,906 publications were found, and of these, 23,900 were found in LILACS database. The complete versions of 10,752 articles were available online, 10,274 were in the format of scientific papers and 7,518 were available from 2006. A total of 17,035 publications were found in BDENF database. Of these, a total of 6,044 complete versions were available online and, of these, 5,483 were in the format of scientific papers, and 4,525 articles were available from 2006.

Regarding the keyword "Women's health" (C), 7,673 publications were found in VHL Nursing and 1,190 of these publications were in LILACS database. Of these, the complete versions of 691 articles were available online, with 645 in the format of scientific articles and 517 publications available from 2006. There were 987 publications available in BDENF database. Of these, the complete versions of 507 articles were available online, 447 were in the format of scientific papers, and 399 publications were available from 2006.

Assessing the keywords above mentioned in the VHL Nursing concomitantly, 29 publications were found (Figure 2). After filtering in LILACS database, 15 publications were found. Of these, the complete versions of 13 articles were available online, ten were

available in the format of scientific papers and nine were available from 2006.

A total of 14 publications were found in BDENF database. Of these, the complete versions of 13 articles were available online, of which nine were in the format of scientific papers and nine were available from 2006. After filtering the articles in the databases, there were six articles in the two databases, totaling 12 scientific articles.

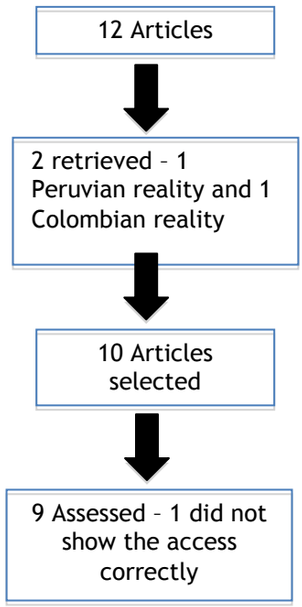


**Figure 3.** Synthesis of methodological process concerning the selection of articles

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### • Analysis matrix

| Institution of affiliation | Year of publication | Professional category | Title of the journal | Academic degree | Method used | Characteristic of the articles |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul; Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul[12] | 2012 | Nurse Nurse | Revista da Escola de Enfermagem da USP | PhD. | Descriptive, qualitative approach | Original article |
| Federal University of Paraíba; Federal University of Ceará,[13] | 2009 | Nurse Nurse | Revista Brasileira de Enfermagem | PhD. PhD. | Descriptive, qualitative approach | Original article |
| Federal University of Rio de Janeiro; Federal University of Rio de Janeiro; Federal University of Rio de Janeiro.[14] | 2012 | Nurse Nurse Nurse | Escola Anna Nery | PhD. Graduated PhD. | Descriptive, qualitative approach | Original article |
| Federal University of Santa Maria; Federal University of Santa Maria; Federal University of Rio de Janeiro; Federal University of Santa Maria.[15] | 2011 | Nurse Nurse Nurse Nurse | ACTA Paulista de Enfermagem | Master's degree PhD. PhD. PhD. | Descriptive, qualitative approach | Original article |
| Federal University of Santa Maria; Federal University of Santa Maria; Federal University of Rio de Janeiro; Federal University of Santa Maria.[16] | 2011 | Nurse Nurse Nurse Nurse | Escola Anna Nery | Master's degree PhD. PhD. PhD. | Descriptive, qualitative approach | Original article |
| Federal University of Santa Maria; Federal University of Santa Maria; Federal University of Rio de Janeiro; Federal University of Santa Maria; Federal University of Santa Maria.[17] | 2011 | Nurse Nurse Nurse Nurse Nurse | Revista de Enfermagem UERJ | Master's degree PhD. PhD. PhD. PhD. | Descriptive, qualitative approach | Original article |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Federal University of Bahia; Federal University of Bahia; Federal University of Vale do São Francisco; Federal University of Vale do São Francisco.[18] | 2009 | Nurse Nurse Nurse Nurse | Revista de Enfermagem UERJ | PhD. PhD. Graduated Graduated | Descriptive, qualitative approach | Original article |
| Federal University of Santa Maria; Federal University of Santa Maria; Federal University of Santa Maria.[19] | 2010 | Nurse Nurse Nurse | Revista Enfermagem UFPE | Master's degree Master's degree PhD. | Descriptive, qualitative approach | Original article |
| Federal University of Santa Maria; Federal University of Santa Maria; Federal University of Santa Maria.[20] | 2010 | Nurse Nurse Nurse | Revista Enfermagem UFPE | Master's degree PhD. PhD. | Descriptive, qualitative approach | Introductory note |

**Figure 4.** Characteristics of authors and the publications selected.

**Year of publication:** there were articles published in 2009 (2), 2010 (3), 2011 (3), and 2012 (2). It was possible to observe a gap in the publications between 2006—the year in which Maria da Penha Law was created—and 2008.

**Title of the journal:** a total of six journals were found: Escola Anna Nery (2), Revista de Enfermagem da UERJ (2), Revista de Enfermagem UFPE (2), ACTA Paulista de Enfermagem (1), Revista Brasileira de Enfermagem (1) e Revista da Escola de Enfermagem da USP (1). There were no articles from the mid-western and northern regions. This fact evidences a greater number of studies published in journals of nursing schools in the south-eastern region.

**Professional categories:** as the research had LILACS and BDENF nursing databases as a criterion for inclusion, most authors were nurses (30) and, in the publication of one article was multiprofessional, being one of the authors a psychologist.

**Academic degree:** three degrees were found considering the year of publication of the articles: PhD. (21), master's degree (6), and graduated (3).

**Institution of affiliation:** authors were considered per article, so the same author could appear more than once, they were: Federal University of Santa Maria (15); Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (5); University of Rio Grande do Sul (2); Federal University of Bahia (2); Federal University of Ceará (1); and Federal University of Paraíba (1). It is observed that the universities with publications were federal and the southern region had the largest number of authors engaged in publications.

**Institutional affiliation**: the Federal University of Vale de São Francisco (2) and the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (1).

**Characteristic of the articles:** nine articles found were characterized as research, and one article as introductory note, observing a preview of a research.

**Method used:** with respect to the type of study, the nine articles were descriptive and, regarding the approach, eight presented qualitative approach and one quantitative approach.

| Type of violence identified | Nursing actions - performed or proposed |
|---|---|
| **- Physical violence** | - Actions proposed |
| **- Marital violence** | - Actions proposed |
| **- Non-specified** | - Actions proposed |
| **- Non-specified** | - Actions proposed |
| **- Non-specified** | - Actions proposed |
| **- Non-specified** | - Actions proposed |
| **- Domestic violence** | - Actions proposed |
| **- Non-specified** | - Actions proposed |
| **- Non-specified** | - Actions proposed |

**Figure 5.** Violence and nursing actions identified in the selected publications.

**Type of violence identified:** the types found in the articles were: physical violence (1); marital violence (1); domestic violence (1); and unspecified violence (6). According to the 7th Edition of Brazilian Annual of Public Safety, there was an increase of almost 20% in

2012 with respect to 2011 in the cases of rape, counting only the data recorded, without counting the cases that were not notified for any reason.

As for the type, the articles presented mainly the violence in the social scenario, without considering the classification of the Maria da Penha Law. With respect to nursing actions, all articles found presented proposals for nursing actions from a research conducted, and not the assessment of the actions performed.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

It was observed that the publications assessed presented few subsidies for nursing teams, because they did not focus on actions developed, even being aware of the importance and gravity of the issue considered a public health problem. The scientific literature on the subject of violence and women lies fundamentally in the social scenario at the expense of the subjects who suffer the perpetration. This perspective allows considering the gaps observed regarding the actions and assistance in the field of health. The professionals' focus of attention was on the subject who suffers the action of violence, regardless of the scenario in which it occurs.

The results encourage differentiated publications and promote reflection about the importance of developing research that can subsidize the nursing professionals in the care and services provided to women who have suffered violence. It is worth mentioning that these investigations with regard to health practices must be contextualized by the PNEVM, especially by the classification of types of violence.

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Submission: 2014/02/12
Accepted: 2014/06/07
Publishing: 2014/08/01

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