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Life histories: Tools of sociopolitical analysis of the realities in Nursing and Health

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In our daily reality and from a scientific perspective, there are plural and polyphonic approaches that escape the traditional methods and, which help us as researchers to approach the knowledge of people and their geopolitical and cultural realities.

Clearly, in this line of reasoning, life histories facilitate the possibility of describing the areas of development and personal growth in the different evolutionary ages. As is well known, they are a tool by which participants are invited to (re) build their experiences, identities and experiences through a process of reflective memory, in which the importance of individualization and Construction through the story.

Historically, in Nursing and Health research, this type of method (or technique, as the case may be) continues to become progressively more relevant, despite having a considerable trajectory since its origin in the Chicago School of the 1920s S of the last century.

If it is based on this premise, it has always been in the interest, particularly of the nursing professional to value and highlight the experiences of being cared for and simultaneously interpret (in the material and conceptual sense) their experiences throughout their process Growth and development.

This position, in itself, highlights the intersubjective character and simultaneously, the importance of life histories in Nursing and Health research, as they make possible the construction of meanings in the project of life, from the chain and baggage ordering Of events and dynamic interactions with the various social institutions in the course of their course vitae.1

In an analogous sense, life histories recount the path of personal and professional life, with the many experiences that in their (counter) times have shaped the itineraries lived. Although they relate the uniqueness of a life, they are capable of simultaneously reflecting the social collectivity of which the person is a part.

In connection with these thoughts, in developing a life story, the individual establishes a coherent connection between the various events and experiences of life that he deems most relevant and / or that have had the greatest impact on his experiences and memories. After starting, the argument and its possibility of recombination, give a certain versatility to the story and, therefore, the life that is being narrated and helps us (s) researchers to represent the current situation and to project Prospectively the future.



Precisely, this self-interpretation of life allows to make it intelligible and to concretize a meaning to the different nuances faced along its trajectories. In connection with that budget, I could say that a life story is not candidly a collection of past memories, but a (re) construction from the present of the identity of the self, according to a future trajectory.

In that exact sense and in a complementary way, life histories make it possible to make explicit and make visible the knowledge in use and consequently, to collect a set of events, experiences, and learning that have configured what the participant is currently - and / Or how it is perceived.

Just remember that telling the story of our life is an exercise in self-interpretation of who we are (or what we believe we are). In short, it is a staging through (self) narration, through which the participant gives meaning to the events he relates, delimiting stages, transitions, continuities or ruptures, inscribed in his personal experience.1

However, it is the researcher's duty to read / interpret in this narrative the processes that participate in the genesis of himself, as well as the social metabolisms in which these paths and paths are interwoven.

Decidedly, the purpose of the use of life histories in Nursing and Health research is linked to the promotion of the participant himself, his training itinerary and his own capacity to continue training, through descriptive process dynamics, (Self) interpretative, reflexive, systematic and critical of the life registers guided by the researcher, which describe specific moments of their existence, while giving them a meaning and intentionality.

Finally, I think that as I have tried to justify in previous succinct reflections, that today we see in the field of research a more integrative and complete model that interprets development and human behavior in a given context and relating it to development Affective and personality variables.

Reflecting through a semi-structured interview about our own life history allows us to understand how the determinants of affective, personal, social, economic, political, social and cultural identity permeate our "I's" and Simultaneously our itineraries of life. Likewise, they allow us to draw a broad socio-collective panorama of which the persons investigated are part.

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1. Medrano C. Las historias de vida: implicaciones educativas. Buenos Aires, Argentina: Alfagrama, 2007.