

Homeopathy in the treatment of Mental and Behavioural Disorders

– A bibliometric analysis of published case reports

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Background

The treatment of mental and behavioral Disorders (MBDs) is a challenge for all health care systems. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) three of the ten leading causes of disability in people between the ages of 15 and 44 are mental disorders, and the other cases are often associated with mental disorders.

Studies suggest that homeopathic treatment is potentially beneficial in the treatment of such diseases. While clinical research on this topic has been conducted in the past, a systematic investigation of case reports has not been done so far.

Aim

We aimed at illuminating the practice of treatment of MBDs in published case reports by means of a bibliometric analysis.

Methods

We searched the journal "Allgemeine Homöopathische Zeitung" for published case reports between 1950 and 2015. Relevant treatment data (Patient data, Diagnoses, Remedy, Potency, Homeopathic aggravation, Unexpected adverse drug reaction) and bibliographical data (Length and quality of article) was extracted for every single case. Moreover, the quality was rated based on the CARE-Guidelines. Data was analyzed over the course of time using univariate statistics.

Results

167 case reports (56.9% female patients, mean age 31.6 ± 23.2) were included in this analysis.

The majority of patients (28.7%) reported on neurotic disorders (F40-49) followed by affective disorders (F30-39: 21.0%) and behavioral and emotional disorders with onset usually occurring in childhood and adolescence (F90-F98; 19.8%) (Figure 2).

Single case descriptions increased both with respect to page size ($p=0.03$; 5.1 pages between 1950 to 1988 to 7.3 pages between 2001 to 2009) (Figure 1) and quality ($p=0.00$; CARE index 8.1 between 1950 to 1988 to 10.5 after 2010) (Figure 3).

No differences in trend however were found with respect to the use of high (83.2% in total) versus low potencies ($p=0.16$) (Figure 4) and with respect of the origin of the remedies ($p=0.70$; herbal: 43.1%, mineral: 38.9%, animal: 9.6% others: 8.4% in total) (Figure 5).

Furthermore homeopathic aggravation was documented in 25.1% and unexpected adverse drug reaction in 12% in total.

Discussion

This bibliometric analysis documents the use of homeopathic therapy in a broad range of indications. Moreover it shows trends of homeopathic practitioners. This collection thus may serve as a starting point for the conduction of larger observational studies and clinical trials of homeopathy in the field of MBDs. It also might be beneficial for designing case reports in the field of problem based learning or in E-Learning.

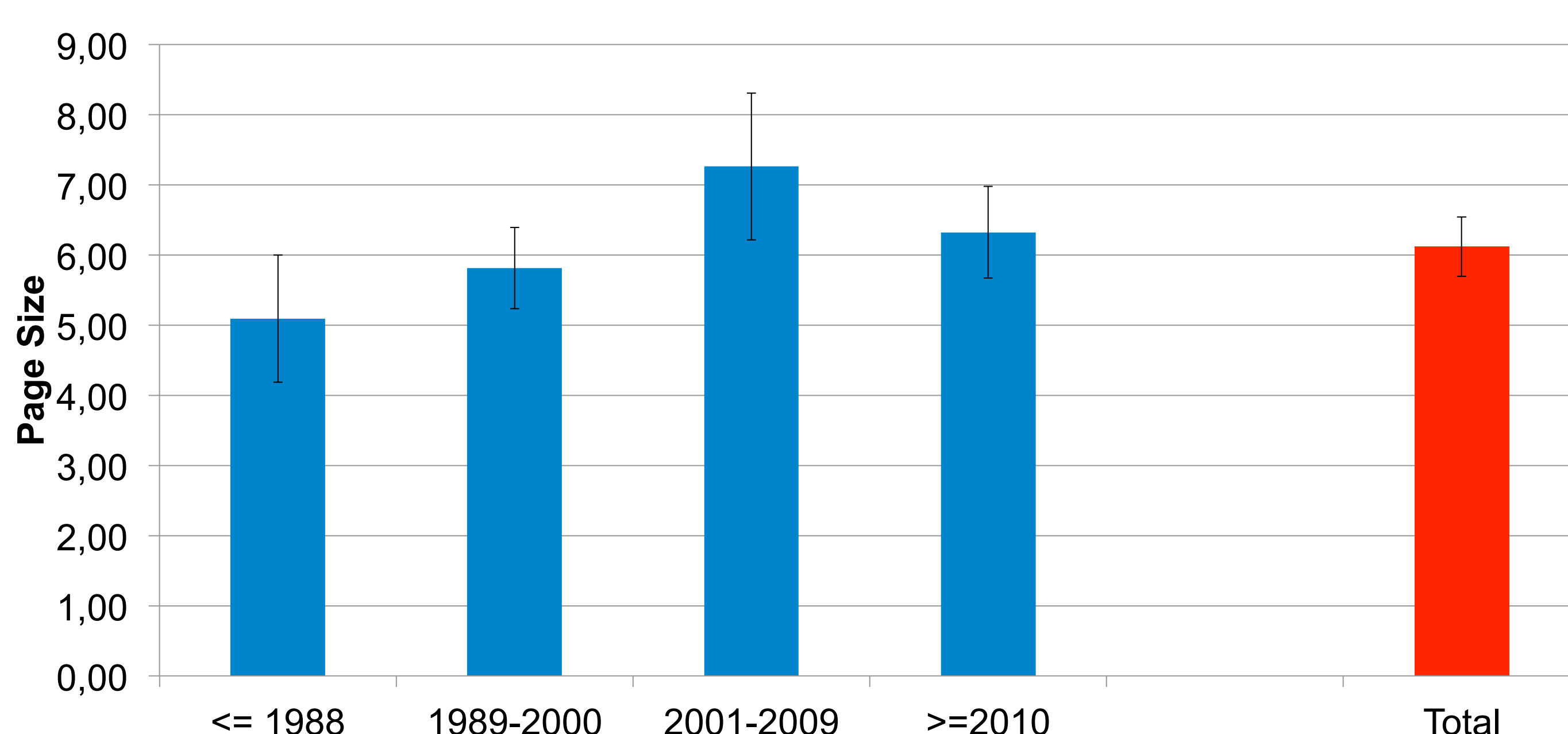


Fig.1: Page size of the single case description (N=167)

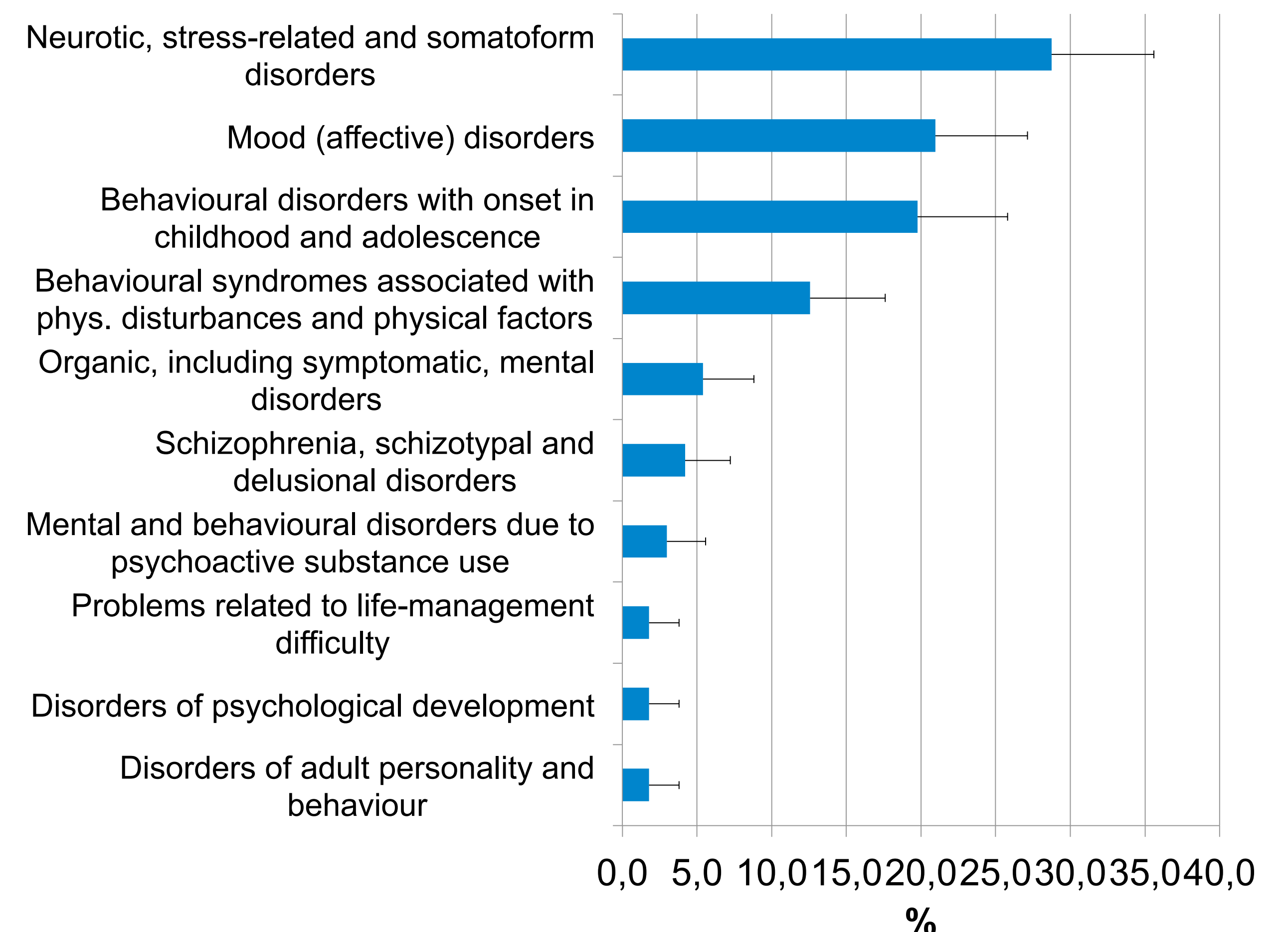


Fig.2: Percentage of diagnoses according to ICD-10 (N=167)

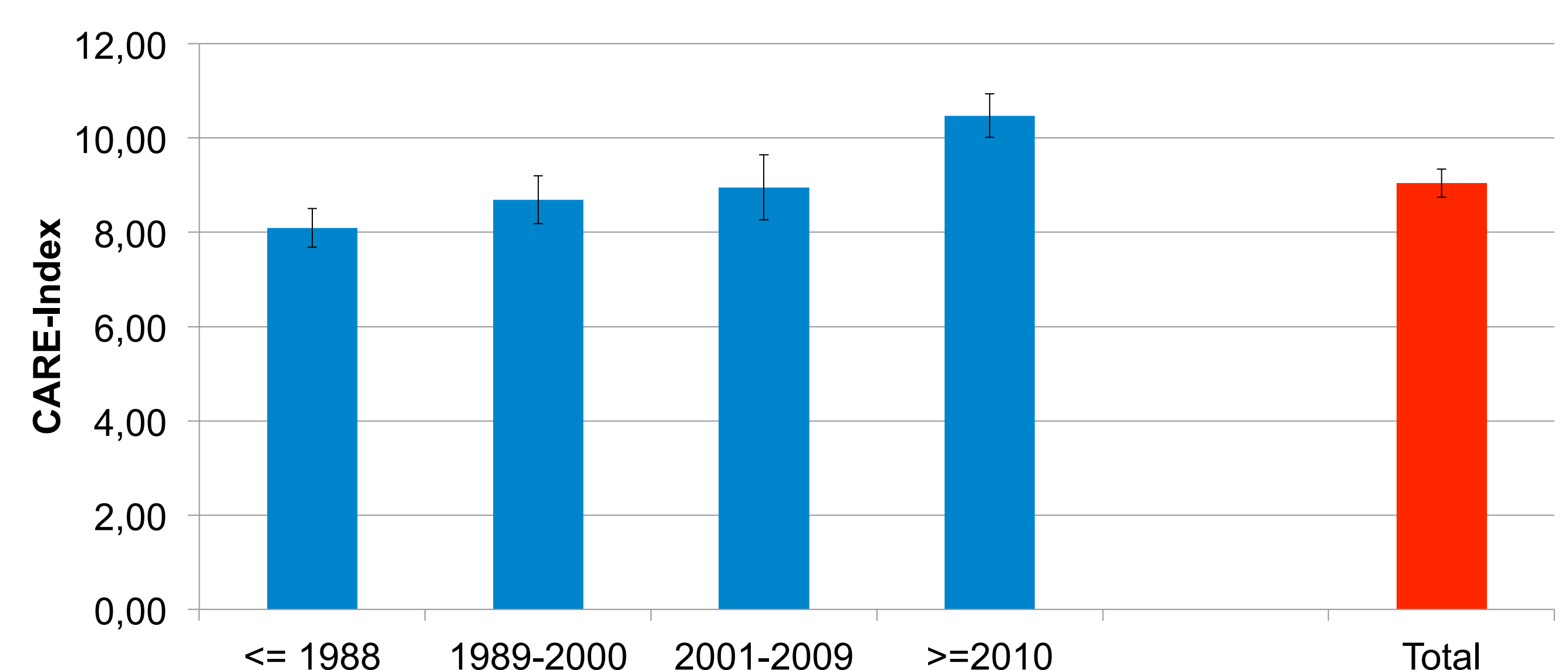


Fig.3: Quality of the single case description according to the CARE-Guidelines (N=167)

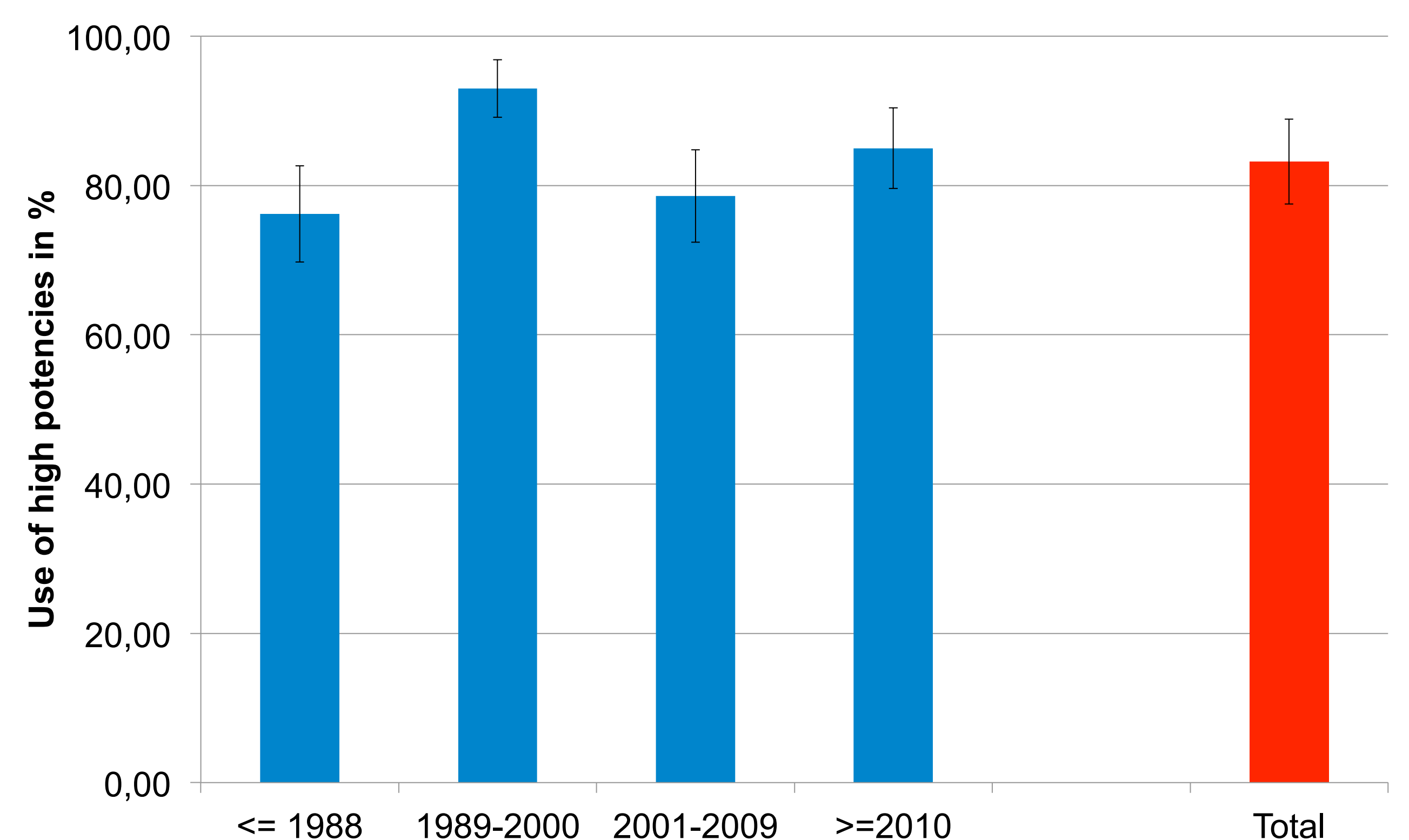


Fig.4: Use of high potencies ($\geq D24$; $\geq C12$; $\geq LM/Q6$) in the course of time (N=167)

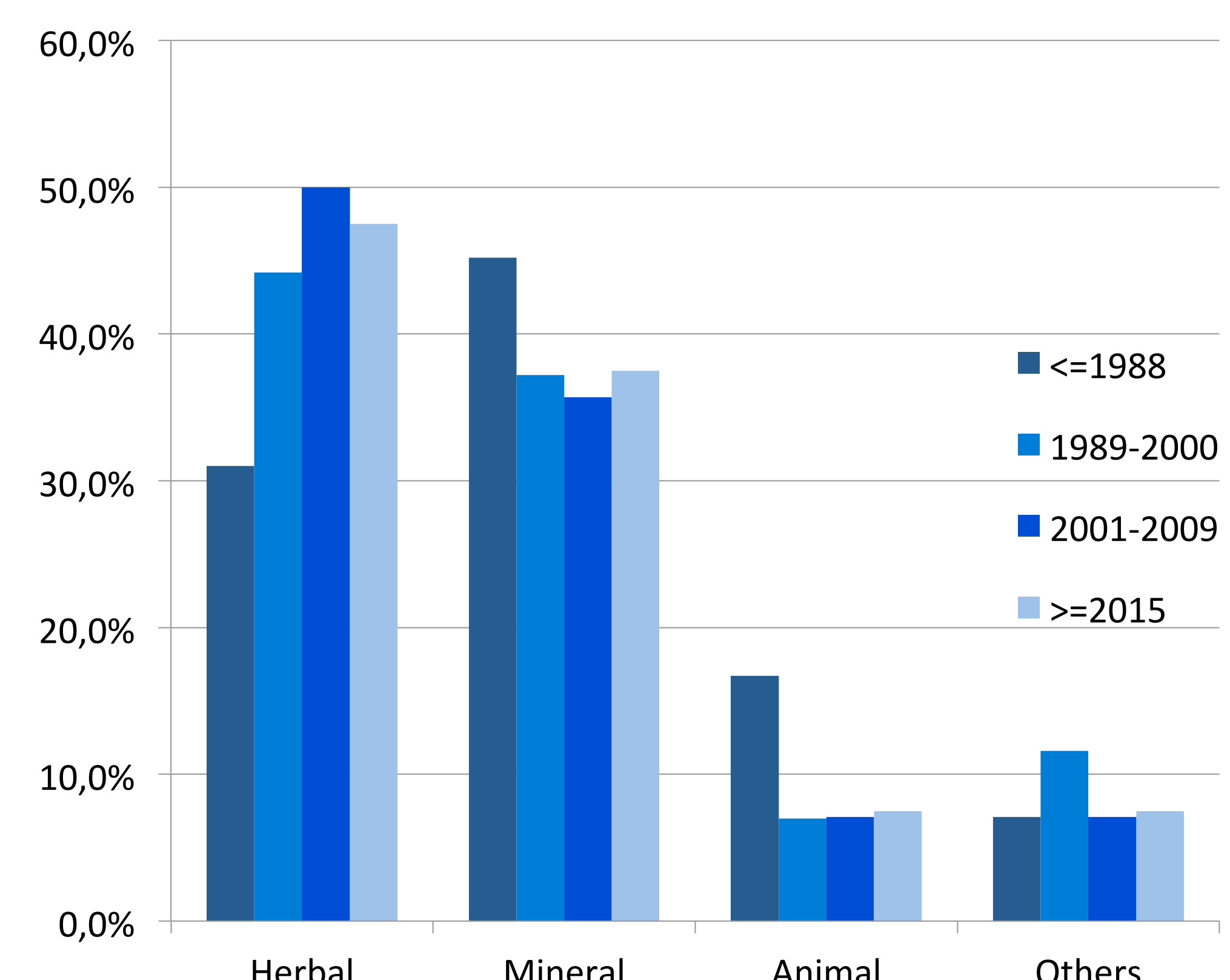


Fig.5: Origin of the applied remedies in the course of time (N=167)

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