

## **A Systematic Literature Review of the Oral History Used in Education Settings**

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**Abstract:** This paper conducted a systematic literature review based on the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) methodology to explore the significance of oral history and potential implications of oral history in education settings. Oral history holds significant potential for enriching language learning experiences by providing authentic, culturally relevant materials. This review synthesised findings from relevant past studies, identified significance in each research article, and gauged the implications of oral history. A total of 12 research articles, published from 2014 to 2024, relevant to the significance and implication of oral history in education were identified from four databases, which were ScienceDirect, ERIC, Taylors & Francis and SCOPUS. The systematic literature review of 12 papers underscores the profound significance and multifaceted implications of oral history in educational settings. The findings consistently reveal that oral history serves as a dynamic and invaluable approach to education, fostering active engagement between students and teachers. This study will be beneficial to educators to fully utilise the use of oral history in education to engage learners' participation, hence creating an effective learning session.

**Keywords:** education, implication, oral history, significance, student engagement

## **INTRODUCTION**

Oral history is used to document and present personal memoirs, filling gaps in written sources and providing a subjective perspective on historical events. It bridges the divide between public and academic history, making individual stories more accessible to a wider audience (Stratford 2019). Oral history is a versatile and successful research tool that helps us comprehend numerous topics by recording human stories and subjective experiences. Although oral histories provide unique perspectives and capture the passion and poetry of unmediated speech, their evidence must be validated and supplemented by other sources (Avis Berman et al., 2023).

Oral history interviews enhance audience comprehension by including both universal and topic-specific knowledge (J. Mlynář et al., 2022).

Social scientists can utilise oral histories as process-generated data, but doing so calls for careful consideration of several issues, including project design, interview techniques, interviewer competence, and ethical and legal considerations (A. Freund et al., 2019). Additionally, oral history in education can provide a greater knowledge of the intricacies and dynamics that affect the teaching profession by shedding light on the historical, political, and societal factors that have molded the educational environment. Contextualization can help guide professional development programmes, curriculum design, policy decisions, and curriculum development, which will ultimately result in more inclusive and responsive educational practices.

The purpose of this study was to identify the significance of oral history in education settings. With the existing literature and empirical evidence, the study also aimed to uncover the potential implications of oral history in education settings. This study aspired to contribute to the broader discourse on educational paradigms. Through this study, a complete understanding of the importance and benefit of oral history and their consequential implication in education settings outcomes was anticipated, offering valuable insights for teachers, researchers, and policymakers.

## **Research Objectives**

The objectives of this research were:

1. To identify the significance of oral history in education settings.
2. To examine the potential implications of oral history in education settings.

## **Research Questions**

The research questions of this study were:

1. What is the significance of oral history in education settings?
2. What are the potential implications of oral history in education settings?

## **BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

This section provided a comprehensive review of the significance of oral history by drawing insights from a range of previous studies. The aim was to explain the conceptual definition of oral history and subsequently to explore the significance and implication of oral history employed in this educational approach. By synthesising the perspectives from past research, this overview sought to clarify the essence of oral history. This section aimed to provide a thorough understanding of the definition, significance and implication of oral history within educational contexts.

### **The definition of oral history**

The recording of people's recollections and life tales orally is known as oral history. Mahani (2018) defines "historical archiving" as people's attempts to record and preserve past social phenomena or events to gain a deeper understanding of past occurrences. Since information is acquired through extended, open-ended, inductive conversations, oral history aims to provide

a comprehensive or holistic knowledge. Data regarding the ways in which prior experiences, attitudes, events, and conditions shaped subsequent ones can be obtained by researchers. A professional researcher and a narrator with direct knowledge of important events are interviewed for oral history, a sort of historical inquiry. The purpose of these interviews is to improve the historical record (Mahani 2018).

Teachers can record their histories, have their voices heard, and have their experiences recognised and understood by participating in oral history research. Researchers can obtain priceless insights into the complexities of teaching, the difficulties faced in the classroom, the effects of educational reforms, and the professional and personal development that teachers experience over the course of their careers by conducting in-depth interviews and recording the oral accounts of teachers. Researchers can further this field, safeguard the preservation of priceless narratives, and foster a greater understanding of the perspectives and experiences of those leading the charge in educational reform teachers themselves by undertaking a thorough literature review of oral history research among educators.

### **The significance of oral history**

Oral history connects public and academic history by collecting public history and converting it into academic and organised ways for preservation in libraries and archives (Dlgash Said Saido et al., 2022). Unlike written records, which can sometimes be limited or biased, oral history captures the voices and perspectives of individuals who may not otherwise have their stories documented. Oral history holds profound significance as a method of preserving and understanding human experiences and narratives across generations. These narratives provide a rich tapestry of personal memories, emotions, and cultural insights that contribute to a deeper understanding of historical events and societal changes.

Oral history is a powerful qualitative research method that engages with and preserves the memories, stories, and knowledge of those still living, enabling validation and valuing of knowledge (Stratford, 2019). In addition to its historical value, oral history fosters empathy and connection among communities. Sharing personal stories through oral history projects can strengthen social bonds, promote intergenerational dialogue, and empower individuals to reclaim and celebrate their cultural heritage. This process of storytelling not only honours the voices of the past but also enriches our collective understanding of human resilience, identity, and shared history.

According to B. Martin et al. (2021) oral history integration in education allows students to engage with and develop the ways of thinking used by oral history practitioners and theorists, emulating experts in the field. Oral history methods are used in social work as a teaching tool, to document experiences and knowledge of social service trailblazers, and to address social problems and practice issues (Natalie D Pope et al., 2023). Oral history plays a crucial role in preserving diverse perspectives, challenging historical narratives, and fostering cultural understanding. By recording and sharing personal stories, oral history contributes to a more inclusive and nuanced interpretation of the past, highlighting the significance of individual experiences in shaping our understanding of history and society.

### **The implication of oral history**

The implications of oral history in education are far-reaching and multifaceted, offering valuable insights and opportunities for enhancing teaching, learning, and educational research. Oral history provides a unique lens through which to examine and understand the complex tapestry of educational experiences, policies, and practices over time. According to Tetiana Viktorivna Tarasova et al. (2022) oral history method helps realise the moral values of previous

generations, recreate historical events from a young person's perspective, and form necessary competencies and skills in education applicants. At its core, oral history in education gives voice to those who have been at the forefront of educational systems such as teachers, administrators, students, and community members. By capturing their first-hand accounts, personal narratives, and lived experiences, oral history creates a rich repository of knowledge that goes beyond traditional textbooks and academic literature.

Söhner et. Al. (2022) observation on the value of oral history in education underscores its multifaceted benefits for both teachers and students. This approach provides educators with a powerful toolkit that encompasses methodological foundations, practical skills, and an understanding of oral history's broader social implications. For teachers, this means not only learning how to conduct and analyse oral histories but also recognizing their potential to enrich curriculum and engage students in meaningful ways.

Similarly, Nietto et. al. (2020) stated that oral history can be used as a research methodology in education, with theoretical-methodological considerations and ethical implications. When students engage with oral history, whether by studying existing accounts or conducting their own interviews, they embark on a transformative learning experience. This method brings historical events and personal narratives to life, making the past more tangible and relatable. Students develop critical thinking skills as they analyse first-hand accounts, compare perspectives, and contextualise information within broader historical frameworks. The process of conducting interviews or engaging with oral histories fosters empathy, as students learn to understand and appreciate diverse experiences and viewpoints. This emotional connection to history can lead to a deeper, more nuanced understanding of past events and their impact on individuals and communities.

In teacher education and professional development, oral history serves as a powerful tool for reflection and learning. Oral history methods can help explore student experiences in higher education and their backgrounds, values, and insights and critical pedagogy (Alya Khan et al., 2020). By studying the experiences of veteran educators or conducting their own oral history projects, new and experienced teachers alike can gain insights into the evolution of teaching practices, classroom management strategies, and educational philosophies. This reflection can inform and improve current teaching methods and help educators navigate the challenges they face in modern classrooms.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The present study employed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 checklist as a framework for conducting a systematic literature review. The papers were analysed and graded using a 27-item checklist and a four-phase flow diagram to address two research topics. The PRISMA approach consists of four different phases: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion.

### **Phase 1: Identification Phase**

This study incorporated five predetermined criteria for the identification and selection of articles. In this systematic literature review, the databases employed to identify appropriate papers for inclusion were ScienceDirect, Taylors & Francis, ERIC, and SCOPUS. The researcher was granted access to four databases that encompass papers pertaining to the domains of social sciences and humanities. Furthermore, it is imperative that these articles are published in the year 2014 to 2024, ten-year duration and are composed in the English language. The study only selected research papers as the fourth criterion, with complete, open access

being the fifth predetermined factor for article selection. Table 1 presents a comprehensive overview of the five criteria that were considered during the process of article identification.

*Table 1: Table shows the inclusion and exclusion criteria in choosing the articles.*

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Database	ScienceDirect, Taylors & Francis, ERIC, and SCOPUS	Other databases
Publication year	2024	Articles before 2014
Language	English	Articles written in other languages than English
Document type	Research articles	Books, book chapters, seminar papers
Access to full text	Open access	Limited or no access

In addition to the five predetermined criteria, the selection of articles was conducted through the utilisation of various search strings and keywords. Every search query was employed throughout all four databases to locate pertinent papers pertaining to the field of oral history.

*Table 2: Table shows the search strings used in all four databases to identify the articles.*

Search strings				
Oral History				
Significance	AND	(oral history)	AND	education
Implication	AND	(oral history)	AND	education

Based on the criteria and the search strings in Table 1 and 2, all articles identified that fit the inclusion and exclusion criteria were chosen and listed, while others were removed and discarded from the list.

## Phase II: Screening Phase

The items listed in Phase I undergo additional screening based on their titles. Each article's title was carefully selected to align with the keywords employed. In addition to the title, the abstract of each article was briefly reviewed and examined to verify that all selected papers met the predetermined criteria for inclusion and exclusion. Articles that did not meet the above criteria were excluded and subsequently removed. Subsequently, the compilation of articles was further refined through the elimination of duplicate entries from each of the four databases.

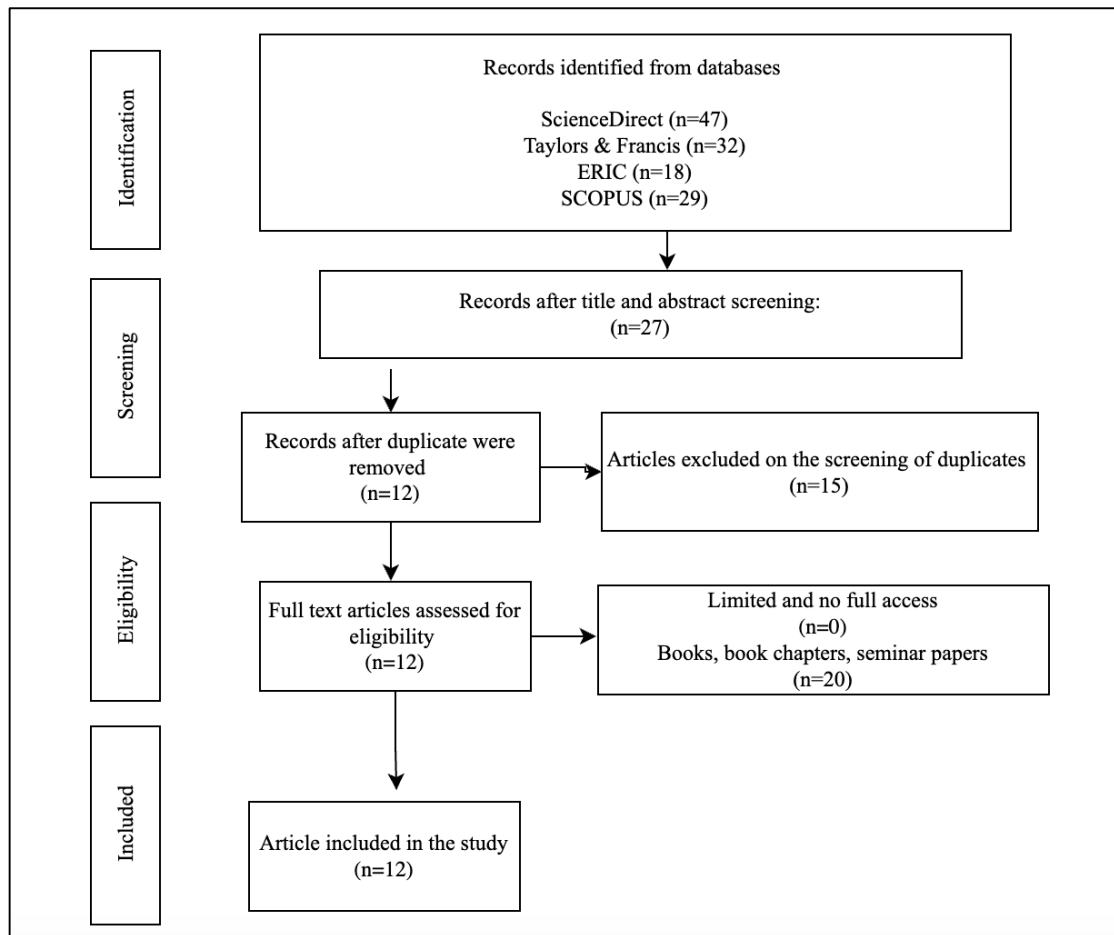
## Phase III: Eligibility Phase

The articles underwent a thorough examination and assessment to determine their suitability for further screening in the third step. Articles that satisfied all the specified inclusion and exclusion criteria were selected for further consideration in the final stage. This stage was of utmost importance in order to ascertain the relevance of all discovered publications in addressing the research questions.

## Phase IV: Exclusion Phase

The selected publications, which met the eligibility requirements, were subsequently chosen for analysis and evaluation in this study, while the remaining articles were excluded. Exclusion criteria encompassed several scholarly sources, including books, book chapters, seminar papers, articles having restricted or nonexistent access to the complete text, and works that were not published within the year 2014 to 2024. The flowchart depicted in Figure 1 illustrates the

process of article identification.



*Figure 1: Figure shows the flowchart of the article screening and selection process.*

The final number of articles selected after the fourth-phase screening process was 12. These articles consisted of research papers that employed qualitative and mixed methodology.

*Table 3: Table shows the number of articles based on the research methodology employed.*

Research methodology	Quantity
Qualitative	5
Quantitative	0
Mixed	7

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

A total of 12 articles have been collected, analysed, and tabulated for the researchers' investigation. Notably, all articles were sourced from the period between 2014 to 2024. This selection strategy was intended to validate the relevance of the current study by aligning it with recent issues and trends. Additionally, it serves as a guide for the researcher in addressing the proposed research questions effectively.

*Table 4: Table shows the details of each research article.*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Title and author(s)</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Research participants</b>
1	Student-Teachers' Experiences in Creating Oral History Texts	Malaysia	Mixed-method	30 participants
2	TESL In-Service Teachers' Experiences When Evaluating an Oral History Workbook	Malaysia	Mixed-Method	109 participants
3	Development of Open Education Resources to Teach Oral History: Perspectives of a Sports Heritage-Engaged Scholarship Initiative in Gauteng, South Africa	South Africa	Qualitative Method	28 participants
4	Viewpoints of Social Studies Teachers about Oral History Method	Turkiye	Qualitative Method	225 Participants
5	Prospective Social Studies Teachers' Evaluations of Their Own Oral History Experiences Related to Turkey's Recent History	Turkiye	Qualitative Method	20 Participants
6	Teacher Candidates' Attitudes to Using Oral History in History Education	Turkiye	Qualitative Methods	50 participants
7	Oral History in Evaluation: A New Partnership to Expand and Enhance Both Fields	USA	Mixed-method	100 participants
8	Student-Teachers' Experiences in Developing Oral History Texts For The Teaching of Reading in A Form Two ESL Classroom	Malaysia	Mixed-method	30 participants
9	Using Graphic Oral History Texts to Operationalize the TEIL Paradigm and Multimodality in the Malaysian English Language Classroom	Malaysia	Mixed-method	30 participants
10	Malaysian English Language Teachers' Willingness, Readiness, Needs and Wants to Develop Graphic Oral History ELT Materials	Malaysia	Mixed-method	50 participants
11	Views of Omani Social Studies Teachers about Using Oral History in the classroom	Oman	Mixed-method	50 participants
12	Participatory Pedagogy: Oral History in the Service-Learning Classroom	USA	Qualitative method	20 participants

Table 4 summarised the origin country of the articles, type of research methodology used by each article and the participants involved in each study. Table 5 on the other hand tabulated the authors of each research article and discussed the significance and implication of oral history.

*Table 5: Table shows the findings of each research article.*

No.	Author(s)	Significance	Relevant implication
1	Azlina et al (2019)	Oral history is highlighted as a crucial element in developing English supplementary materials that are locally relevant and culturally contextualised	Student-teachers not only gain practical experience in material creation but also develop a deeper appreciation for incorporating local cultural contexts into their teaching resources
2	Azlina et al (2019)	Enhancing teachers' understanding of Oral History among local cultures and histories	Incorporating locally relevant content into teaching materials can enhance teachers' and students' engagement and learning outcomes.
3	Isabel S. Schellnack-Kelly & Nampombe P. Saurombe (2022)	Oral history plays a crucial role in preserving indigenous knowledge and safeguarding cultural heritage, particularly in capturing the narratives of "unsung sporting heroes" from marginalised communities in Gauteng.	By using oral histories as educational tools, the project enhances the pedagogical framework, enabling students to engage deeply with historical content and develop critical analytical skills.
4	İlker Dere (2019)	Teachers view oral history as an effective and engaging method that enhances student interest, promotes active participation	Oral history helps students gain a deeper understanding of historical events and social phenomena by providing access to primary sources and first-hand narratives
5	Hülya Çelik (2018)	Engaging in oral history projects equips prospective teachers with innovative pedagogical skills, enabling them to bring diverse and often underrepresented voices into the classroom	By involving diverse narratives, oral history helps broaden the historical perspectives of both teachers and students, ensuring a more inclusive representation of Turkey's recent history
6	Ebru Demircioğlu (2016)	Oral history methods require teacher candidates to actively engage with historical content, moving beyond passive learning to a more interactive and immersive experience	Teacher candidates who have positive attitudes towards oral history are more likely to incorporate these methods into their teaching, thus enriching the educational experience for their students.
7	Shannon R. Sharp, Judith C. P. Lin, Patchareeya P. Kwan, Sarah Mason,	Oral history provides rich, qualitative data that can enhance traditional evaluation methods by	The integration of oral history can enhance the methodological rigour of evaluations by providing multiple data sources and perspectives

*continued*



	Jessica Wilkerson & April Grayson (2024)	adding depth and personal context to the findings.	
8	Dr. Azlina Abdul Aziz, Jeyakumary A/P Narayanasamy, Dr.Maslawati Mohamad, Dr. Melor Md Yunus & Hamidah Abdul Hameed (2019)	Developing oral history texts allows student-teachers to engage with authentic, culturally relevant materials, enhancing the relevance and interest of reading materials for ESL students.	Using oral history texts can increase student engagement and motivation to read, as the texts are more relatable and interesting
9	Said Ahmed Mustafa Ibrahim, Azlina Abdul Aziz, Nur Ehsan Mohd Said & Hanita Hanim Ismail (2022)	Graphic oral history texts bring culturally relevant stories into the classroom, making the content more relatable and engaging for students	This approach encourages teachers to adopt innovative teaching practices that integrate technology and visual media into the curriculum
10	Said Ahmed Mustafa Ibrahim, Azlina Abdul Aziz, Nur Ehsan Mohd Said & Hanita Hanim Ismail (2023)	Incorporating oral history into ELT materials brings local and culturally relevant stories into the classroom, making learning more meaningful for students.	Understanding teachers' willingness, readiness, needs, and wants can inform targeted professional development programs that equip teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to develop and use graphic oral history materials effectively.
11	Ahmed Hamad Al-Rabaani (2015)	Oral history allows teachers to incorporate local and personal stories into the curriculum, making history more relatable and engaging for students	Teachers' use of oral history can lead to increased student interest and engagement in social studies by making history more personal and vivid.
12	Elena Foulis (2018)	Oral history projects in service-learning classrooms promote strong connections between students and their communities by involving community members in the learning process	Students are more likely to be engaged and motivated when learning through oral history projects that connect them with their community and real-world issues

Table 5 shows the various significance and implications of oral history implemented in education settings. The integration of oral history in developing English supplementary materials is significant for several reasons. Firstly, it allows for the inclusion of diverse local cultures and histories, providing students with a richer and more inclusive educational experience. By incorporating stories and experiences from various communities, these materials help students see themselves and their heritage reflected in their studies, fostering a deeper connection to the subject matter (Ebru Demircioğlu 2016).

For teachers, enhancing their understanding of oral history techniques can lead to more effective and engaging teaching methods (Azlina et al 2019). As they become more adept at using oral histories, teachers can create a dynamic classroom environment that captivates students' interest and encourages them to explore topics more deeply. This method shifts the focus from passive learning to active engagement, where students are not merely recipients of information but active participants in the learning process.

The implications of using oral history in the classroom are profound. Students benefit from increased motivation and interest in their studies, as they find personal and relatable connections to the material. Additionally, the skills developed through oral history projects such as interviewing, critical thinking, and storytelling are valuable across various disciplines and in real-world contexts. Overall, the use of oral history in education promotes a more engaging, inclusive, and skill-building learning environment, preparing students for both academic success and active citizenship.

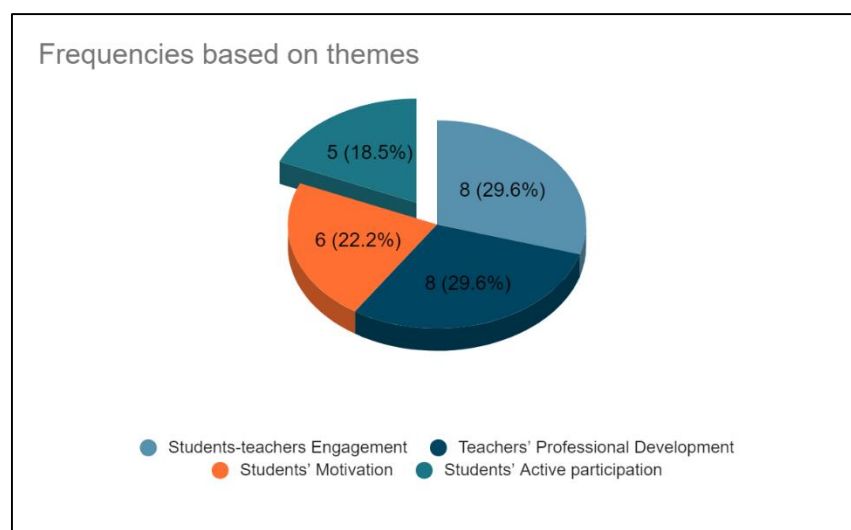
Despite the various types of findings, oral history in education settings demonstrated a positive impact on student-teachers engagement, teachers' professional development, students' motivation and students' active participation.

Table 6: *Table shows the findings of each research article.*

No.	Author(s)	Students-teachers Engagement	Teachers' Professional Development	Students' Motivation	Students' Active participation
1	Azlina et al (2019)	/	/		
2	Azlina et al (2019)	/	/		
3	Isabel S. Schellnack-Kelly & Nampombe P. Saurombe (2022)	/		/	/
4	İlker Dere (2019)	/	/		
5	Hülya Çelik (2018)	/		/	/
6	Ebru Demircioğlu (2016)		/		
7	Shannon R. Sharp, Judith C. P. Lin, Patchareeya P. Kwan, Sarah Mason, Jessica Wilkerson & April Grayson (2024)		/		
8	Azlina Abdul Aziz, Jeyakumary A/P Narayanasam, Maslawati Mohamad,	/		/	/

*continued*

	Melor Md Yunus & Hamidah Abdul Hameed (2019)				
9	Said Ahmed Mustafa Ibrahim, Azlina Abdul Aziz, Nur Ehsan Mohd Said & Hanita Hanim Ismail (2023)	/	/		
10	Said Ahmed Mustafa Ibrahim, Azlina Abdul Aziz, Nur Ehsan Mohd Said & Hanita Hanim Ismail (2023)	/	/	/	
11	Ahmed Hamad Al-Rabaani (2015)	/	/	/	/
12	Elena Foulis (2018)	/		/	/



*Figure 2: Chart shows the frequencies based on themes*

The findings were divided into four main themes such as students-teachers engagement, teachers' professional development, students' motivation and students' active participation. Oral history in educational settings has shown to be a powerful tool with numerous benefits. Generally, students-teachers engagement and teachers' professional development were the most frequently discussed themes among the articles, with a percentage of 29.6% and the frequencies of 8. By integrating personal narratives and firsthand accounts into the curriculum, student-teachers experience increased engagement as they connect more deeply with the

material. This method moves beyond traditional textbook learning, making historical events and concepts more relatable and memorable. For teachers, incorporating oral history into their professional development enhances their instructional techniques, providing them with innovative ways to present content and foster critical thinking among students.

Next, figure 1 shows that students' motivation was the second least discussed theme among the articles, with a percentage of 22.2% and the frequencies of 6. Students themselves show heightened motivation when they are exposed to stories that bring subjects to life, creating a more dynamic and immersive learning environment. Students' participation was the least discussed theme among the articles, with a percentage of 18.5% and the frequencies of 5. Oral history encourages active participation, as students are often required to conduct interviews, engage in discussions, and present their findings. This hands-on approach not only helps in developing their research and communication skills but also promotes a sense of ownership and personal connection to the learning process. Overall, the use of oral history in education enriches the learning experience, making it more engaging, motivating, and participatory for all involved.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The systematic literature review of 12 papers underscores the profound significance and multifaceted implications of oral history in educational settings. The findings consistently reveal that oral history serves as a dynamic and invaluable approach to education, fostering active engagement between students and teachers. This interactive method not only enriches the learning experience but also enhances the retention and understanding of historical content. This engagement cultivates critical thinking, empathy, and a deeper appreciation for diverse perspectives and experiences. Moreover, the implications of incorporating oral history in education extend beyond immediate classroom benefits.

The reviewed studies highlight how oral history can significantly enhance the methodological rigour of educational evaluations. By providing multiple data sources and perspectives, oral history offers a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of historical events and their impact. In conclusion, the integration of oral history in educational settings is not merely a pedagogical tool but a transformative approach that bridges the gap between past and present. It empowers students, enriches the educational process, and enhances the overall quality and depth of historical understanding and evaluation. The implications of this are profound, suggesting that oral history should be considered an essential component of modern education.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Future research seeking to explore a similar area as this study should consider these recommendations and suggestions to result in an improved finding. This study could further be refined by using a larger set of databases to have higher reliability, validity, and results accuracy. Other than using larger databases, the inclusion criteria for the year of publication should be longer, not only in 2014 to 2024. Based on the findings, more empirical research should be conducted on oral history research in education settings.

In addition, educators should receive targeted professional development to effectively utilise oral history as a pedagogical tool. This training should focus on best practices for collecting, preserving, and interpreting oral histories, ensuring that educators are well-equipped to guide students in these processes. Furthermore, the use of technology should be encouraged to modernise oral history projects. Digital tools can facilitate the recording,

editing, and sharing of oral histories, making them more accessible to a broader audience. Future research with new variables such as technological constraints should be done to gain more insights into this area. Lastly, ongoing research should be supported to continuously evaluate and refine the use of oral history in education. By staying informed of best practices and emerging trends, educators can ensure that oral history remains a dynamic and impactful component of the learning experience.

## LIMITATIONS

Despite the success of answering both research questions demonstrated, several limitations were found in this study. This study was limited by the fact that only four databases were explored to search for research articles to be used in this study. Other databases such as Springer, Emerald Insight, and ProQuest could provide a more extensive background to identify relevant literature related to oral history in educational settings. Due to accessibility restrictions, this study was unable to have a larger dataset to find more articles to be reviewed and analysed. The accessibility of the full-text articles is one of the challenges in accessing full-text articles or dissertations, particularly those published in less accessible journals, which may restrict the review's ability to include all relevant studies. Furthermore, this research was also limited by the potential publication bias. Studies that did not demonstrate statistical significance may not be published but may be important to the findings of a systematic literature review.

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