Mapping the Research Landscape on University Students' Mental Health: A Bibliometric Study

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study aimed to analyze the background, current trends, and conceptual framework of mental health research among university students using bibliometric analysis.

Design/methodology/approach: A bibliometric analysis was performed utilizing the Biblioshiny package in R-Studio. This study utilizes bibliometric quantitative methods and conceptual frameworks for knowledge discovery. The screening algorithm recognized all references to "Mental Health," "University Students," and "Academic Performance" in article titles within Scopus, yielding a total of 174 scientific publications and journals published from 1995 to 2024.

Findings: This bibliometric analysis encompassed 174 documents authored by 702 authors across 130 journals published in the Scopus database from 1995 to 2024. There were 647 affiliations among the universities or institutes where the authors were employed. The present body of research on mental health among university students is an expanding field of study. Previous studies have indicated that further study is required to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions, such as setting-based techniques, and to determine risk factors and predictors of mental health among university students (Rahim et al., 2024). Early intervention and prevention can help evaluate these factors by looking at the long-term effects of early support services and the best time for intervention during the university experience. This means examining how well peer support, resilience training, and psychoeducation help to lower both the occurrence and severity of mental health issues. Preventing the deterioration of mental health problems by means of early intervention still proves to be cost-effective (Future Minds, 2025).

Research limitations/implications: The study's exclusive sourcing of data from the Scopus database presents a limitation. It would be significantly beneficial for additional researchers to perform bibliometric analyses of mental health by integrating data from Dimensions, PubMed, WOS, the Cochrane Library, or alternative databases. Additionally, the study would benefit from incorporating author and source impact, Lotka's Law, Bradford's Law, and other bibliometric elements for a more comprehensive descriptive analysis.

Practical implications: This approach will assist researchers in conducting bibliometric analyses across various fields by providing a clear research flow from major online databases, featuring an easy-to-use interface that allows for quick analysis.

Originality/value: By looking closely at previous studies, bibliometric analysis helps researchers identify the most important authors, articles, and institutions in their field, giving a clear and unbiased view of the research landscape for both academics and professionals (Hernández-Torrano et al., 2020; Rahim et al., 2023). A recent bibliometric analysis used similar methods to look at how artificial intelligence and college student mental health are connected, highlighting global publication trends, key contributors, and new research topics from the last

twenty years (Chen et al., 2024). These evaluations not only emphasize the primary themes and significant contributions but also identify underexamined areas and interdisciplinary shortcomings. Thematic maps assist the visualization and classification of study issues, emphasizing dominant patterns, central themes, and emerging regions within the literature. These visual instruments help researchers in comprehending the structure, development, and dynamic growth of the field. Thematic mapping connects related topics and points out important themes, making it easier to choose and focus on new research areas, which increases the chances of making significant contributions to mental health studies.

Keywords: Biblioshiny, Conceptual structure, Mental Health cluster, University Students, Thematic map, Mental Health Bibliometric

INTRODUCTION

Mental health is a condition of psychological well-being that allows individuals to manage life's stressors, recognize their capabilities, engage in effective learning and jobs, and contribute to their community. It possesses intrinsic and instrumental value and is essential to people's well-being (World Health Organization, 2025). At the same time, mental health among university students is best defined as a state of well-being in which students recognize their capabilities, manage the typical pressures of university life, engage effectively, and contribute to their academic and social environments (Claire Wardle, 2024; Hernández-Torrano et al., 2020; World Health Organization, 2025). It can be said that mental health includes emotional, psychological, and social well-being and affects individuals' capacity to manage stress and make educated health decisions (Cleverley et al., 2022; Hyseni Duraku et al., 2023; World Health Organization, 2015, 2022). Declining mental health not only affects a young person's capacity to manage academic duties but also compromises their skill development, social life, financial independence, and personal matters (Antaramian, 2015; Hyseni Duraku et al., 2023; World Health Organization, 2002, 2022).

Researchers from both global and regional viewpoints have undertaken extensive studies on mental health, particularly concerning university students. The Scopus database indicates the beginning of research on mental health among university students since 1995. Prior studies demonstrate that the mental health and well-being of university students have exhibited steady improvement over recent decades, especially since 2010, as evidenced by a bibliometric analysis covering 1975-2020 (Hernández-Torrano et al., 2020; Rahim et al., 2024). Therefore, it can be stated that the subject of mental health has been thoroughly investigated for an extended period and is not an emerging subject in the scientific field.

The primary aim of this research is to analyze Scopus publications related to mental health among university students. The bibliometric analysis intended to ascertain the bibliometric profile of mental health, including its annual scientific output, research trends, and conceptual framework. This evaluation will ascertain the scope of the research undertaken on mental health (Ruslan & Abdul Rasool, 2024).

LITERATURE REVIEW

In 2023, 76% of students in the United States reported experiencing moderate-to-severe psychological distress, with anxiety (36%) and depression (28%) as the predominant diagnoses (Bryant & Welding, 2024). Previous studies indicate that university students' mental health represents a significant public health challenge. World Health Organization (WHO) surveys indicate that three-fourths of mental problems manifest prior to the age of 24 (Kessler et al., 2007). A nationwide mental health survey in Singapore identified a median onset age of 22 years, with the highest rate of mental illness occurring between the ages of 18 and 24 years (Vaingankar et al., 2013). Research conducted over the past several decades consistently indicates that university students constitute a demographic at elevated risk for mental health issues. The shift to university life presents new academic, social, and financial pressures, frequently aligning with the critical age for the emergence of mental disorders—late teens to early adulthood (Dessauvagie et al., 2022; Hernández-Torrano et al., 2020; Pedrelli et al., 2015).

Moreover, the Ministry of Health (MOH) performed the National Health and Morbidity Survey (NHMS) in Malaysia, which indicated a 29.2% prevalence of mental health disorders among individuals aged 16 and older. One-third of Malaysians have mental health illnesses, with the highest prevalence noted among individuals aged

16 to 19 and those from low-income households (Malaysian Ministry of Health, 2016). A prior study revealed that more than half of the participants (n=810) reported moderate to severe psychological discomfort (68.9%), anxiety (72.7%), and depression (60.6%) (Arifin et al., 2023; Rahim et al., 2024). Research conducted in various settings indicates a significant incidence of depression, anxiety, stress, and substance use disorders among university students, with depression and anxiety being the most prevalent concerns (Dessauvagie et al., 2022; Pedrelli et al., 2015). Numerous factors contribute to the development of mental health problems among university students. This includes academic pressure, as the rigorous demands of university coursework and the aim of high achievement can significantly increase psychological distress. Additionally, the transition to university life often marks the first time many students live away from home, which can disrupt established support systems and increase vulnerability to mental health challenges (Hernández-Torrano et al., 2020; Pedrelli et al., 2015). Financial and occupational stress also play a substantial role; balancing academic responsibilities with part-time employment and managing financial obligations is a common source of stress, particularly for non-traditional students (Dessauvagie et al., 2022; Pedrelli et al., 2015).

These factors will adversely affect students' academic achievement. Reduced academic performance significantly correlates with mental health issues. Students suffering from depression, anxiety, or other psychiatric disorders frequently have challenges with focus, motivation, and energy, resulting in diminished grade point averages (GPAs), increased absenteeism, and an elevated chance of university dropout (Chu et al., 2022; Eisenberg et al., 2013; Talkspace, 2025). Mental health issues, in addition to academic concerns, can diminish students' general quality of life and satisfaction with their university experience. They may encounter sleep disruptions, deteriorating physical health, and an overall decline in well-being. Mental health issues frequently hinder students' capacity to establish and sustain favorable relationships with classmates, family, and lecturers. Social isolation, self-doubt, and retreat are prevalent, potentially resulting in feelings of loneliness and further increasing psychological suffering. Thus, identifying and offering early intervention for mental health concerns among university students is crucial (Rahim et al., 2024; Shamsuddin et al., 2013). This matter requires additional investigation due to its possible adverse consequences, as university students are vital to the advancement of human capital in the nation. Mental health is essential for university students' well-being and their ability to manage academic and life obstacles (Pheng et al., 2019; Rahim et al., 2024; Shahira et al., 2018).

Bibliometric Analysis

Bibliometric analysis is a systematic and quantitative approach employed to investigate patterns, trends, and influence within scientific literature and academic publishing (Passas, 2024). This analysis includes the use of statistical and analytical methodologies on bibliographic data, such as publications, citations, authors, and institutions, to assess research output, evaluate scholarly impact, and define collaborative networks. Bibliometric methods are extensively employed by academics, universities, funding bodies, and governments to guide strategic decisions, distribute resources, and evaluate research success (Kumar, 2025; Mina, 2025). Bibliometric analysis incorporates quantitative evaluation that employs statistical tools to analyze the influence, productivity, and quality of publications, authors, journals, and organizations (Ninkov et al., 2022; Sarı & Aypay, 2024). Additionally, bibliometric analysis provides data sources that rely on bibliographic information such as citations, references, authorship, keywords, and publication dates (Ninkov et al., 2022). Bibliometric analysis can identify development trends and future research orientations by extracting and evaluating publishing data, including author, institution, country, and keywords. Additionally, using various display methods makes results easier to interpret. The method provides a broad picture, identifies knowledge gaps, highlights trends, and allows field-specific intellectual framework investigation (Fu et al., 2023).

Furthermore, bibliometrics uses statistical measurements to evaluate research, scientists, and scientific activities in a systematic, transparent, and reproducible manner (Ruslan & Abdul Rasool, 2024). It is more objective and reliable than other methods (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017). Bibliometrics is used in many fields, but analyzing it is difficult since it requires several processes and analytical and mapping software tools that are usually only available with commercial licenses (Guler et al., 2016). This study recommends an open-source R application with a defined, replicable logical bibliometric methodology. Researchers developed an R program designed for comprehensive bibliometric analyses, utilizing the Biblioshiny library package. And the Biblioshiny library package was used to analyze and visualize mental health research trends (Ruslan & Abdul Rasool, 2024). This

package includes bibliometric measurements, co-citation and co-work networks, co-authorship evaluation, and journal impact factors for data capture, cleansing, and analysis. Biblioshiny's graphical user interface enables non-programmers to perform bibliometric studies (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017).

Bibliometric in Mental Health

Researchers used metadata from 1995–2024 Scopus journal articles to evaluate university students' mental health. This study uses bibliometric methods to analyze the literature on mental health among university students over 45 years, examining its growth, productivity, social structure, intellectual structure, and conceptual structure (Hernández-Torrano et al., 2020). A detailed bibliometric study of 174 well-regarded publications looked at worldwide collaboration and emerging patterns in research on mental health among higher education students. The main goals were to identify the most productive national, institutional, and author contributors and show their collaborations. The study used keyword and citation analysis to detect mental health research topics and trends (Mohd Beta et al., 2024).

METHOD

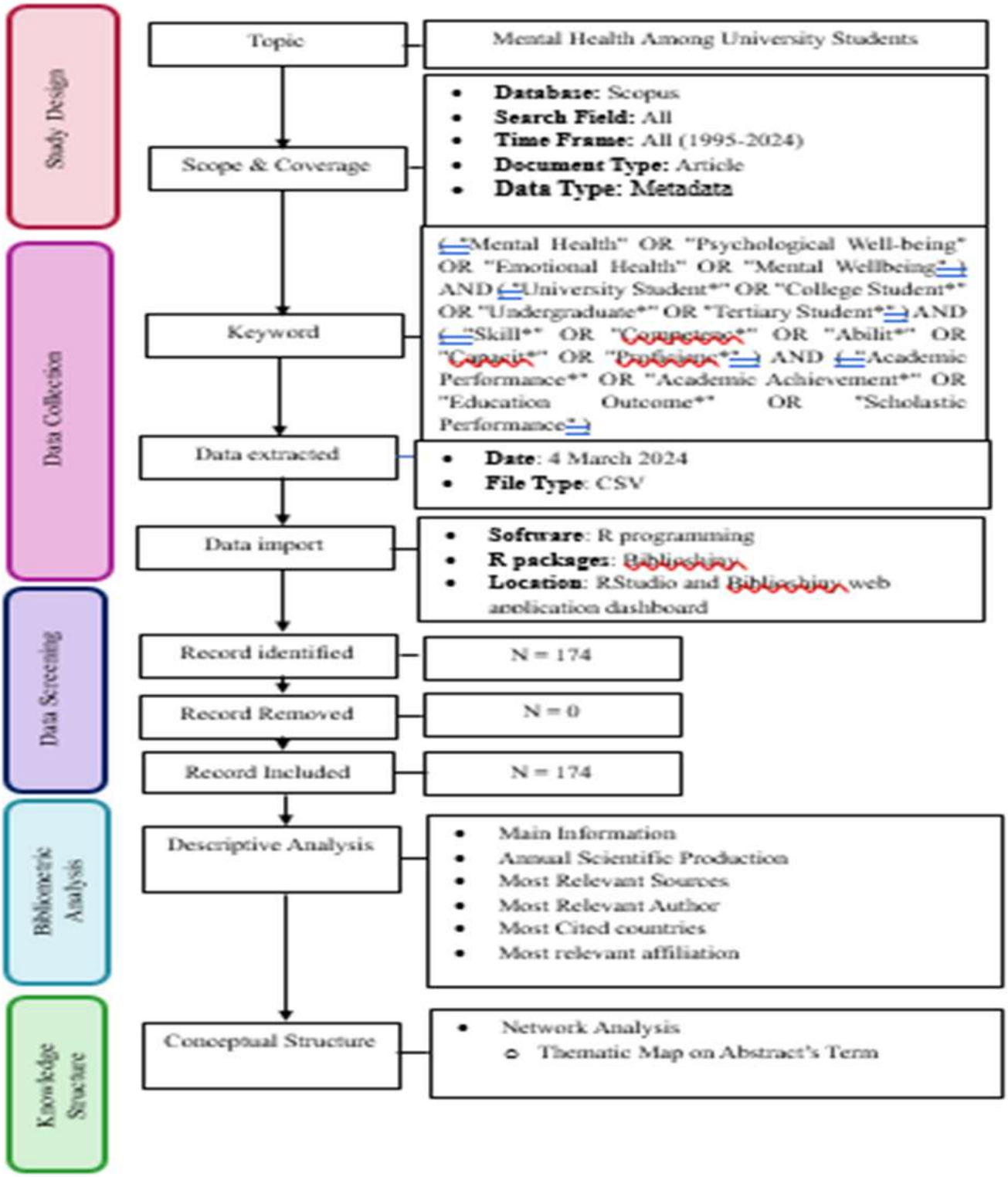
This study seeks to examine the status, trends, and conceptual framework of mental health research. The procedure comprised five stages: Study Design, Data Collection, Data Screening, Bibliometric Analysis, and Knowledge Discoveries. All relevant phrases about mental health were thoroughly analyzed (Ruslan & Abdul Rasool, 2024). Bibliometric analysis employs statistical and mathematical techniques to assess research output and trends, with Scopus serving as a fundamental data source for comprehensive and reliable coverage. Scopus indexes a broad range of periodicals related to mental health, psychology, psychiatry, education, and associated fields. It also ensures that the bibliometric analysis encompasses the entirety of research activity about mental health among university students in this study (Hernández et al., 2021; Sharma et al., 2024).

Scopus enables scholars to do extensive searches utilizing keywords, author names, institutional affiliations, and publication years. This study filters research explicitly focusing on "mental health" and "university students" during a defined time window, ensuring the dataset is both thorough and pertinent. Bibliometric analysis assists scholars in conducting citation analysis (Sakarji et al., 2024; Sharma et al., 2024). Consequently, Scopus monitors citation frequency, allowing for the identification of significant works, authors, and research collectives. The database provides bibliometric measures like the h-index, citation counts, and journal impact factors, which help assess the scientific value and output of researchers and institutions in the field. Bibliometric analysis makes it easier to export and visualize data, so Scopus data can be exported for further study using bibliometric software like VOSviewer or RStudio, which are often used to create visual displays of research trends, collaboration networks, and topic groups in the field.

Following extensive deliberation, the terms ("Mental Health" OR "Psychological Well-being" OR "Emotional Health" OR "Mental Wellbeing") AND ("University Student*" OR "College Student*" OR "Undergraduate*" OR "Tertiary Student*") AND ("Skill*" OR "Competenc*" OR "Abilit*" OR "Capacit*" OR "Proficienc*") AND ("Academic Performance*" OR "Academic Achievement*" OR "Education Outcome*" OR "Scholastic Performance") were selected as keywords, with the Boolean operator OR utilized between the two keywords for metadata extraction. The operator OR was utilized because of the presence of two different spellings of these lines in the database. Boolean operators and wildcard symbols are essential in formulating effective search queries for academic research, as they refine search results. Boolean operators like "AND," "OR," and "NOT" allow researchers to amalgamate or exclude terms to improve the pertinence of their search outcomes. In this query, "OR" is employed to aggregate synonymous terms pertaining to mental health, including "Mental Health," "Psychological Well-being," "Emotional Health," and "Mental Well-being," thus facilitating a more extensive search that encompasses diverse articulations of the idea. The “AND” operator is employed to merge this mental health category with terms related to university and college students, such as “University Student*,” “College Student*,” “Undergraduate*,” and “Tertiary Student*.” The asterisk (*) functions as a wildcard, broadening the search to encompass all variations of the root word, including "student," "student's," or "students. “The combination of phrases such as “Skill,” “Competence*,” “Ability*,” “Capacity*,” and “Proficiency*” illustrates the searcher's purpose to embrace a range of competences and skills, hence broadening the search's scope. The query ultimately focuses on educational outcomes by utilizing terms such as “Academic Performance*,”

"Academic Achievement*," "Education Outcome*," and "Scholastic Performance," thereby ensuring the search encompasses a variety of literature pertaining to students' academic achievements in relation to their mental health. The strategic application of Boolean operators and wildcards allows for a thorough examination of the relationship between mental health, student demographics, skills, and academic success (Bates, 1989). Evaluating research related to these keywords is beneficial. The research related to these keywords is useful. The Biblioshiny library package used in R programming was applied for bibliometric analysis and knowledge discovery (Ruslan & Abdul Rasool, 2024), focusing on the conceptual framework of mental health. Figure 1 illustrates the advancement of the investigation, with the objective of improving understanding.

Figure 1: Methodologies phases of bibliometric research (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017; Firdaus et al., 2019)



Findings

Descriptive Analysis -Main Information

Table 1 compiles the main features of the dataset, which consists of 174 documents obtained from Scopus (1995–2024) using Biblioshiny. With an average age of 5.52 years and 18.51 citations per document, the collection exhibits an average yearly growth rate of 11.42%. All publications cited a total of 8,007 references.

Table 1: Main Information of Retrieved Articles

Description	Results
MAIN INFORMATION ABOUT DATA	
Timespan	1995:2024
Sources (Journals, Books, etc)	130
Documents	174
Annual Growth Rate %	11.42
Document Average Age	5.52
Average citations per doc	18.51
References	8007
DOCUMENT CONTENTS	
Keywords Plus (ID)	1533
Author's Keywords (DE)	544
AUTHORS	
Authors	702
Authors of single-authored docs	12
AUTHORS COLLABORATION	
Single-authored docs	12
Co-Authors per Doc	4.17
International co-authorships %	20.69
DOCUMENT TYPES	
article	174

Only 12 of the 702 authors' works in the sample are single authored. Each manuscript has an average of 4.17 co-authors. The bibliometric analysis of 174 Scopus-indexed papers (1995–2024) indicates a progressively multidisciplinary research landscape. Collaborative trends among psychology, education, public health, sociology, and cultural studies are obvious, with 20.69% of publications produced via international co-authorship. Three key multidisciplinary interfaces arise:

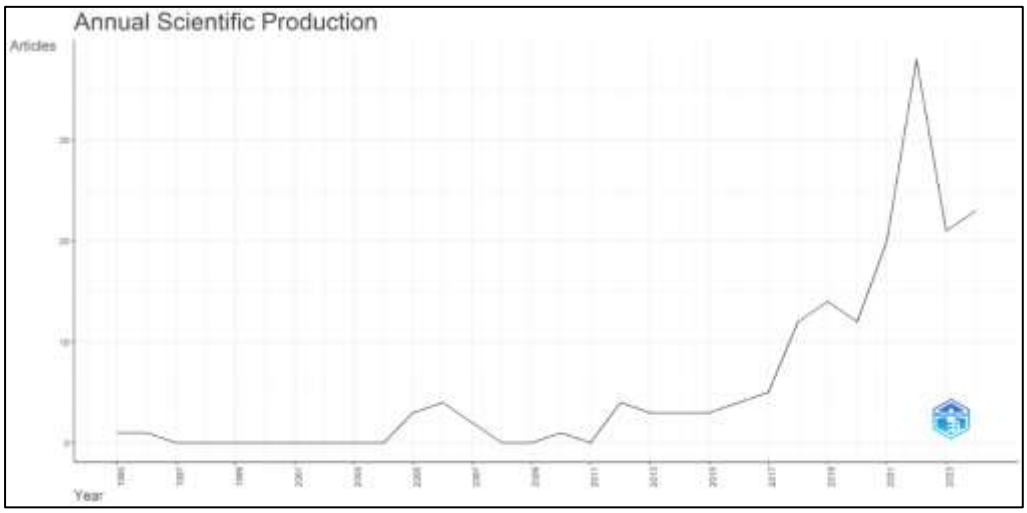
1. Psychology–Education: The research combines mental health evaluation with the assessment of academic achievement, such as resilience and cognitive function in educational results.
2. Sociology–Public Health: Research focuses on broad social determinants of health, including inequality, community support, and resource accessibility. It is a growing, although limited body of research uses narrative analysis to examine student well-being, emphasizing human meaning-making, identity, and ethical implications in policy.

This structural interdisciplinarity signifies a continuous paradigm shift, transitioning from clinically isolated mental health studies to socio-culturally embedded research.

Annual Scientific Production

Figure 2 illustrates the annual scientific output for a mental health article, accompanied by percentage growth.

Figure 2: Annual Scientific Production on Mental Health Research



Annual publishing output was low and mostly stagnant between 1995 and 2015. A discernible rise started in 2016 and picked up speed between 2019 and 2021, reaching a peak of about 35 articles in 2022. This increase aligns with global crises that have transformed university student life due to equity and inclusion initiatives; awareness of mental health disparities among first-generation students, minority ethnic groups, and low-income households has significantly heightened since 2019. The digitalization of education, together with the exploration of social media utilization, tele-counseling, and AI-based interventions, became important after 2021, contributing to this spike. These tendencies signify a transition from static, individual assessments to context-responsive scholarship, affecting both global research goals and local institutional policies. Besides, the increase in 2022 coincides with heightened academic interest in the impact of COVID-19 on college students' mental health. The pandemic prompted extensive research on stress, anxiety, and depression brought on by uncertainty, social isolation, and disruptions in the classroom (Rahim et al., 2024). After 2022, production decreased, but it eventually leveled off at 20–25 articles annually, which was a significant improvement above pre-2016 levels. Increased research funding, institutional focus, and worldwide interest in the subject are probably the causes of the post-2019 rise.

Most Relevant Sources

Figure 3 illustrates the most relevant sources, as selected by Biblioshiny based on the volume of published papers, obtained from extensive data analysis.

Figure 3: Top 10 Most Relevant Sources in Publishing Research on Mental Health

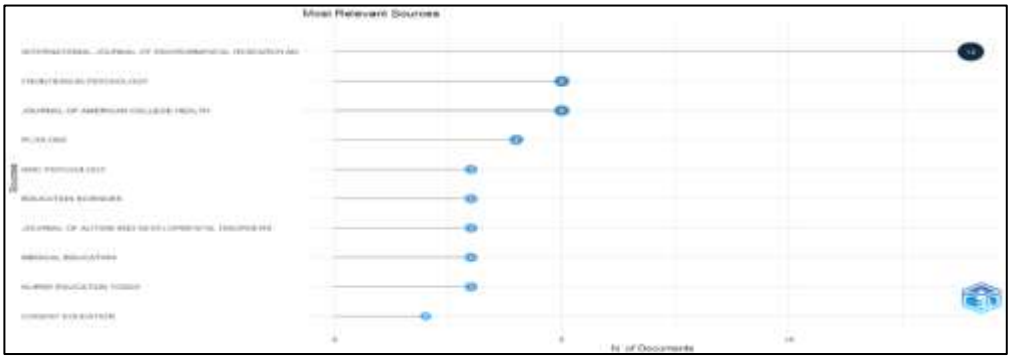


Figure 3 illustrates the distribution of published papers across major academic journals in this field, with the International Journal of Environmental Research dominating with 14 publications. This journal has significantly more publications than any other source, suggesting it may be the main venue for research in this specific field. This was followed by Frontiers in Psychology and the Journal of American College Health, which published 5 articles. PLOS One came next, publishing 4 journals. BMC Psychological, Educational Sciences, Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders, Medical Education, and Nurse Education Today published 3 different articles. The publication with the fewest articles is Cogent Education, which has 2 articles.

Most Relevant Author

Figure 4 displays the most significant authors, identified by Biblioshiny according to the quantity of published papers derived from comprehensive data analysis.

Figure 4: Most Relevant Author in Mental Health Research in terms of fractionalized frequencies

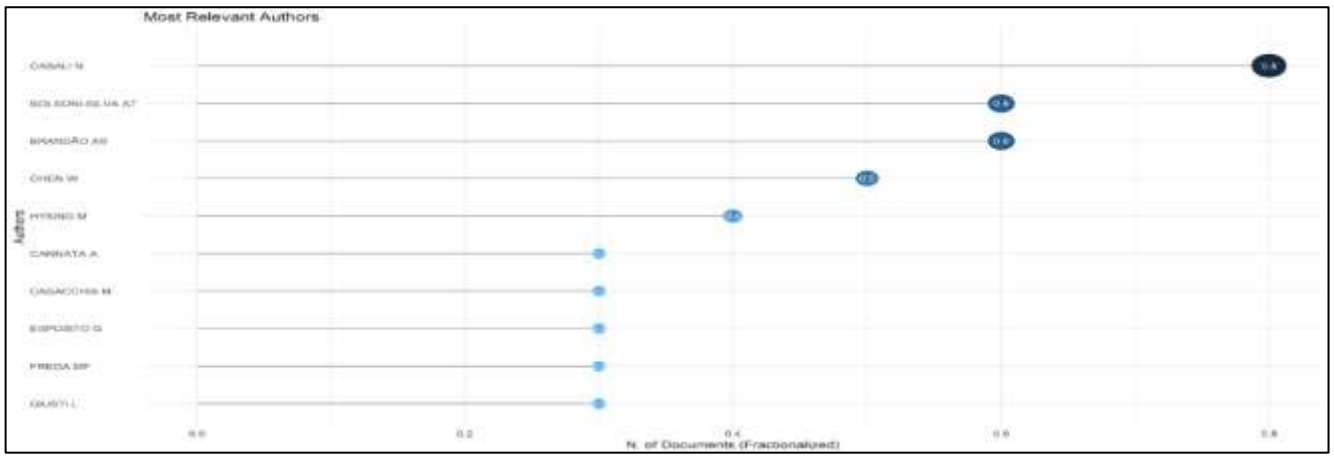
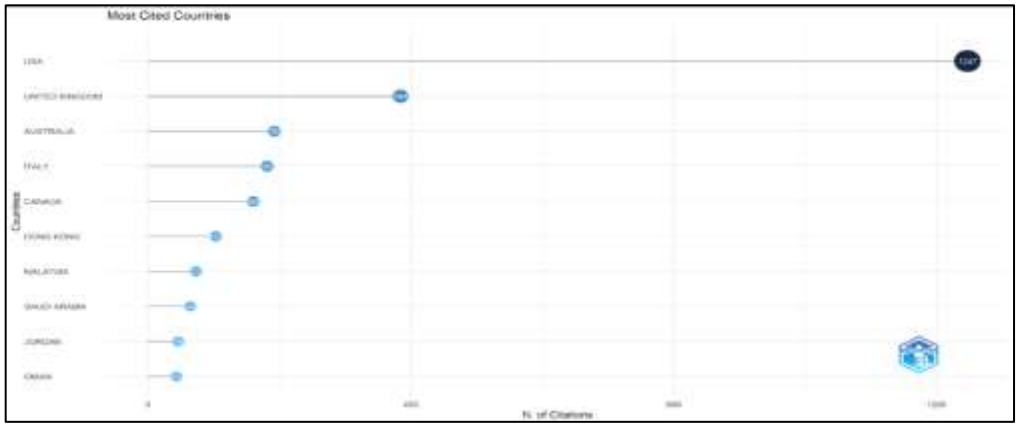


Figure 4 displays the list of "Most Relevant Authors." It indicates the number of different authors who have contributed and the total number of papers each has written. Based on the number of articles they contributed, this chart presents a quick visual summary of which authors are the most important or well-known in the dataset. The author CASALI N has the highest fractionalized document count at 0.8, making them the most significant contributor in this dataset. BOLSON-SILVA AT and BRANDÀO AS come next, both with a score of 0.6. Other writers, like CHEN W and HYSMGI M, have lower counts (0.5 and 0.4 of each). The contributions of the other authors are even smaller; each of them is counted as 0.2.

Most Cited Countries

Figure 5, "Most Cited Countries," indicates the citation counts for scientific contributions from various nations.

Figure 5: Most Cited Countries

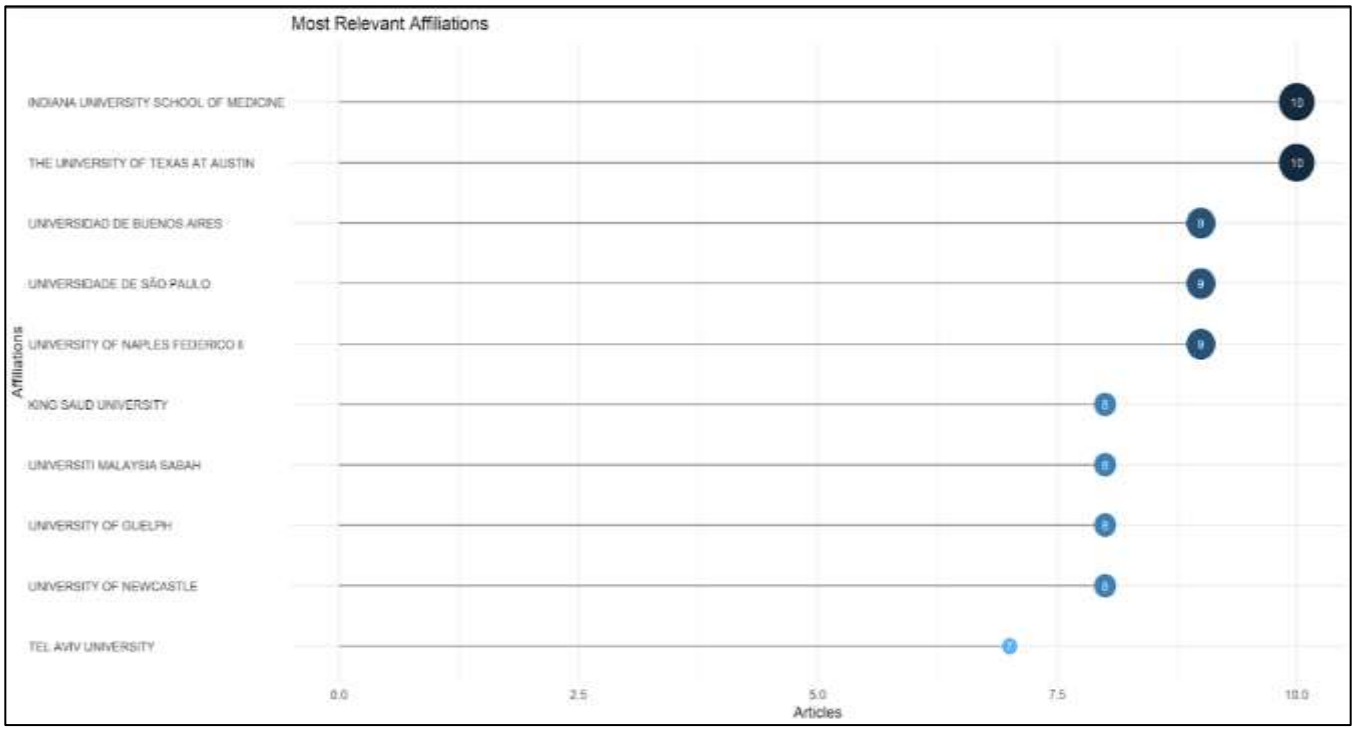


This figure displays the countries whose research output received the most citations. North America and Europe predominate, as indicated by citation analysis (USA: 1,247 citations; UK: 384). Australia, Italy, and Canada follow with rankings of 192, 181, and 166, respectively, while the Global South remains underrepresented, despite rising contributions from Hong Kong, Malaysia, and Saudi Arabia, which have 103, 73, and 64, respectively. This difference underscores the imperative for research originating from the Global South and cross-cultural comparative efforts to reshape the body of knowledge and tackle context-specific issues. Additional nations with notable, although lesser, citation totals comprise Jordan (46) and Oman (43).

Most Relevant Affiliations

Figure 6 displays the "Most Relevant Affiliations" based on the quantity of publications associated with each institution.

Figure 6: Most Relevant Affiliations



The Indiana University School of Medicine and the University of Texas at Austin each generated 10 publications, the highest quantity in the collection. The University of Buenos Aires, the University of São Paulo, and the University of Naples Federico II each contribute 9 articles. King Saud University, University Malaysia Sabah, University of Guelph, and University of Newcastle produced 8 articles each. Meanwhile, Tel Aviv University produces 7 articles. Institutions from several nations demonstrate the international and interdisciplinary character of this study domain.

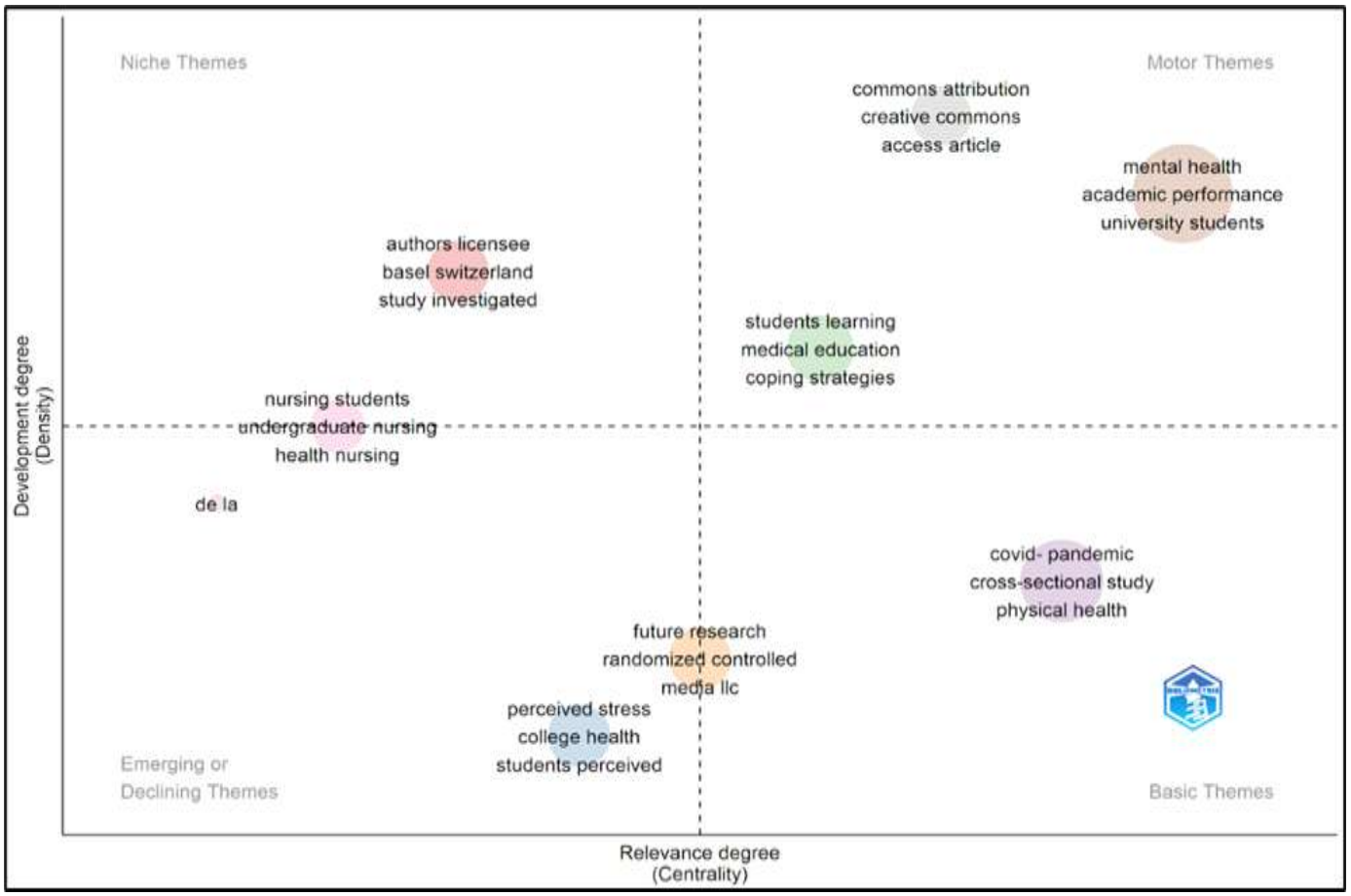
Some universities, like Indiana University School of Medicine and the University of Texas at Austin, are highly regarded in this field, which suggests that they have strong study programs or networks of people who work together on projects in this area. Universities from different countries, like those in the USA, Argentina, Brazil, Italy, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, and Israel, show that the research environment is diverse and international.

Thematic Map

Figure 7 exhibits diverse topics related to the designated domain. The topics were discovered according to their significance and evolution. This exemplifies a thematic map frequently utilized in bibliometric analysis to classify research themes into four quadrants. This also outlines the categorization of the network cluster into four

thematic quadrants: Motor Themes, Niche Themes, Emerging or Declining Themes, and Basic Themes (Cobo et al., 2011).

Figure 7: Thematic Maps



The themes were identified based on their significance and evolution. The motor theme, located in the upper-right quadrant, stands out for its centrality and advanced development. This theme referred to mental health–academic success relationships and universal frameworks for student well-being. The article on Commons Attribution and Creative Commons is well-developed and central, potentially pertaining to open-access publishing and information dissemination.

The upper-left quadrant, labeled "Niche Themes," includes Authors Licensee Basel, Switzerland. Analysis indicates that this quadrant addresses specialized topics potentially linked to administrative or publication issues, which are not central to the main research focus. Nursing students in undergraduate programs demonstrate proficient skills, though more peripheral, highlighting the necessity for specialized study in nursing education. Studies focusing on specific subgroups, such as nursing students, tend to provide detailed insights but have limited applicability across broader populations.

The basic themes in the lower right of the diagram represent the Covid pandemic, physical health, stress, and coping, which are frequently operationalized in cross-sectional designs, but they need more thorough longitudinal and cultural contextualization. Most contemporary research likely relies on them as basic subjects. Students' learning, medical education, and coping mechanisms are crucial, highlighting the significance of educational methodologies and student well-being.

The lower-left quadrant is categorized as either emerging or declining. The study domain lacks significant emphasis on comprehensive examination of the themes, indicating their possible emergence or decline. Perceived stress, student perspectives, and collegiate health could develop into critical research areas if sustained and theoretically anchored. Future randomized controlled studies by Media LLC may address methodological or administrative difficulties that are inadequately specified within the discipline.

Crucially, few studies systematically integrate humanities lenses or sociological theories into their methodology—highlighting an area for future interdisciplinary enrichment.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study represents a bibliometric examination of mental health articles from their inception in 1995 to the present, employing Biblioshiny. This study seeks to understand and address the growing concerns regarding students' mental health. It also underscores the necessity of tracking the evolution of research that clarifies the advancement of mental health comprehension among university students throughout time. This study examines and outlines the progression of research topics related to mental health and its associated concepts in literature using bibliometric methods and techniques. Researchers obtained bibliographic data from the Scopus database for 174 papers produced by 702 published researchers, derived from the metadata of the Scopus database. There were 647 affiliations among the universities or institutes employing the authors. Bibliometric analysis has substantially advanced the examination of mental health among university students by methodically mapping and synthesizing the extant research literature. It facilitates the mapping of research trends and development. There has been a consistent increase in studies concerning the mental health of university students over the previous decades, particularly after 2010, indicating a growing scholarly focus on this subject. It also offers a comprehensive overview of the field's evolution by examining publication and citation trends, highlighting the shifts in research volume and focus over time (Hernández-Torrano et al., 2020).

Furthermore, it aids in identifying research themes and gaps by classifying and visualizing principal research issues such as positive mental health, mental diseases, substance misuse, counseling, stigma, stress, and mental health assessment, thereby explaining the conceptual framework of the subject. This can pinpoint underexplored domains, such as the impact of social sciences (e.g., sociology, anthropology) on mental health, highlighting areas where additional research is needed (Hernández-Torrano et al., 2020). This review synthesizes significant literature to direct policymakers, educators, and mental health professionals toward key areas for intervention and support in university environments. Consequently, it aids in identifying effective intervention strategies and risk factors, thus promoting evidence-based methods to enhance student mental health outcomes (Mohd Beta et al., 2024; Rahim et al., 2024).

Future Research and Limitations

The existing literature on mental health among university students is an expanding field of research. Further research is required to ascertain how artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning are changing mental health research through enhanced detection, customized therapy, and novel therapeutic platforms. Future research will concentrate on creating transparent, validated AI models, tackling ethical and regulatory concerns, and investigating how AI might promote early intervention, expand access, and reduce stigma in mental health treatment. Furthermore, the utilization of extensive data from digital platforms (e.g., social media, mobile devices) is creating novel opportunities for digital epidemiology, facilitating continuous monitoring and focused treatments. Research will persist in evaluating the efficacy of these technologies in enhancing care delivery and outcomes (Naslund et al., 2020).

Methodological trends in mental health research include descriptive, cross-sectional surveys before 2010; mixed-methods studies integrating quantitative trends with qualitative depth between 2010 and 2019; and longitudinal cohort tracking and systematic reviews after 2020. However, longitudinal impact studies on sustained intervention effectiveness are underrepresented, ethnographic and participatory research methods are rare despite their ability to capture lived experiences, and policy impact analyses are scarce, leaving a gap between evidence and institutional or governmental policy change. Moreover, the complete reliance on data from the Scopus database constitutes a limitation of this study. It would be highly advantageous for further researchers to do bibliometric evaluations of mental health by using data from Dimensions, PubMed, Web of Science (WOS), the Cochrane Library, or other databases. The study would be enhanced by integrating Author and Source Impact, Lotka's Law, Bradford's Law, and more bibliometric factors for a more thorough descriptive analysis. This study exclusively examined the conceptual framework of knowledge pertaining to the identification of imperceptible trends. It would be considerably more beneficial to further examine the psychological and social frames of knowledge (Ruslan & Abdul Rasool, 2024).

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