

Mapping a Decade of Bullying Research in Counseling: A Bibliometric Analysis Using VOSviewer



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Abstract: This study presents a bibliometric analysis of research trends on bullying within the counseling field, based on 174 peer-reviewed articles indexed in the Scopus database between 2014 and 2024. Bibliometric techniques—including keyword co-occurrence mapping, co-authorship network analysis, and citation tracking—were conducted using VOSviewer to identify dominant themes, influential authors and journals, and patterns of scholarly collaboration. The analysis revealed eight major keyword clusters, primarily centered around childhood adversity, mental health outcomes, and counseling-based intervention strategies. Prominent contributors included authors such as Espelage, D.L., and journals such as *Children and Youth Services Review*, *School Psychology International*, and the *Journal of Counseling & Development*. The United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia emerged as the most productive countries, with medicine, psychology, and social sciences dominating the subject areas. Research output peaked in 2021 and 2023. Despite the overall growth in scholarly interest, topics such as cyberbullying and anti-violence education remained underrepresented, indicating important gaps for future exploration. These insights offer a clearer understanding of the field's evolution and provide valuable direction for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers committed to advancing bullying-related interventions in counseling contexts.

Key Words: Bullying; Counseling; Bibliometric analysis; Mental health; Intervention strategies

comprehensively map the intellectual landscape of bullying research in counseling. This would not only help in identifying influential works and emerging topics but also support the development of more evidence-based, context-specific interventions and policies tailored to the counseling setting.

Bibliometric analysis has emerged as a powerful and systematic method for evaluating the structure and development of scientific literature. By quantitatively examining patterns of publication, citation, and collaboration, this approach enables researchers to identify influential studies, prolific authors, and core journals within a field. It also facilitates the mapping of co-authorship networks, institutional collaboration, and keyword co-occurrence to uncover thematic clusters and research trends (Donthu, N., Kumar, S., Mukherjee, D., Pandey, N., & Lim, 2021; Zupic, I., & Čater, 2015). In the context of counseling and bullying, bibliometric tools such as VOSviewer allow for visualizing the intellectual landscape and detecting how scholarly discourse has evolved (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017; van Eck & Waltman, 2010). These capabilities make bibliometric analysis an essential technique for synthesizing complex bodies of literature and guiding future research directions.

The primary objective of this study is to systematically examine the body of scholarly literature on bullying within the context of counseling by employing bibliometric analysis. This investigation specifically focuses on how bullying is conceptualized, addressed, and discussed in peer-reviewed counseling-related research. The dataset was obtained from the Scopus database, one of the most comprehensive and reputable indexing platforms for academic publications across disciplines. A total of 174 journal articles were selected based on predefined inclusion criteria, which limited the scope to English-language, peer-reviewed publications published between 2014 and 2024. The analysis was carried out using VOSviewer (version 1.6.19), a specialized software tool designed for visualizing and constructing bibliometric networks.

This tool enabled the generation of multiple network maps that illustrate relationships among authors, keywords, countries, institutions, and cited sources. Specific bibliometric techniques applied include keyword co-occurrence analysis to identify thematic clusters, co-authorship network analysis to trace collaborative relationships, and citation analysis to determine the most influential works and journals in the field. By mapping these various dimensions, the study aims to provide a structured overview of research patterns, highlight emerging topics and underexplored areas, and offer practical insights for researchers, counselors, and policymakers. Ultimately, the findings are expected to contribute to the development of evidence-informed practices and support the advancement of strategic interventions against bullying within the counseling domain.

RESULTS

Procedure and Data Collection Process

This study employed a bibliometric approach to analyze trends in bullying research within the counseling context. Data collection was conducted through a systematic search in the Scopus database. The exact search string used was: ("bullying" AND "counseling") applied to the article title, abstract,

CONCLUSION

This bibliometric analysis presents a thorough summary of bullying studies conducted in the counselling field within the last ten years. Particularly for high-income countries, the results expose a substantial focus on psychological well-being, school-based interventions, and cooperative research networks. Even although the subject has developed with more research output, there are still notable gaps—particularly in understudied areas including cyberbullying, anti-violence education, and offender viewpoints. The predominance of Western-centric models emphasises even more the need of using

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culturally inclusive strategies. Though they are becoming more and more important, emerging ideas like digital counselling and restorative practices still need further research particularly in non-Western settings. By use of keyword clustering, topical mapping offers insightful analysis of the changing study terrain and points of view for focused intervention development. Notwithstanding constraints on database coverage and citation-based measures, this study provides a basis for next investigations. Scholars are urged to seek cross-cultural viewpoints, target underprivileged communities, and combine creative approaches to forward the field of bullying and counselling in a more inclusive, context-sensitive, and powerful direction.

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