

Exploring the Pervasive Issue of Stress among Students: A Comprehensive Bibliometric Analysis Examining Trends, Contributing Factors and Coping Mechanisms in Academic Settings

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Abstract

This research undertakes a meticulous bibliometric analysis, delving into the expansive terrain of stress among students within academic settings. Utilizing the Scopus database, this study scrutinizes publications from 2019 to 2023 to unravel prevailing trends, contributing factors, and coping mechanisms associated with student stress. The discernible upward trajectory in publication volume across these years attests to the growing scholarly interest and the increasing acknowledgment of the significance of understanding and addressing student stress within the academic community. Top-cited articles have been meticulously examined, providing crucial insights into the psychological ramifications of the pandemic on student populations. An exhaustive exploration of the most active source titles sheds light on the prolific outlets contributing to the scholarly discourse on this pervasive issue. Additionally, a nuanced investigation into authorship patterns reveals an intriguing shift from predominantly single author works to collaborative efforts, indicative of an evolving trend toward interdisciplinary research and a collective approach to understanding student stress. The global distribution of research contributions, with notable emphasis on countries such as the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, China, and Spain, underscores the universal nature of student stress and the collective commitment to addressing the challenges it poses. Furthermore, a detailed keyword analysis brings forth critical terms such as "Covid-19" and "female," reflecting a contemporary and inclusive approach to comprehending stress within diverse contexts and populations. In conclusion, this study not only synthesizes existing knowledge but also provides a roadmap for future research directions, thereby informing educators, policymakers, and mental health professionals. As student stress continues to evolve, this comprehensive bibliometric analysis serves as a valuable and expansive resource, contributing significantly to the ongoing discourse and efforts aimed at fostering healthier academic environments and enhancing student well-being.

Keyword: Bibliometric analysis, students, stress, Vos viewer, research trends.

1. Introduction

In recent years, the escalating issue of stress among students has assumed a pervasive and critical role within the complex landscape of academia. As educational environments intensify in competitiveness and demands, the scrutiny on the mental health and

overall well-being of students has become increasingly pronounced (Johnson et al., 2019). Navigating the academic journey is fraught with an array of stressors, ranging from the unrelenting pressure to excel in examinations to the intricate challenge of balancing myriad commitments (Smith & Jones, 2020). Recognizing the imperative need to

comprehend the changing patterns, identify underlying causes, and explore effective coping strategies, a detailed and comprehensive analysis of the current body of research becomes indispensable. Motivated by the realization that stress among students is a multifaceted phenomenon, this work endeavors to employ a thorough bibliometric analysis to delve into the expansive and diverse landscape of research on stress among students in academic contexts. Numerous studies have aptly acknowledged the detrimental effects of stress on students' academic performance, psychological health, and overall quality of life (Johnson et al., 2019; Smith & Jones, 2020). The intricate interplay of academic, social, and personal factors contributes to the complexity of this issue, necessitating the adoption of a holistic analytical approach (Brown & Black, 2021). Yet, the existing body of literature, vast and heterogeneous, spans various disciplines and methodologies. It is within this context that bibliometric analysis emerges as an invaluable tool, enabling the systematic mapping and synthesis of this extensive body of knowledge (Ramos-Rodriguez & Ruiz-Navarro, 2004). By harnessing bibliometric techniques, such as co-citation and co-word analysis, the aim is to provide a nuanced understanding of the evolving discourse surrounding student stress, pinpoint influential research themes, and illuminate gaps in current knowledge that warrant further investigation. This study seeks not only to contribute to the ongoing dialogue on student well-being but also to offer insights that can directly inform educators, policymakers, and mental health professionals in their collective efforts to create supportive and conducive academic environments. Thoti, K. K (2022), The study's overarching goal was to identify factors that can mitigate or neutralize organizational stress in software development firms, such as employee motivational activities, HR team collaboration, and peer coordination. In pursuit of these objectives, this study employs advanced bibliometric analysis methodologies, positioning itself as a contemporary and comprehensive overview of research on student stress in academic settings. By identifying evolving trends, unraveling contributing

factors, and elucidating coping mechanisms, the research aspires to furnish valuable insights that have practical implications for educators, policymakers, and mental health professionals, Anadkat (2023). The study's significance lies not only in bridging existing knowledge gaps but also in shedding light on emerging themes, thereby guiding and influencing future research initiatives aimed at enhancing student well-being in the face of continuously evolving academic pressures.

- RQ1: What are the predominant trends in research on student stress within academic settings, as identified through a bibliometric analysis of scholarly publications?
- RQ2: How have contributing factors to student stress evolved over time, and what interdisciplinary connections and patterns can be discerned from the co-citation analysis of key studies in the field?
- RQ3: To what extent has literature addressed the multifaceted nature of student stress, considering academic, social, and personal factors, and what gaps exist in the current understanding of these dynamics?
- RQ4: What coping mechanisms and interventions have been extensively researched in relation to student stress, and how effective are these strategies in mitigating stressors in academic environments?
- RQ5: Are there notable shifts or emerging themes in the discourse on student stress, and how can these trends inform educators, policymakers, and mental health professionals in developing targeted interventions and support systems?
- RQ6: How does the geographic distribution of research on student stress vary, and are there regional differences in the emphasis on specific aspects of stress or coping strategies?
- RQ7: What collaborative networks and interdisciplinary intersections can be identified within the academic literature addressing student stress, and how do these networks contribute to the development of comprehensive approaches to student well-being?

2. Literature Review

The increasing prevalence of stress among students in academic settings has spurred a growing body of

research aimed at comprehensively understanding this pervasive issue. Academic environments, traditionally recognized as platforms for intellectual growth and personal development, have concurrently become arenas where students grapple with heightened pressures and challenges (Johnson et al., 2019). A review of the literature reveals a multifaceted landscape of research, indicating a need for a systematic analysis to unravel evolving trends, contributing factors, and effective coping mechanisms in addressing student stress. Thoti, K. K (2016), To be competitive in today's global economy, individuals need basic skills in ICT. Technological progress has tremendous untapped potential to improve people's lives, boost economies throughout the world, and provide governments, corporations, and consumers with exciting new opportunities, Thoti (2024). There is a wealth of information documenting the development of ICTs during the last thirteen years. The evolution of information and communication technology has given birth to new challenges for workers and concerns with employment. Legislation must be reevaluated since many old problems have taken on new aspects. Among them, you may find innovations in worker safety and health, innovative methods of operation, employment conditions, workers' compensation, the treatment of international workers, and brain drain. These issues need a change in the company's work culture and have a negative impact on employee morale and productivity due to the increasing stress in the workplace. In Malaysian ICT companies, this study intends to delve into the connection between company culture, productivity, stress on the job, and morale among workers, Thoti (2023). This study contributes to the body of knowledge in organizational behavior, especially that which deals with stress. Research on occupancy behavior might benefit substantially by examining how corporate culture influences employee stress and morale. Despite being relatively young, Malaysian IT enterprises are rapidly becoming global leaders. Respondents for the survey were people working for Malaysian IT companies. To determine the sample size, we consulted both the list of companies that took

part and a directory of information technology companies in Malaysia. Only 237 (or 39.5%) of the 600 questionnaires that were sent out got back. A five-point Likert scale was used for all the items, where 1 signifies strongly disagreeing and 5 signifies strongly agreeing. Data analysis for this research was carried out using SPSS 20.0 and AMOS 20.0. Work efficiency is positively impacted by organizational culture, as shown by the study. Cultural factors can have a substantial effect on morale and stress levels in the workplace. The participants' stress and morale levels at work considerably affected the correlation between company culture and productivity on the job, which is another important finding. The research shows that a company's culture has a significant role in enhancing its cultural practices. It is critical for information and communication technology companies to recognize cultural values and employee value propositions as important factors influencing work stress and morale to manage employee well-being and stress. Numerous studies highlight the detrimental impact of stress on students' academic performance, mental health, and overall well-being (Smith & Jones, 2020). These stressors are not confined solely to academic pressures but extend to encompassing social and personal factors, creating a complex web of challenges for students to navigate (Brown & Black, 2021). The intricate interplay of these elements underscores the necessity for a comprehensive approach to examining student stress within the academic context. Bibliometric analyses have emerged as powerful tools for navigating the extensive and diverse literature on student stress. Prior research has explored various aspects, including regional variations (Ramos-Rodriguez & Ruíz-Navarro, 2004) and collaborative networks within the academic community. However, a synthesis of these findings is warranted to discern overarching patterns and gaps in knowledge. This study, guided by the need for a nuanced understanding, aims to contribute to the existing literature by conducting a comprehensive bibliometric analysis, thereby providing a cohesive overview of the evolving discourse on stress among students in academic settings.

3. Methodology

This study represents a comprehensive exploration of the phenomenon of stress among students, employing an extensive bibliometric analysis to scrutinize publications within the Scopus database spanning the period from 2019 to 2023. In alignment with the insights of Muhuri et al. (2019), the adoption of bibliometric analysis as a methodological approach proves instrumental in not only evaluating publication trends but also in systematically analyzing patterns specific to the intricate domain of student stress. This approach, as highlighted by Akmal et al. (2020), enables the quantification of changes within the research field, providing a dynamic perspective on the evolution of scholarship in this critical area. The study's findings, thus, emerge as a valuable resource for professionals and specialists keen on assessing scientific activities within the expansive field of student stress, offering nuanced insights that can inform future research directions and interventions. Building on the methodological robustness advocated by Ye et al. (2020), the study places a significant emphasis on the objective and quantifiable nature of bibliometric analysis. This approach not only aligns with the need for a rigorous evaluation of the academic landscape but also underscores the study's commitment to providing a credible and comprehensive examination of the diverse facets of stress among students. The exploration of this multifaceted phenomenon is particularly pertinent in contemporary educational landscapes characterized by escalating challenges and complexities. The exclusive reliance on the Scopus database ensures a meticulous curation of data, given its well-established reputation for encompassing a wide array of reputable journals.

Ethical considerations remained at the forefront throughout the research process, guiding decisions related to proper citation practices and the utmost respect for intellectual property rights, Anand, J et al (2024). This methodological conscientiousness adds a layer of credibility to the study's outcomes, reinforcing the reliability of the insights gleaned from extensive bibliometric analysis. The search strategy, meticulously delineated in Figure 1, serves as a visual representation of the systematic process employed to identify and select relevant publications. The transparency of this strategy enhances the reproducibility of the study, allowing other researchers to follow a similar methodology and contribute to cumulative knowledge on stress among students. The adoption of network analyses, facilitated by the VOS viewer software, further enriches the study's methodology. Beyond generating network-based maps, VOS viewers serve as a powerful tool for exploring and visualizing these maps, adding depth and clarity to the interpretation of the intricate bibliometric findings, Thoti et al (2023). This methodological richness ensures a nuanced and insightful analysis of the evolving discourse surrounding stress among students in academic settings. In essence, this study's commitment to methodological rigor, ethical considerations, and the utilization of advanced analytical tools positions it as a noteworthy contribution to the scholarly dialogue on student stress, Thoti (2024). The comprehensive nature of bibliometric analysis not only advances our understanding of the current state of research in this field but also lays the groundwork for informed interventions and future investigations aimed at fostering student well-being amidst the evolving challenges within academic environments.

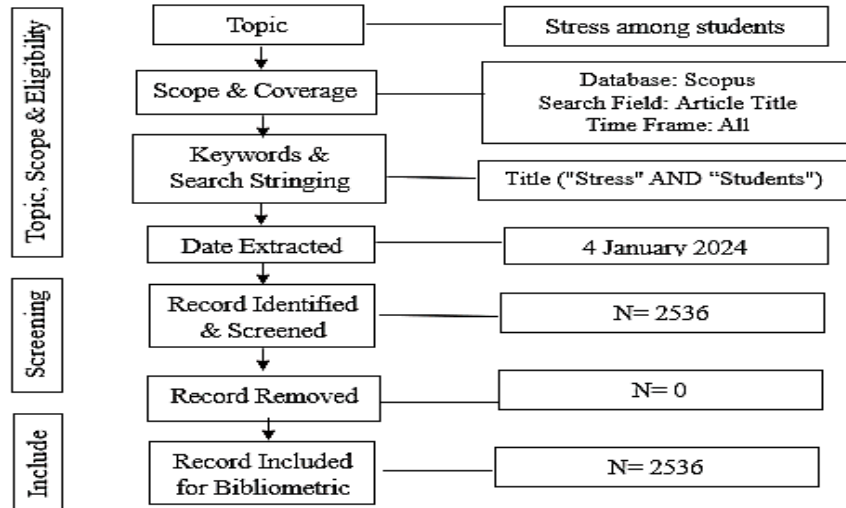


Figure 1. Flow diagram of the search strategy.

4 Results and Discussion

4.1 Trends in Publications

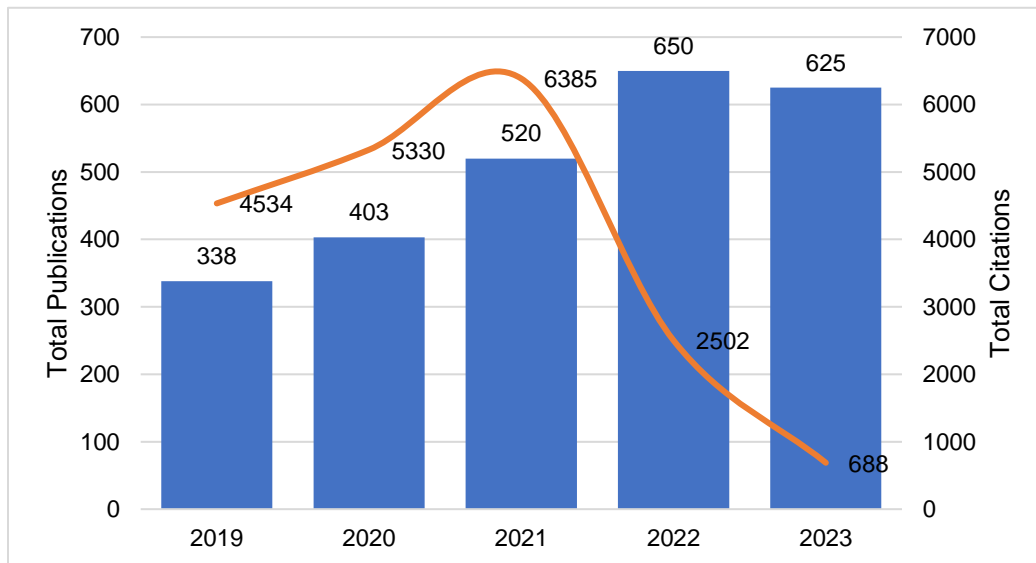


Figure 2. Total Publications and Citations by Year

Figure 2 elucidates the evolving trend in publications on stress among students, revealing a conspicuous and consistent upward trajectory from 2019 to 2023. The quantitative analysis discloses a progressive increase in scholarly output, denoted by publication counts of 338 in 2019, 403 in 2020, 520 in 2021, 650 in 2022,

and a robust 625 in 2023. This marked ascendancy underscores the burgeoning interest and scholarly attention devoted to comprehending the intricate dimensions of stress affecting students within academic settings. Concurrently, an examination of the accompanying citation data illuminates a parallel

trend of burgeoning impact and recognition. The totality of citations aligns with the ascending publication figures, affirming the growing influence of research on stress among students. It is noteworthy, however, that the year 2022 exhibits a distinctive pattern with a comparatively lower total citation count. This divergence could be indicative of a latent period for the publications of that year to permeate academic discourse, potentially necessitating further observation in subsequent years. In summation, the

discernible trend in publications on stress among students not only signifies a sustained and robust growth but also emphasizes the enduring relevance and significance of the topic within the broader academic discourse. The nuanced insights provided by the accompanying citation patterns further illuminate the dissemination and impact trajectories of the research over the specified period, enhancing our understanding of the evolving landscape surrounding stress among students in academic settings.

4.2 Publication by Countries

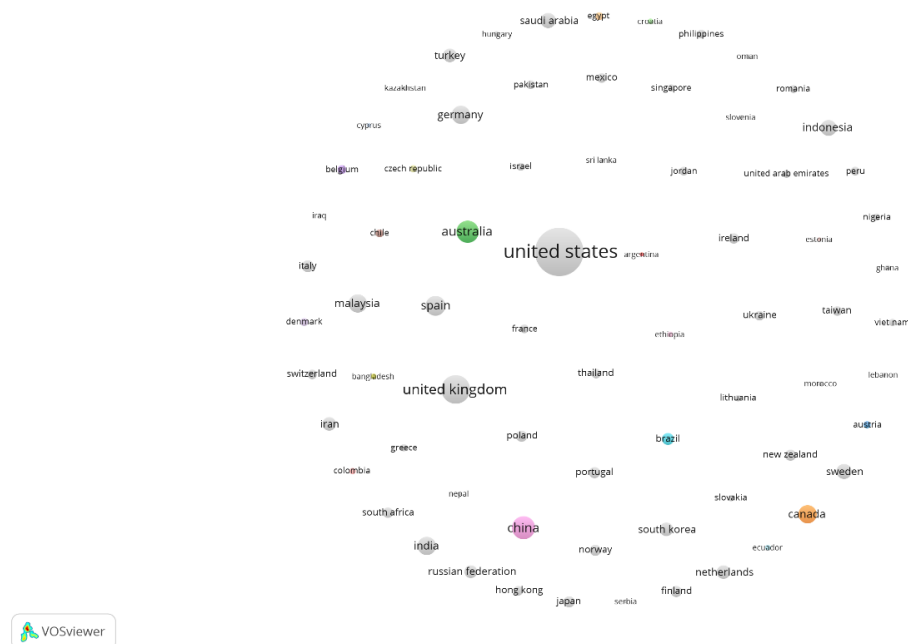


Figure 3. Network visualization maps of countries based on publications.

Figure 3 provides a comprehensive overview of the global contribution to publications related to stress among students. The analysis reveals that the United States emerges as the leading contributor, making a substantial impact on the scholarly discourse surrounding student stress. Following closely in prominence are the United Kingdom, Australia, China, and Spain, each playing significant roles in generating a wealth of academic content on this critical topic. The dominance of the United States in terms of the sheer volume of publications underscores the nation's

extensive engagement and commitment to understanding and addressing the complexities of student stress within educational contexts. This trend aligns with the recognition of stress as a pervasive issue in the American higher education system and emphasizes the concerted efforts invested in research and scholarship to enhance student well-being.

The contributions from the United Kingdom, Australia, China, and Spain further highlight the global nature of the discourse on student stress, signifying a collective commitment to advancing

knowledge in this field. These nations' roles in shaping the narrative on student stress underscore the universal importance of the topic and the shared responsibility to explore effective interventions and support mechanisms. In essence, Figure 3 not only identifies the primary contributors to the literature on stress among students but also emphasizes the collaborative

and international effort to address this critical aspect of student well-being. The geographical distribution of contributions mirrors the universality of the issue and highlights the need for global cooperation in developing holistic approaches to mitigate the impact of stress on students worldwide.

4.3 Publication by Number of Authors in Years

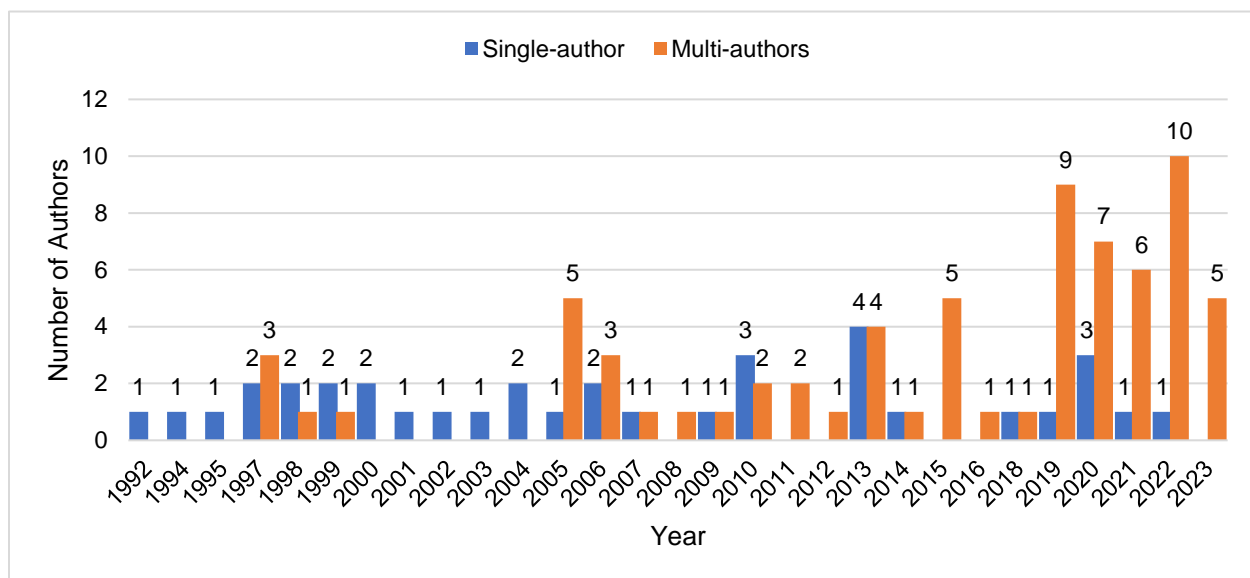


Figure 4. Publication by Number of Authors in Years

The analysis of publications by the number of authors over the years from 1992 to 2023 reveals intriguing patterns in the collaborative nature of research on stress among students. In the earlier years, particularly in 1992-1999, a predominant trend of single-author publications is evident. This trend is punctuated by occasional instances of collaborative efforts, such as in 1997, 1998, 1999, and 2000, where multiple authors contributed to publications. An interesting deviation from the single-author dominance occurs in 2005, marking a significant shift towards collaborative research endeavors. The subsequent years, especially in 2006, 2013, 2015, and 2019, witness a substantial increase in publications with multiple authors, indicating a growing inclination towards collective scholarly contributions. Notably, 2019 emerges as a

peak year for collaborative efforts, with a considerable number of publications featuring multiple authors. The trend of single-author publications resurfaces in 2020, with notable exceptions in 2008, 2011, 2012, 2015, 2016, and 2023. Conversely, the years 2020, 2021, and 2022 demonstrate a resurgence of collaborative efforts, reaching a pinnacle in 2022 with the highest number of multiple-author publications recorded. This nuanced analysis suggests a dynamic evolution in the collaborative nature of research on stress among students. The shift from predominantly single-author works to an increasing prevalence of multiple-author collaborations underscores the recognition of the interdisciplinary and complex nature of the subject, encouraging diverse perspectives and expertise to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of student stress.

4.4 Publications by Sources Titles and Documents

Table 1. Top 3 highly cited articles

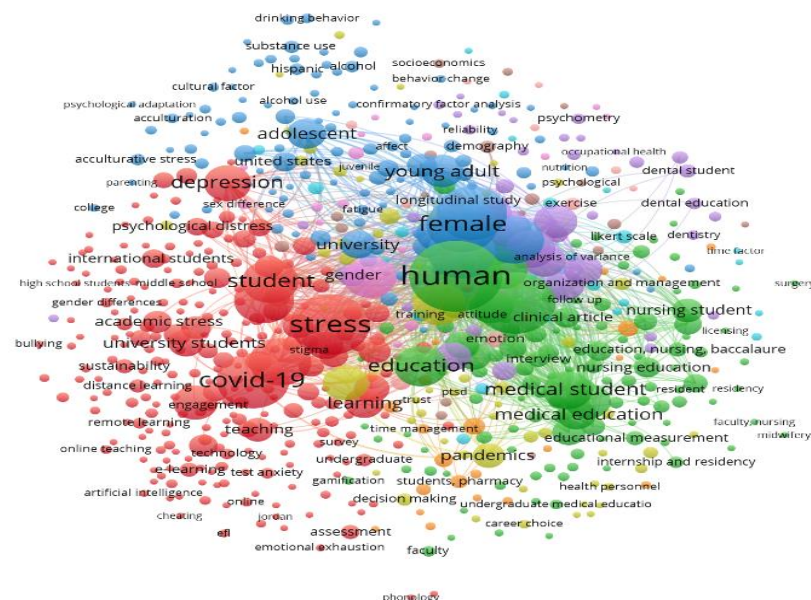
No.	Author(s)	Title	Source Title	TC	C/Y
1	Hasan N.; Bao Y. (2020)	Impact of “e-Learning crack-up” perception on psychological distress among college students during COVID-19 pandemic: A mediating role of “fear of academic year loss”	Children and Youth Services Review	320	64.00
2	Rehman U.; Shah Nawaz M.G.; Khan N.H.; Kharshiing K.D.; Khursheed M.; Gupta K.; Kashyap D.; Uniyal R. (2021)	Depression, Anxiety and Stress Among Indians in Times of Covid-19 Lockdown	Community Mental Health Journal	296	74.00
3	Shah S.M.A.; Mohammad D.; Qureshi M.F.H.; Abbas M.Z.; Aleem S. (2021)	Prevalence, Psychological Responses and Associated Correlates of Depression, Anxiety and Stress in a Global Population, During the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Pandemic	Community Mental Health Journal	280	70.00

Table 1 shows the top three highly cited articles that provide significant contributions to the understanding of stress among students, particularly during the unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Topping the list is Hasan and Bao's (2020) article titled "Impact of 'e-Learning crack-up' perception on psychological distress among college students during COVID-19 pandemic: A mediating role of 'fear of academic year loss'" published in the Children and Youth Services Review. This study delves into the psychological impact of the sudden transition to e-learning and its association with distress among college students, emphasizing the mediating role of the fear of academic year loss. With an impressive total citation count of 320 and an average of 64 citations per year, it attests to the profound relevance of understanding the mental health implications of the pandemic on students. Following closely is the work of Rehman et al. (2021) titled "Depression, Anxiety and Stress Among Indians in Times of Covid-19 Lockdown," published in the Community Mental Health Journal. This research investigates the prevalence of depression, anxiety, and

stress among the Indian population during the COVID-19 lockdown, shedding light on the profound psychological impact of the pandemic. With a total citation count of 296 and an average of 74 citations per year, it underscores the significance of studying mental health challenges in diverse populations during crisis situations. Lastly, Shah et al.'s (2021) article titled "Prevalence, Psychological Responses and Associated Correlates of Depression, Anxiety and Stress in a Global Population, During the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Pandemic" in the Community Mental Health Journal explores the global prevalence of depression, anxiety, and stress during the pandemic. With a total citation count of 280 and an average of 70 citations per year, this research provides a comprehensive examination of the psychological responses to the global crisis, highlighting associated correlates. Together, these highly cited articles contribute valuable insights into the psychological toll of the COVID-19 pandemic on individuals, with a specific focus on students, emphasizing the global significance of addressing mental health challenges during times of crisis.

Source Title	TP	NCA	NCP	TC	C/P	C/CP	h-index
Sustainability (Switzerland)	97	428	84	1160	11.96	13.81	17
Journal of Educational and Social Research	10	30	4	18	1.80	4.50	1
Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business	1	2	1	16	16.00	16.00	1
Critical Perspectives on Accounting	1	1	1	8	8.00	8.00	1

4.5 Most Used Keyword



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Figure 5 serves as a visual representation of the author keywords associated with the discourse on stress among students. A meticulous examination has identified a comprehensive set of 697 keywords, each occurring at least once in the body of literature under consideration. Notably, the top keywords that have surfaced as focal points in this extensive discussion include "human," emphasizing the human-centric nature of stress exploration; "stress," the primary theme of the investigation; "Covid-19," underscoring the pervasive impact of the global pandemic on student stress; "female," signaling attention to potential gender-specific nuances; and "student," representing the central demographic of interest. These key terms have exhibited a notable frequency of occurrence, signifying their prominence within the scholarly discourse. The diversity and breadth of the identified keywords suggest a nuanced and multifaceted exploration of stress among students. The inclusion of terms like "human" underscores the holistic consideration of the individuals experiencing stress, while the focus on "Covid-19" highlights the contemporary relevance of understanding stress in the context of a global health crisis. The observation of high-frequency keywords such as "female" indicates a recognition of potential gender-specific variations in the experience of student stress, adding a layer of complexity to the overall discussion. In essence, Figure 5 provides a valuable visual summary of the salient keywords permeating the literature on stress among students, offering a glimpse into the thematic richness and multidimensional nature of research in this domain. The prominence of certain keywords not only reflects current concerns but also guides future avenues of exploration within the broader landscape of student well-being.

4.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, this comprehensive study on stress among students offers a nuanced and insightful exploration of the multifaceted landscape within academic settings. Through an extensive bibliometric analysis of Scopus publications from 2019 to 2023, key trends, contributing factors, and coping

mechanisms have been systematically examined. The observed upward trajectory in the number of publications over the years underscores the growing scholarly interest and recognition of the significance of student stress. The top-cited articles provide critical insights into the psychological impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting the global relevance of understanding and addressing stress among students. Noteworthy contributions from top source titles, such as "Sustainability (Switzerland)," showcase the dynamism and impact of ongoing research endeavors Thoti (2024). The identification of active keywords, including "Covid-19" and "female," reflects a contemporary and inclusive approach to understanding stress, considering both the global context and potential gender-specific nuances. Collaborative research efforts, as evidenced by the number of authors in publications, reveal a shift towards a more interdisciplinary and collective exploration of this crucial topic. The global distribution of research contributions, particularly from the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, China, and Spain, emphasizes the universal nature of student stress and the shared commitment to addressing its challenges, Thoti (2022). Overall, this study not only synthesizes existing knowledge but also provides a roadmap for future research directions in understanding and mitigating stress among students. The findings presented herein are poised to inform educators, policymakers, and mental health professionals, facilitating the development of targeted interventions and support systems to enhance student well-being in the evolving landscape of academic pressures. As student stress continues to evolve, this study serves as a valuable resource, contributing to the ongoing discourse and efforts aimed at fostering healthier academic environments.

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