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Scientific Production on Venezuelan Migration: A Bibliometric Analysis

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Abstract

The International Organization for Migration adheres to the notion that migration involves the displacement of individuals from one place to another, whether temporarily or permanently, whether voluntarily or forcibly, across international borders or within a country, and that these movements generate significant impacts on both the societies of origin and destination, as well as on the migrants themselves. This study focuses on a documentary review aimed at addressing the following questions: How is migration research approached in different countries? What is the volume of scientific production on this subject? Within the aforementioned context, the present work encompasses various types of documents published between 2012 and 2022, authored in English, and disseminated through the SCOPUS database.

To undertake the analysis, a combination of tools such as VOSviewer, Biblioshiny, and Excel was employed. These tools facilitated the identification of clusters, co-occurrence frequencies, and nodes within the network. From the bibliometric analysis of Venezuelan migration, key years of high citation impact stand out, despite a relatively lower output of articles, thereby underscoring the principle of quality over quantity. The leadership of the United States, Colombia, and Venezuela in publications underscores their interest and relevance in this domain. Global scientific cooperation and the Bradford Law reveal patterns of thematic concentration within journals, influenced by prestige and preferences.

Keywords: *Migration, Human displacement, Migration impact.*

Introduction

According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM, 2018), migration should be considered as part of demographic processes that has to do with birth, morbidity, and mortality, leading to changes in population size and mobility responses aimed at improving quality of life and fulfilling emotional needs (IOM, 2020). On the other hand, the World Health Organization (WHO) defines migration as a complex phenomenon involving the crossing of borders and settling in a place different from the country of origin. It encompasses legal, cultural, and social aspects that impact both migrants and the receiving and original societies (Méndez & Gómez, 2022). Likewise, the United Nations

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High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) states that migration involves the voluntary movement of individuals or groups across borders in search of better economic opportunities, subject to specific protections under international law (Sánchez, 2018).

Migration is known from different perspectives; however, at its core, it entails the movement of individuals amidst societies and nations. Furthermore, the migratory phenomenon constitutes a perpetual element in history, driven by diverse individual and collective motivations, such as natural disasters, unmet needs, persecutions, and the pursuit of advancement (Rodicio and Sarceda, 2019). The spectrum of migratory experiences, ranging from benevolent to hostile, underscores the paramountcy of safeguarding human rights in displacement scenarios. Rivas (2018) accentuates that migration embodies a fundamental human right, representing a quest for amelioration and dignity amid adversities (Celis and Aierdi, 2015).

History is enriched by the lived narratives of migrants who confront challenges and opportunities in their pursuit of a better future. The Venezuelan exodus mirrors the intricate interplay between economic and political crises, blockades, and aspirations for an improved life. Recession, inflation, and political instability propel migration, compelling the populace to seek prospects beyond their homeland. This migration impacts both host countries and Venezuela, straining welfare systems and resulting in remittance loss. According to scholarly literature, Venezuelan migration arises in response to unmet essential needs and security, exerting influence on welfare systems, the labor market, and remittances. While governments strive to address the situation through regularization and assistance, migration affects the cultural diversity and identity of host countries, thus underscoring its intricate ramifications.

The Venezuelan migratory process can be divided into stages that unveil distinct migrant profiles, ranging from those who choose non-regional destinations due to economic factors to those seeking survival in neighboring countries. Extra-regional migration is comprehended through an individual decision-making lens, wherein economic factors and enhancement of well-being guide migratory choices.

Throughout this document, theoretical frameworks of migration and some studies concerning Venezuelan migration are considered; methodological underpinnings are specified; and the scholarly output that has been developed is analyzed to arrive at conclusions. The results enable an understanding of the vested interest of certain countries, journals, and authors in the subject matter, as well as the cooperation among them to conduct research on the migration of Venezuelans.

Theoretical Framework

The migratory experience has been significant in the last three decades, especially in societies that host migrants. This is influenced not only by flows from countries with emerging economies but also by those considered role models due to their capacity for growth and economic development (Massey, 2000). Consequently, population mobility has been constant and steadily increasing throughout history. It is an age-old response experienced by humankind, varying in intensity and driven by diverse interests (Solano-Magaleno et al., 2023). These interests encompass, among others: natural disasters, education, inadequate coverage of basic needs, political and racial persecutions, as well as homophobic discriminations, which have both voluntarily and involuntarily motivated the migratory phenomenon (León, 2015). Furthermore, Guillén et al. (2019) assert that the reasons for migration are manifold, spanning experiences that can range from benevolent to hostile and cruel, all of which have laid the foundations of migration.

It is plausible that the context provided in the preceding paragraph corroborates Rivas' (2018) perspective, which underscores migration as a fundamental human right, positing that the denial of this right contradicts individuals' personal freedom to seek improved

living conditions or confront adverse challenges. This approach advocates for access to solutions for essential needs and the safeguarding of individuals' integrity and dignity in perilous situations. Moreover, it is pertinent to elucidate that over decades, humanity's history has facilitated the compilation of diverse migratory events across the globe; endeavors have been undertaken to depict and expound upon the migratory phenomenon, resulting in a myriad of theories addressing various facets of migratory movements (Gutiérrez et al., 2020). Therefore, social contact networks and relationships exert influence on migration decisions and the attainment of opportunities in the destination country (Mora, 2009). Likewise, economic, political, and social drivers propelling emigration, alongside factors attracting migrants to host countries (Ribas, 2018), as well as education, skills, and experience, impact the decision to migrate and the integration into the host society (Hernández et al., 2023).

The Venezuelan exodus reflects the economic and political crisis, with the incidence of various embargoes and prohibitions being promoted by countries aiming to alter the governance interests of Venezuela. This has led, on one hand, to shortages of basic goods and commodities, as well as the exile and emigration of its population to neighboring countries (Amnesty International, 2019). The aforementioned exposition suggests that economic recession, inflation, and political instability in Venezuela have been driving factors for emigration. The population, in its pursuit to meet basic needs, faces limited opportunities within the country (Pineda and Ávila, 2019). Bernal (2022) reinforces that adverse economic, social, and political aspects in Venezuela influence migration, transforming it into a strategy to enhance the quality of life and access improved opportunities in host destinations.

In summary, according to Martínez and Plata (2021), Venezuelan migration arises in response to the lack of food, medicine, and essential services, as well as violence and insecurity. This impacts both host countries, which grapple with changes in the labor market and welfare systems, and Venezuela itself, which experiences the loss of its workforce and remittances (Silva, 2022). Governments are taking measures to address this situation, seeking regularization and humanitarian assistance. Furthermore, this migration influences the cultural diversity and identity of host countries, highlighting the complexity of its effects across multiple dimensions (Buitrago, 2023).

The Venezuelan migratory process, according to Álvarez and Phélan (2019), can be divided into two stages. The first spans the initial 14 years of the current century and is characterized by population movements to non-regional destinations, notably from Venezuela to the United States, accounting for approximately 14% of the total emigration. In this phase, it is observed that individuals belong to middle and upper-middle socioeconomic strata, implying that their migration is not primarily driven by precarious conditions or threats to their security (García and Restrepo, 2019). Consequently, the displacements of these emigrants hold a distinct comfort element due to the economic capacity of the travelers, given that they were able to afford means of transportation such as air travel, for instance, arriving with budgets that provided maneuverability in terms of housing, sustenance, and leisure (García and Restrepo, 2019).

The perspective of extra-regional migration can be comprehended through the individual decision-making approach proposed by Todaro (1969), a framework that underscores the influence of economic factors in shaping migratory choices. This approach highlights how the pursuit of better opportunities and living conditions guides individual decisions to migrate towards non-regional destinations. In this context, the migratory process is rooted in the personal choice to emigrate, driven by a logic of economic rationality with the aim of enhancing individual well-being, as mentioned by Gómez (2010).

As for the second phase, ongoing since the mid-2020s, it is characterized, first and foremost, by the emigration of impoverished individuals living in precarious conditions. Consequently, their movements are primarily on foot. Second, this phase is marked by

migratory patterns among countries in the southern region that are purportedly in better conditions than Venezuela (Torres and González, 2023). This second phase encompasses the remaining 84% of the total emigrants, who, as per Álvarez and Phélan (2020), have transformed into wanderers seeking survival. Unlike the previous group, these individuals are undocumented in the countries to which they relocate.

However, according to Sotelo (2023), Venezuelan migrants, as well as those from other nations, are overseen to ensure dignified human treatment by institutions such as the UNHCR and IOM. It is from these institutions that the experiences of Venezuelan migrants are documented, especially those lived during the pandemic and post-pandemic periods, wherein their access to healthcare and food security has become more precarious. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees - UNHCR - has been globally engaged since 1950 in matters concerning the human rights of refugee migrants on a global scale. Through this endeavor, lives have been saved, and the conditions of migrating refugees have been improved (Armijos and Ama, 2023).

Regarding the International Organization for Migration - IOM, its establishment took place one year after the inception of the UNHCR, with the purpose of fostering migration that is humane, ensuring the dignity of all those who, voluntarily or involuntarily, are engaged in migratory movements.

These organizations, due to their distinctive nature, align with the objectives of the United Nations - UN, which, as of 2022, comprises 193 member countries sharing the vision of maintaining global peace and security, promoting cooperation among nations, and upholding human rights (UNHCR, 2022).

Based on the literature review, it can be concluded that Venezuelan migration has evolved in two phases, with movements towards non-regional destinations in the first decade of the 21st century and a broader exodus towards countries in the southern region in the latter half of the decade. This phenomenon is influenced by socio-economic and political factors that impact both recipient countries and Venezuela, engendering changes in the labor market and welfare systems. Despite the challenges, institutions such as UNHCR and IOM, which strive to ensure the dignity and rights of migrants, apathy and segregation towards the communities that emigrate is maintained (Marín and Miranda, 2023).

Methodology

The questions posed within the context of bibliometric analysis were addressed through the methodology proposed by Kart and Kart (2021). This methodology is founded on the understanding that bibliometric analysis involves a profound and quantitative assessment of the existing literature within a specific field of study. Following the methodological suggestion put forth by Castillo-Paredes et al. (2022), a series of methodological phases were undertaken with the explicit purpose of achieving and fulfilling the objectives set forth for this study. These phases encompassed: 1. Identification of keywords; 2. Search and selection of studies; 3. Data extraction; 4. Data analysis; 5. Interpretation of results; and 6. presentation of results. Through these stages, the following respective outcomes were achieved: the selection of relevant keywords, a comprehensive search across academic databases employing exclusion and inclusion criteria, the structuring of the format for information extraction, quantitative analysis of the extracted data, alignment of objectives with obtained results, and the creation of a report adhering to scientific publication guidelines.

In perspective, the methodology employed in this bibliometric study is grounded in a rigorous and structured approach to gather and analyze a wide array of pertinent documents. The process of data selection and treatment was carried out systematically, ensuring objectivity and reliability in the obtained results.

Firstly, a set of search and exclusion criteria was established to enable precise document selection, thereby ensuring that the analyzed material remained coherent and relevant to the study's objectives. The Scopus database served as the primary source for the search, ensuring access to a variety of publication types, such as articles, conference papers, book chapters, and reports, all in English.

The quantity of scrutinized documents was substantial, amounting to 414, signifying a thorough journey in collecting pertinent information. The search period, spanning from January 2012 to December 2022, provided an updated and representative outlook on trends and approaches within the Venezuelan migration theme.

Tools such as VOSviewer and Biblioshiny were utilized for analysis, facilitating an in-depth examination of the information structure. Particularly, VOSviewer was employed to conduct co-occurrence analysis, a valuable technique for identifying patterns and relationships within the document network. Considering measures of centrality and influence in node analysis adds an additional dimension to the study, enabling the identification of influential documents and key connections.

Data collection and recording were carried out using the Microsoft Excel® program, reflecting a disciplined and organized approach in information management. This ensured precision and ease in data handling, consequently contributing to the reliability and validity of the results.

Results and Discussion

According to the data presented in Table 1, an intriguing trend in article production and its impact over the years becomes evident. The year 2022 exhibits a moderate article production, totaling 90. The generated citation count (104) is relatively low in comparison to the number of published articles. In 2020, a total of 75 articles were produced, and these have had a significant impact in terms of citations, totaling 448. This suggests that the work carried out in this year has captured the attention and interest of the scientific community. The year 2017 displays a lower article production, with only 17 published. However, these articles have been widely cited, accumulating a total of 501 citations. In 2014, 21 articles were produced, amassing a total of 539 citations. Furthermore, the year 2013 shows a slightly higher article production compared to preceding years. These 23 articles have generated a total of 570 citations.

Table 1 Annual Scientific Production

Year Citations				
Year	N° of Developed Articles	%	Citations	%
2022	90	22%	104	2,50%
2021	70	17%	387	9,40%
2020	75	18%	448	10,90%
2019	42	10%	378	9,20%
2018	27	7%	293	7,10%
2017	19	5%	501	12,20%
2016	24	6%	400	9,70%
2015	11	3%	117	2,80%
2014	21	5%	539	13,10%
2013	23	6%	570	13,80%
2012	12	3%	362	8,80%

Note: Data sourced from Scopus.

Scientific Collaboration among Countries

The United States leads in terms of the quantity of publications related to Venezuelan migration with 146 documents. This could be attributed to its significance as a migratory destination and a hub for academic research. Colombia holds the second position in terms of research and publications, contributing 78 documents. Given that it is one of the neighboring countries most affected by Venezuelan migration, a significant interest in this topic is understandable.

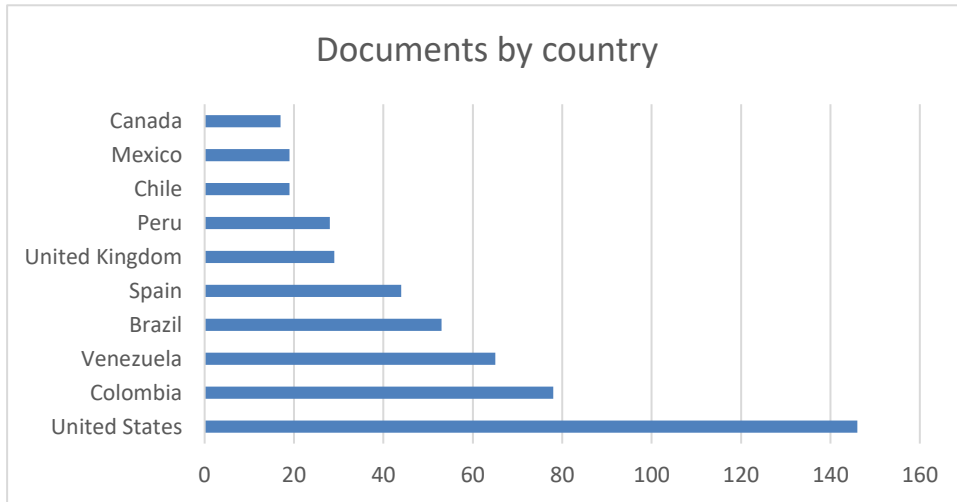


Figure 1 Documents by Country or Territory

Despite the internal situation, Venezuela ranks third in terms of publications. This could indicate an internal interest in comprehending and addressing migration from a local perspective. Brazil, Peru, Chile, and Mexico have also shown interest in the topic, contributing 53, 28, 19, and 19 documents respectively. Spain, as a recipient country of Venezuelan migrants in Europe, demonstrates significant interest in the matter, albeit on a smaller scale compared to the American nations, with 44 publications. Similarly, the United Kingdom (29) and Canada (17), despite their geographical distance, have generated information on Venezuelan migration.

In essence, the United States, Colombia, and Venezuela are the top three countries with the highest number of research and publications concerning the migratory phenomenon of Venezuela. This reflects the significance of migration and how it impacts countries of origin, transit, and destination. Other countries on the list also display interest and effort in understanding and addressing this topic from various perspectives.

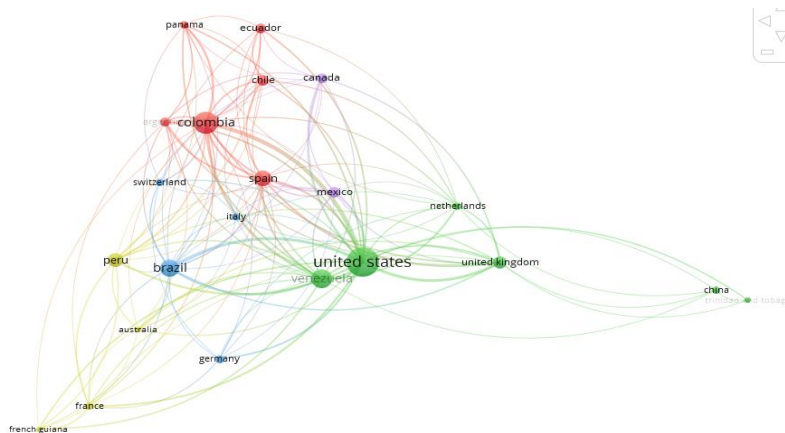


Figure 2 Distribution by country of developed studies.

Note: Information developed in VOSviewer from Scopus data by the authors.

However, concerning scientific cooperation among nations, there has been a pronounced increase in recent times, leading to the formation of highly significant collaboration networks among various institutions and research teams (Cárdenas, 2021). Figure 2 illustrates collaboration networks where meaningful connections have been established among the United States, Colombia, Brazil, Peru, Venezuela, and Spain. These connections arise as a result of cooperation and joint effort in producing scientific works by researchers who share an interest in the realm of Venezuelan migration to different nations and regions.

Table 2 Prominent Authors in Scientific Production.

Order	Authors	#x of docs.	H-index	Institution	Country
1	Freier LF	6	11	Universidad del Pacífico	Lima, Peru
2	Paniz-Mondolfi A	6	36	Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai,	New York, United States
3	Bahamondes L	5	39	Universidade Estadual de Campinas	Campinas, Brazil
4	Grillet ME	5	21	Universidad Central de Venezuela	Caracas, Venezuela
5	Rodríguez-Morales AJ	5	58	Fundación Universitaria Autónoma de las Américas	Medellin, Colombia
6	Suárez JA	5	17	Gorgas Memorial Institute for Health Studies,	Panamá City, Panamá
7	Villegas L	5	21	Asociación Civil Impacto Social	Bolívar, Venezuela
8	Marchesini P	4	11	MS	Brasilia, Brazil
9	Rull V	4	36	Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas,	Madrid, Spain
10	Schwartz SJ	4	71	The University of Texas at Austin,	Austin, United States
11	Seelke CR	4	2	Congressional Research Service,	Washington, D.C., United States
12	Vegas-Vilarrúbia T	4	24	Universitat de Barcelona,	Barcelona, Spain
13	Brasil C	3	3	Municipality of Boa Vista	Boa Vista, Brazil
14	Escalante AA	3	50	Temple University	Philadelphia, United States
15	Escobar, Marcos E	3	11	Universidad Del Zulia	Maracaibo, Venezuela
16	Fernández-Niño Ja	3	17	Johns Hopkins University.	Baltimore, United States
17	Hobson Ka	3	92	Environment and Climate Change Canada,	Gatineau, Canada
18	Maldonado-Molina, Mildred	3	28	University of Florida Info	Gainesville, United States
19	Musset, Lise	3	25	Organisation Mondiale de la Santé	Geneva, Switzerland
20	Márquez, Gonzalo	3	13	Universidad de Huelva	Huelva, Spain

Note: Information based on Scopus data.

Visualizations of author collaboration networks are presented in Figure 3. In this figure, it can be observed that prominent names in the network include Alvarado and Rebello, Canals, Heredia, Irons, Moreno, Seelke, Soeiro, Rocha, and Surita, as well as Soto and Gil. However, despite Figure 3 depicting a co-authorship network divided into 12 clusters, a clear grouping among them is not discernible. These results are supported by the information provided in Table 3, which identifies the most influential authors in the network and underscores limited collaboration among them. To construct this network, authors who had published at least two documents ($n = 2$) were selected, resulting in a total of 8 authors out of the initially identified 1720. In the network analysis, the link strength (ls) metric was employed, reflecting the total power of co-authorship connections between a researcher and other collaborators.

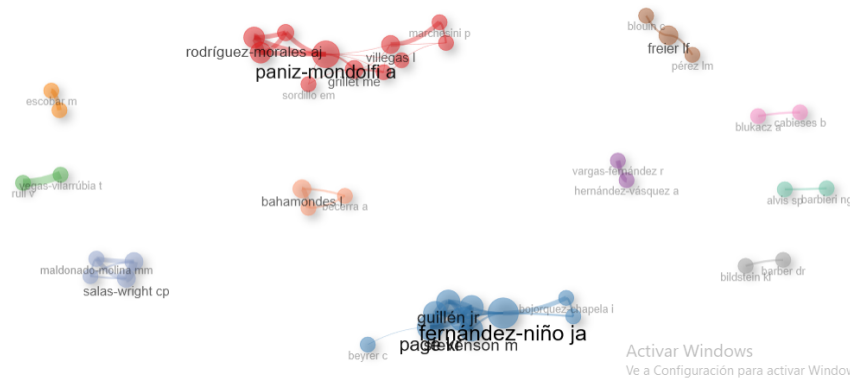


Figure 3. Collaboration network between authors

Note: Information developed in Bibliometrix from Scopus data by the authors.

Table 3. Co-authoring cluster and publication topics

Cluster	No. of researchers	Members	Principal researcher	Publication topics
Dark red	2	Alvarado y Rebello	Alvarado M.V.	Immunology; Agricultural and Biological Sciences
Green	1	Canals R.	Canals R.	Social Sciences; Arts and Humanities; Psychology
Dark blue	1	Heredia, J.	Heredia J.	Arts and Humanities; Social Sciences
Yellow	1	Irons, R.	Irons, R.	Social Sciences; Arts and Humanities; Psychology
Purple	1	Moreno, A.	Moreno, A.	Social Sciences; Arts and Humanities; Psychology
Aquamarine Blue	1	Seelke C.R.	Seelke C.R.	Social Sciences; Environmental Science; Agricultural and Biological Sciences; Business, Management and Accounting
Orange	3	Soeiro, R.; Rocha, L.; Surita	Soeiro, R.	Social Sciences; Multidisciplinary
Pink	2	Soto, S.; Gil, F.	Soto, S:	Social Sciences

Note: Information developed by the authors based on Scopus data.

Concentration-Dispersion of Documents

The concept of Bradford's Law was employed to analyze the distribution and dispersion of information in scientific journals related to Venezuelan migration. The aim was to explore how the quantity of journals and articles published in this field relates and comprehending their contribution to society. Throughout the period spanning from 2012 to 2022, a total of 336 journals were identified that accepted works on this topic.

The evaluation of the distribution of published documents revealed the existence of three distinct zones. Zone 1 includes fifty-one journals, accounting for 15% of the total, but

concentrating 36% of the production, equivalent to 150 documents. In contrast, Zone 2 is composed of 129 journals, representing 38% of the set, and concentrating 34% of the articles. As for Zone 3, 156 journals were identified (46%), contributing 30% of the documents (see details in Table 4).

As shown in Table 4, approximately a third of the documents (150) are clustered within 51 journals, while the remaining two-thirds of the publications are distributed among 129 and 156 journals, respectively. In other words, the zone with fewer journals centralizes 36% of the articles on the topic under consideration. On the other hand, zone 3 holds a higher proportion of journals with a smaller number of published articles. This arises from the existing disparities in production, where areas of high productivity stand out alongside peripheral areas with more limited output.

Table 4. Distribution of Journals and Articles by Zone - Bradford Model. 2012-2022

Zone	N° magazines per zone	% magazines	N° articles	% articles per zone	Average articles per magazine in the zones
1	51	15%	150	36%	2,9
2	129	38%	140	34%	1,1
3	156	46%	124	30%	1,0
Total	336	100%	414	100%	

Note: Information developed by the authors based on Scopus data.

Regarding institutional affiliation, it is evident that the majority of the works are concentrated in journals with high values in the SJR (Scimago Journal Rank) indicator relative to the number of articles they publish. It is noteworthy that most publications are situated in journals falling within the first quartile (Q1), as reflected in the details presented in Table 5. Additionally, it was discovered that the predominant category among prominent journals falls under the Social Sciences field, with a focus on areas such as demography, sociology, geography, planning and development, political science, international relations, as well as public health.

Table 5. Journals with the Highest Thematic Production in the Field

Journal	N° Docs	SJR 2020	quartile	Category
Plos One	8	0,885	Q1	Multidisciplinary
Journal Of Migration And Health	6	1.445	Q1	Social Sciences: Demography, Sociology and Political Health
Revista Panamericana De Salud Publica Pan American Journal Of Public Health	6	0,607	Q2	Public Health
Revista Peruana de Medicina de Experimental y Salud Publica	6	0,320	Q3	Public Health
Lancet	5	14,607	Q1	General Medicine
Migraciones	5	0,324	Q2	Social Sciences: Cultural, Sciences: Demography
Travel Medicine And Infectious Disease	5	1,932	Q1	Public Health
Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies	4	1,435	Q1	Arts and Humanities; Demography
Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health	4	0,813	Q2	Public Health
Bulletin of Latin American Research	3	0,344	Q2	Social Sciences: Geography, Planning and Development
Colombia Internacional	3	0,436	Q1	Social Sciences: Political Science and International Relations, sociology
International Migration	3	0,794	Q1	Social Sciences: Demography

Note: Information developed by the authors based on Scopus data.

Main Descriptors

According to the obtained data, the study of migration in general, and of Venezuelans in particular, has an impact on both origin and destination societies (CEPAL, 2019). This migrant flow brings about political, economic, and social consequences in both countries, affecting areas such as the labor market, social security, and the economy at large. Additionally, it is crucial for addressing human rights issues and social justice. Venezuelan migration could involve topics like access to education, healthcare, and decent work for migrants and refugees. The analysis of the frequency and relationships among the different keywords in the 414 documents resulting from the search are presented below:

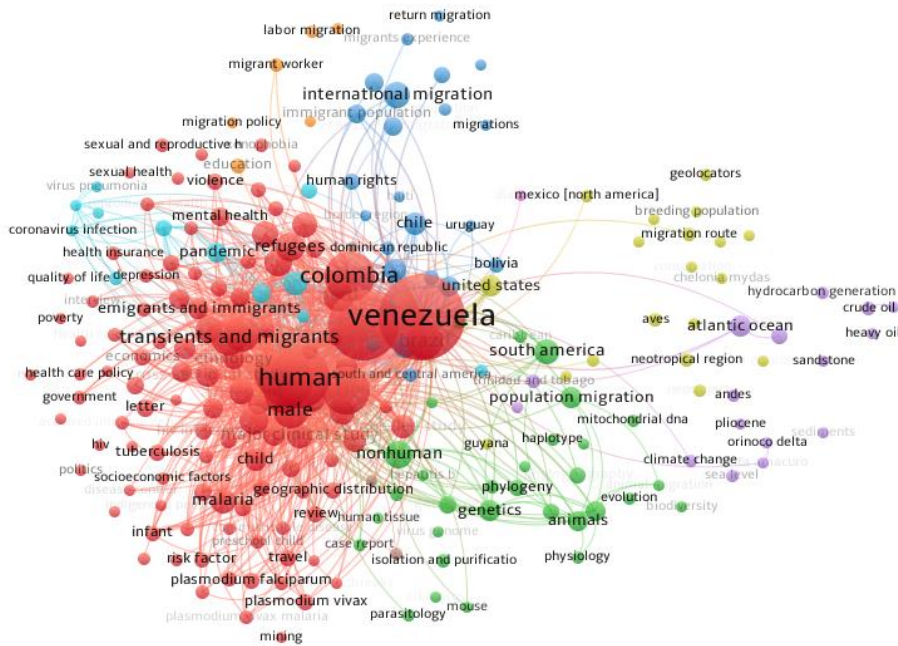


Figure 4. Keyword Co-occurrence

Evolution of the Theme

A study was conducted on the thematic evolution in the research field through thematic areas, as shown in Figure 5. The obtained results confirm the field's consistency and support the intellectual framework that emerges within the study topic (Donthu et al., 2023). In the case of this particular study, Venezuelan migration was investigated, and it was found that this topic has been and continues to be of interest. It was also observed that the pandemic period was a time when migrations increased significantly, especially to Latin American countries, highlighting the reality of migration policies aimed at mitigating impacts across various sectors.

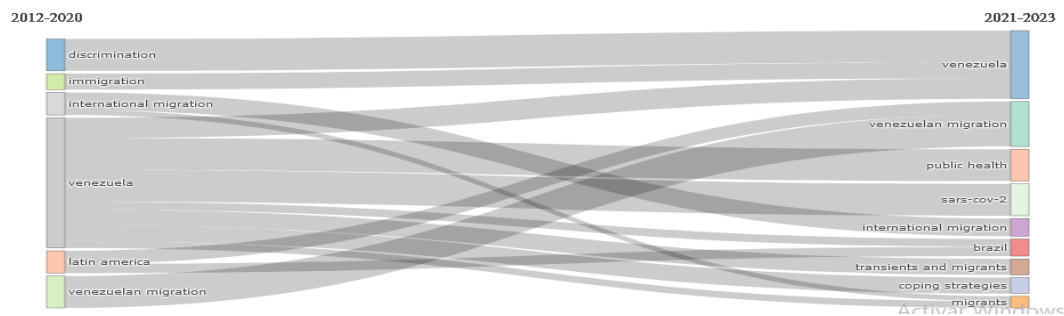


Figure 5 Thematic Evolution.

Conclusions

Through the conducted bibliometric analysis on Venezuelan migration, noteworthy elements have emerged in terms of article production and impact. Thus, the following years stand out: 2020, 2017, 2014, and 2013, which have generated a high number of citations despite the lower article output compared to other years. This underscores the importance of considering not only the quantity of produced articles but also the quality and relevance of their content.

On another note, at a geographical level, contributions from the United States, Colombia, and Venezuela stand out, leading in the number of publications. This corroborates, in line with the reviewed literature, that the countries most impacted by migration, whether due to political interests, proximity, or direct experience, are the most interested and thus engage from various perspectives in addressing and producing content on the subject.

It is evident that scientific cooperation among nations has experienced a significant increase, forming collaborative research networks. These connections among the United States, Colombia, Brazil, Peru, Venezuela, and Spain reflect joint efforts in producing scientific work and demonstrate the global relevance of this research subject.

The application of the Bradford Law concept in the distribution of journals and articles yielded intriguing insights. By allowing the identification of three distinct concentration zones, this approach offers a novel perspective. The majority of articles reside in Zone 1, representing a smaller proportion of journals but concentrating a significant amount of output. This suggests that the concentration and dispersion of information within journals adhere to specific patterns in this field. Additionally, it underscores that the dissemination of knowledge is not uniform, following distinct concentration and distribution patterns in scientific journals, which can be influenced by factors such as thematic relevance, journal prestige, and researchers' preferences.

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