

Social-Emotional Competencies in High School Students: A Bibliometric Analysis

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Abstracts The development of socioemotional skills can serve as protection against the negative effects of stress and difficult situations in the classroom or at work. The aim of the study was to conduct a bibliometric study of the literature indexed in Scopus on socioemotional competencies in high school students from 2003 to 2023 worldwide. Methodologically, it was a quantitative bibliometric study. The scientific production indicators were generated from 191 documents selected from Scopus, using keywords in English ("social-emotional", "high school" and "students"). From 2013 to 2021, published papers increased (67.5%), indicating a growing interest in the subject of study. The United States is the country with the highest scientific production (65.4%), and Arizona State University with the most publications (n=8). The journal *Psychology in The Schools* had the highest publication (n=5), however, *School Psychology Quarterly* received more citations (n=302), with the author Elias, M.J. (n=6 papers) being the most cited (n=242). It is concluded that the implementation of cross-cutting programs involving socioemotional competence is increasing due to the promotion of interdisciplinarity of individuals affiliated with the globalized society. Therefore, when students have strong socio-emotional competencies, learning improves, and disruptive behaviors are reduced.

Keywords: High School, Scientific Production, Socioemotional Competence, Students.

1. INTRODUCTION

The study of emotional intelligence led to the creation of the social-emotional competence (SES) framework (Costa et al., 2021). In this sense, emotional intelligence, originally defined as the ability to control, manage, motivate and benefit from one's own and others' emotional states, made it possible to understand the existing differences in emotional competence among people (Prieto & González, 2022).

In that order of ideas, in terms of learning and development, the concept of socioemotional competencies gives priority to the bidirectional exchange between the individual and his or her environment (Molina-Montes et al., 2023; Suárez & Castro, 2022). Consequently, socioemotional competencies can be developed at any time, due to their basis in the application of learned attitudes, knowledge and personality traits (Morales & Flores, 2021).

Likewise, the consequences of socioemotional learning for educational quality, academic performance and success in life seem to be supported by significant scientific evidence (Vera et al., 2021; Llorent et al., 2021). According to Flores and Chasquibol (2021), adolescents whose emotional competencies are underdeveloped are more likely to be marginalized and at risk. Similarly, Narro-Sáenz and Maguiña-Vizcarra (2022) use socioemotional competencies as a predictor variable to classify students into groups of high and low academic performance.

For their part, in addition to cognitive skills, Martos-Cachi & Maguiña-Vizcarra (2022) argue that nurturing the social and emotional growth of students makes it possible to socio-personally solve the problem of school failure, a deterioration that manifests itself as the inability of a student to achieve the learning goals established by an educational center at a given grade level.

In addition, there are broad benefits associated with the implementation of interventions for the cultivation of students' social-emotional competencies, among which is the prevention of potential dangers in the classroom

(Torrijos & Serrate, 2021). In this way, they improve students' psychological adjustment, well-being, and interpersonal relationships, while reducing both the number of expulsions from class and the frequency of aggressions (Cedeño et al., 2022). This increases the likelihood that these students will participate in positive extracurricular activities and receive significant incentives for doing so (Aragundi & Game-Varas, 2021).

Likewise, training in social and emotional competencies can occur in a wide variety of contexts and have far-reaching effects in diverse situations such as: stress management and reducing the level of aggressiveness in the classroom (Salas et al., 2022; Bayona & Ahumada, 2022). In short, the educational environment is a crucial scenario in which students' socioemotional skills can be developed (López et al., 2020).

Given the transcendence of the topic, several studies have been conducted to address the foundations of socioemotional competencies, demonstrating how the issue of aggressiveness and school violence is the basis for many intervention initiatives (Zych & Ortega, 2021; Rojo, 2023). Consequently, numerous educational reforms have been proposed, many of which aim to improve students' social and emotional performance in school, which in turn affects their study skills, communication skills, values, and ability to coexist (Castro, 2019). Thus, bibliometric indicators are developed to quantify the results of the metric analysis of scientific production related to this subject or to various fields of study (Lagos & Pino, 2020; García et al., 2020).

In this context, bibliometrics refers to the practice of calculating and evaluating quantitative data on literary works and other published materials (Caló, 2022; Ribeiro & Aroni, 2019). In this sense, Leyva et al. (2023), point out that bibliometric analysis helps researchers to follow the evolution of scientific writings, to make inferences about the influence of works, and to allocate resources in the most productive way. In addition, it is used for scientific data collected and stored in databases to provide reliable information about the processes involved in scientific discovery (Sanz, 2022).

In this sense, studies point out that teachers should strive to improve their teaching methods to create dynamic classroom environments in which students can grow academically and personally, so that students actively participate in their own learning and develop the emotional regulation and social skills necessary to succeed in life (Lozano-Peña et al., 2022; Delgado-Villalobos & López-Riquelme, 2022). Thus, teacher flexibility, tolerance, and the ability to manage conflicts in a dialogic and constructive way are necessary to successfully improve students' social-emotional competence in the educational setting (Urosa, 2021; Gutiérrez-Torres & Buitrago-Velandia, 2019).

Therefore, it is crucial to explain and portray the academic community's understanding of trends in socioemotional competencies, categorizing the information according to publication, type of document, country, subject area, source, and authorship. Based on this premise, the study aims to conduct a bibliometric study of the literature indexed in Scopus on socioemotional competencies in high school students from 2003 to 2023, worldwide.

2. MATERIEL AND METHODS

A bibliometric analysis of the scientific production on socioemotional competencies in high school students was conducted. Bibliometrics, which includes both qualitative and quantitative results, was used to collect the data and perform the analysis of the material (Salinas and García, 2022). Likewise, the data used were extracted from publications worldwide, from the last twenty years (2003-2023) from Elsevier's Scopus database.

On the other hand, in the information selection procedure, their abstracts, titles and keywords were taken into account using the following search formula: ("social-emotional" AND "high school" AND "students") (Muñoz, 2019; Hernández et al., 2022). Filters were also created based on the information collected. The resulting metadata were extracted after applying filters based on characteristics such as year of publication (2003-2023) and document type. After eliminating duplicates and normalizing the metadata, a total of 286 were obtained, from which a sample of 191 documents was extracted.

Finally, the data on scientific production were subjected to a keyword co-occurrence analysis, which examined the frequency with which certain terms appeared. Specifically, the quantitative study of bibliometric data related to

socioemotional competencies in high school students (Florez-Fernández and Aguilera-Egua, 2020). These data include details such as year of publication, journal, country of publication, authors, type of paper, subject area, and author affiliation. Data for co-occurrence and source density maps were visualized using VOSviewer V_1.6.19, and descriptive statistics were compiled and analyzed in Excel.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The bibliometric analysis included 191 papers from 2003 to 2023 that were found using the Scopus database and focused on the topic of socioemotional competencies in high school students. Figure 1 shows an annual growth in scientific publications of 67.5%, or 129 scientific papers developed between 2013 and 2021. In addition, the year with the highest publication (n=34; 17.8%), was 2021, within the chosen time frame.

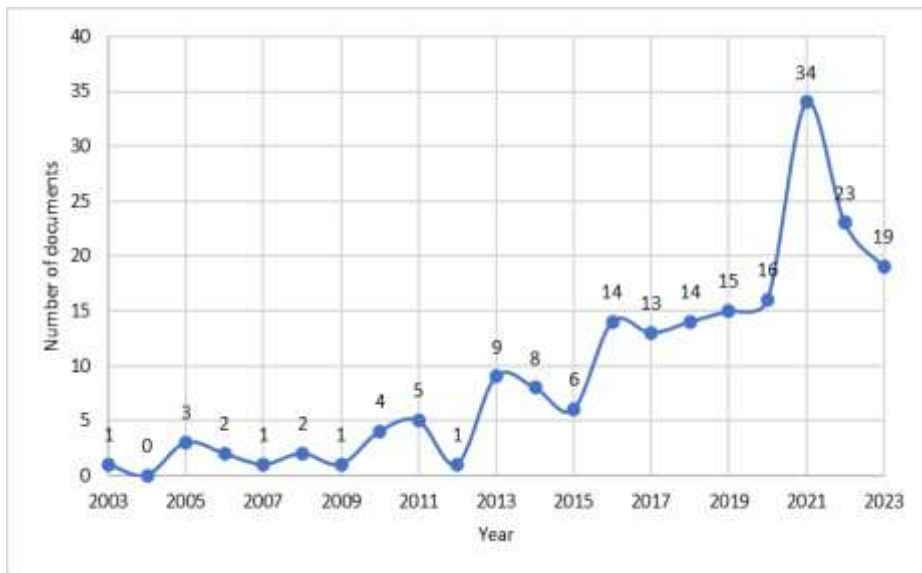


Figure 1. Papers published by year.

Table 1 provides a summary of the contributions of 37 countries to scientific production, with special emphasis on the countries in which research on this topic has been published. The United States is the country with the highest percentage of published papers (65.4%; n=125), followed by Australia (5.7%; n=11) and Canada (3.7%; n=7). In addition, the English language represents almost all the published material (98%), while Spanish accounts for only 2% of the papers developed.

Table 1. Publication of papers by country.

N°	Country	Number of documents	%	N°	Country	Number of documents	%
1	United States	125	65.4%	18	Sweden	2	1.0%
2	Australia	11	5.8%	19	Turkey	2	1.0%
3	Canada	7	3.7%	20	United Arab Emirates	2	1.0%
4	Israel	6	3.1%	21	Brazil	1	0.5%
5	Germany	4	2.1%	22	Chile	1	0.5%
6	Portugal	4	2.1%	23	China	1	0.5%
7	Singapore	4	2.1%	24	Denmark	1	0.5%
8	Spain	4	2.1%	25	France	1	0.5%
9	Netherlands	3	1.6%	26	Greece	1	0.5%
10	United Kingdom	3	1.6%	27	Iceland	1	0.5%
11	Croatia	2	1.0%	28	Italy	1	0.5%
12	India	2	1.0%	29	Japan	1	0.5%
13	Latvia	2	1.0%	30	Lithuania	1	0.5%

14	New Zealand	2	1.0%	31	Malaysia	1	0.5%
15	Peru	2	1.0%	32	Malta	1	0.5%
16	Romania	2	1.0%	33	Undefined	13	6.8%
17	South Korea	2	1.0%	Total countries		37	

This study uses information extracted from 118 academic journals as a source of data. Table 2 shows which are the main sources that have published the most articles on this topic. Most of the papers were published in Psychology in The Schools (n=5), followed by Journal of School Psychology, School Mental Health and School Psychology International, with four publications each. Similarly, the United States largely dominates the world's highest impact journals; the vast majority of these journals are in the top two quartiles of the impact factor.

Table 2. Publication of documents by source or journal.

Source or Magazine	Number of documents	Source or Magazine	Number of documents	Source or Magazine	Number of documents
Psychology in The Schools	5	European Journal of Teacher Education	2	Applied Developmental Science	1
Journal of School Psychology	4	International Journal of Emotional Education	2	Asia Pacific Education Review	1
School Mental Health	4	Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment	2	Asia Pacific Journal of Education	1
School Psychology International	4	Journal of Research on Leadership Education	2	Autism	1
American Journal of Orthopsychiatry	3	Journal of School Health	2	Child and Adolescent Mental Health	1
Early Education and Development	3	Middle School Journal	2	Child and Youth Services	1
Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology	3	Mindfulness	2	Child Indicators Research	1
Phi Delta Kappan	3	Prevention Science	2	Children and Schools	1
School Psychology	3	Teaching and Teacher Education	2	Children and Youth Services Review	1
School Psychology Quarterly	3	Advances in Motivation and Achievement	1	Communication Disorders Quarterly	1
Assessment for Effective Intervention	2	Advances in School Mental Health Promotion	1	Computers and Education	1
Early Childhood Research Quarterly	2	American Journal of Community Psychology	1	Undefined	81
Educational Forum	2	American Psychologist	1	Total sources	118

A bibliographic cluster analysis was performed to categorize the sources or journals according to the data obtained from the selection (Figure 2). Six distinct clusters emerged from this analysis: School Psychology Quarterly is the most cited source in the field, with 302 citations; then Psychology in the Schools (n=146 citations); followed by Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology (n=94 citations); Phi Delta Kappan (n=79 citations); Journal of School Psychology (n=71) and finally School Psychology International (n=68 citations). In other words, there is a close connection between the highly cited papers published in the same journals and the primary sources, as shown by the bibliographic clustering study.

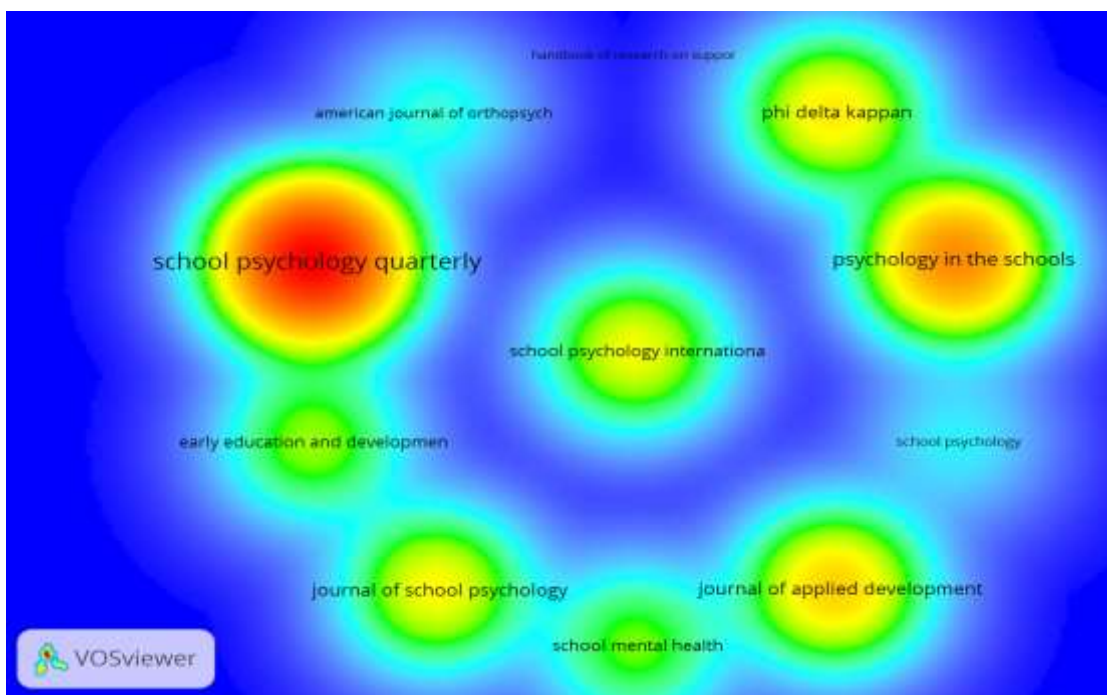


Figure 2. Source or journal clustering density map.

For their part, the 191 research publications were the result of collaboration among academics from 139 institutions. Figure 3 shows the number of papers published during the specified study period focusing on socioemotional competencies of high school students. The highest number of papers was published by Arizona State University (n=8) in the United States, followed by the University of Illinois at Chicago (n=7). Whereas Pennsylvania State University and Rutgers University-New Brunswick produced 6 papers each. This compares with the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the University of California at Santa Barbara, each of which produced 5 scientific publications.

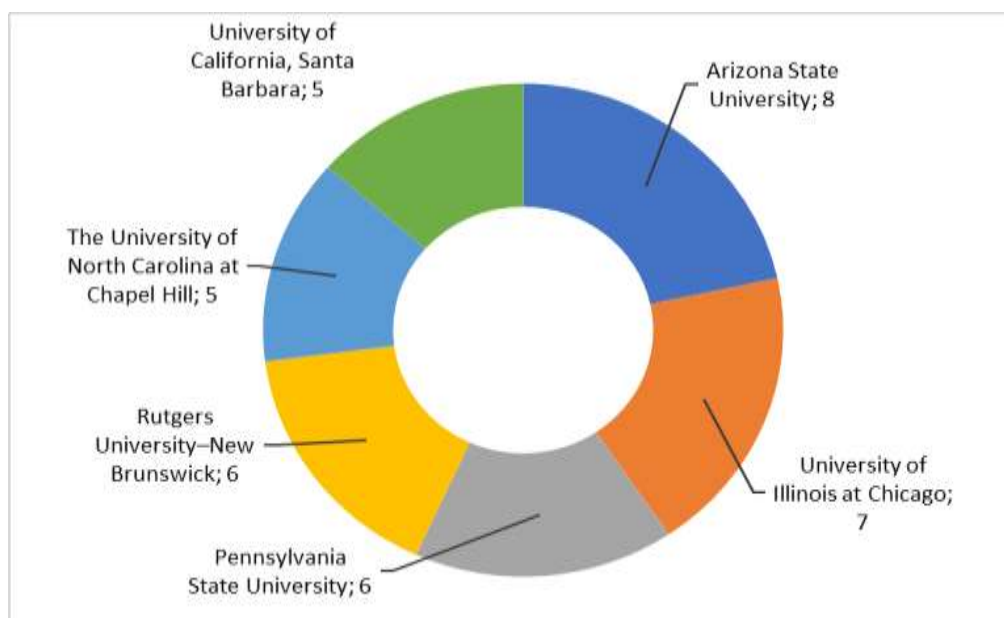


Figure 3. Papers published by institution.

The total number of participating authors was 148, from 139 different academic institutions. According to the data in Table 3, Elías, M.J. is the scientist who published the most papers (n=6). He is followed in number of publications

by Tantillo Philibert, C. and Weissberg, R.P. (with n=4 each). While, Elliott, S.N., Low, S., Merrell, K.W. and Yang, C. with three publications each.

Table 3. Papers published by author.

By author	Quantity	Total citations	By author	Quantity	Total citations
Elías, M.J.	6	242	Cassidy, K.	2	49
Blau, I.	2	172	Coelho, V.A.	2	34
Weissberg, R.P.	4	171	Elliott, S.N.	3	27
Low, S.	3	106	Castejón-Costa, J.L.	2	27
Merrell, K.W.	3	101	Anthony, C.J.	2	5
Yang, C.	3	91	Armstrong, L.M.	2	5
Bear, G.G.	2	65	Babb, M.J.	2	5
Byrd, S.	2	49	Tantillo Philibert, C.	4	0

Figure 4 shows the most cited authors whose work focuses on the socioemotional competencies of high school students, which complements the study of publications by author presented in Table 3. Thus, Elías, M.J., stands out as the most cited author with 242 references. Blau, I. (n=172), followed by Weissberg, R.P. (n=171), Low, S. (n=106), and Merrell, K.W. (n=101), stand out in second place in the number of citations in published papers.

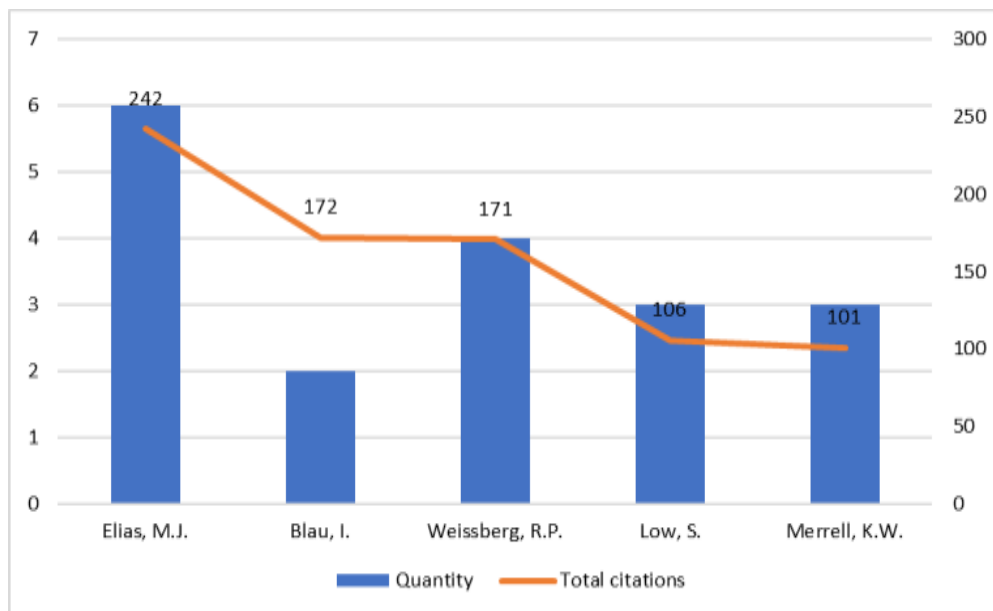


Figure 4. Most cited papers by author.

On the other hand, all the documents published throughout the study period (2003-2023) dealing with socioemotional competencies in secondary school students are shown in Table 4, organized both thematically and by type of publication. The results show that the combined bibliographic production in the fields of social sciences and psychology represents 78% of the overall production in the 12 thematic areas studied worldwide.

Table 4. Publication of documents by thematic area and type.

By area	Quantity	%
Social Sciences	154	48%
Psychology	94	30%
Medicine	28	9%
Arts and Humanities	14	4%
Neuroscience	6	2%
Health Professions	6	2%
Business, Management and Accounting	5	2%
Economics, Econometrics and Finance	3	1%
Computer Science	3	1%
Engineering	2	1%
Other areas	3	1%
Total	318	100%
By type	Quantity	%
Article	155	81%
Book Chapter	22	12%
Book	14	7%
Total	191	100%

Likewise, as can be seen in Figure 5, the social sciences account for 48% of scientific production, psychology 30% and medicine 9%. On the other hand, when analyzing production according to the different types of documents created, it can be seen that scientific articles represent the majority of production (81%), followed by book chapters (12%) and books (7%).

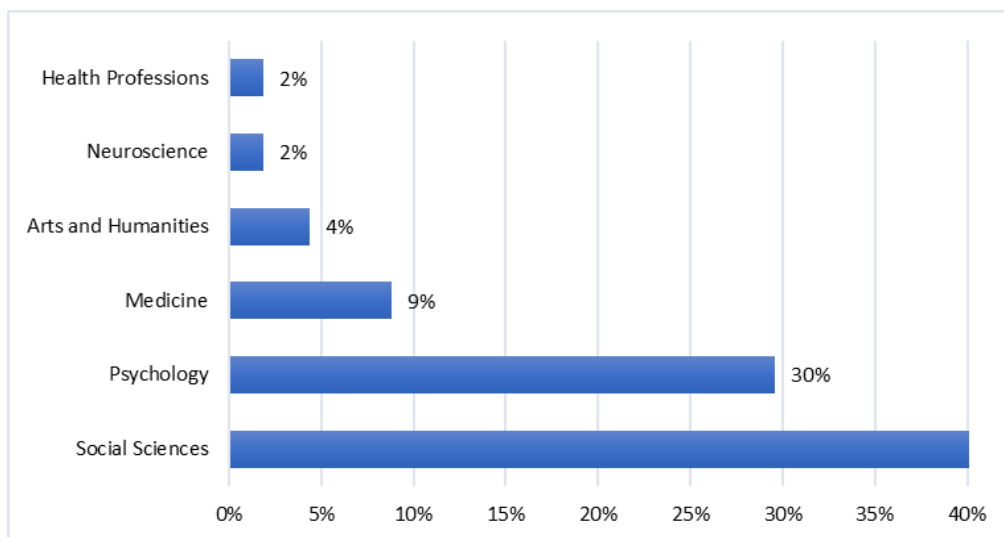


Figure 5. Publication of documents by subject area.

Terms with more than three occurrences in the title, keywords, and abstract fields were selected for keyword co-occurrence analysis, the results of which are shown in Figure 6. Word clusters were assigned colors based on the strength of their conceptual connection, as determined by VOSviewer.

- Green cluster. "social-emotional" (n=198 occurrences), refers to a group of related words including: learning, Student, skill, Teacher, mental health, perception, self-report, awareness, school, social learning.
- Red cluster. "adolescent" (n=172 occurrences), clusters the following words: social competence, major clinical study, follow up, cognition, peer group, emotionality, competence, physiology, behavior disorder,

no progress can be made in the academic world. In this sense, the relevance of socioemotional learning for school success demonstrates the importance of learning to identify and manage one's own emotions and those of others, as well as the importance of fostering a positive school climate and promoting social and emotional well-being through various methods (Román & Bahamón, 2023). In a similar vein, Aguirre et al. (2022) argue that classroom climate, students' self-esteem and general well-being can be improved by fostering the development of their social-emotional competencies, which can help them avoid problems such as anxiety, depression and stress. This helps researchers and teachers evaluate the effectiveness of interventions aimed at fostering students' social and emotional growth through formal and informal learning environments (Fernandez, 2020).

Likewise, the vast majority of documents examined here are from the field of social sciences and psychology, although interdisciplinarity is also observed in other areas such as medicine, arts and humanities, neurosciences and many more. In addition, scientific articles account for 81% of all documentary production. Although "social-emotional" appears more frequently than the other keywords, which together form the basis of the study, other terms, such as "adolescent" and "social skill", are not too far removed from what the authors have researched.

Consequently, there is evidence demonstrating the link between social and emotional skills and academic performance (Yugcha et al., 2023). In general, they are protective and health-promoting factors, and, in a broad sense, they are tools for resolving conflicts and social tasks (Padilla & López, 2021). Moreover, students' socioemotional strengths can be used in a variety of ways to benefit both themselves and their education (Soto-Romero et al., 2023). Consequently, education systems have a responsibility to continue to encourage students to use their full potential and reach increasingly higher levels of complexity, while ensuring that their acquired skills are robust and useful in a variety of settings through targeted interventions (Cabanillas et al., 2020).

Finally, the key words around socioemotional competencies of high school students suggest an interdisciplinary approach, with evidence of this being found in numerous fields, such as social sciences, psychology, medicine, neurology, arts, and humanities (Morales-Volveras et al., 2022; Simeón-Aguirre et al., 2021; Vega et al., 2019). As a result of their ability to act as moderating variables in more complex investigations, students who develop their social-emotional competencies are more likely to find success in both their professional and personal endeavors. Consequently, the term co-occurrence network provides a visual representation, in the form of clusters, of central themes and concepts present across publications and disciplines (Benicio et al., 2021).

CONCLUSIONS

In accordance with the stated purpose of the study, a bibliometric analysis of the papers indexed in the Scopus global database on socioemotional competencies in high school students between 2003 and 2023 reveals an exponential increase in the number of articles published on the topic between 2013 and 2021 (67.5%, n=129). In addition, it is evident that the United States accounts for 65.4% (125 articles) of the world's scientific production, compared to 37 countries.

In addition, of all the sources or journals in this field, *Psychology in the Schools* is the one that has published the most articles (n=5). For its part, the academic production of Arizona State University stands at eight papers. The author Elias M.J. is the one who has published the most scientific papers on the topic of social-emotional competencies (n=6) and the one who has received the most citations of his own papers (242 in total). Moreover, most of the papers are scientific articles (81%), developed in the fields of social sciences (48%), psychology (30%) and medicine (9%). Also, "social-emotional" turned out to be the most used term (n=198 occurrences) from the results of the keyword analysis performed with the VOSviewer software.

From the analysis of the 191 documents that make up the study sample, it is concluded that the deployment of interdisciplinarity in favor of the formation of individuals attached to the globalized society is increasing the acceptance and success of the implementation of cross-cutting programs that include social-emotional competence. Thus, learning is favored, and disruptive behaviors attenuated, when students possess strong socioemotional skills, i.e., the overall quality of students and schools (as measured by factors such as student achievement and teacher satisfaction).

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