

Bibliometric Review of Research on International Students in Russia

Original article

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Abstract. Russia is the sixth most attractive host country for international students, and this has translated into increased publications on international students in Russia. These studies have focused on the issues of Russian higher education internationalization, foreign student mobility, and acculturation challenges of international students. This paper seeks to highlight the knowledge base of international student research in Russia. Specifically, this paper represents a bibliometric review of indexed Scopus data to establish the seminal authors and current foci of research on international students in Russia. The findings indicate a present exponential growth in publications from 2015 in contrast to the slow start from 1999. The findings also demonstrate that the leading authors, with 59% of the sampled Scopus indexed articles, are affiliated with government-sponsored higher education institutions. The findings also established the most cited sources in the related literature and the current themes of research on international students in Russia. The implication of the research and limitations of the study were discussed. The directives for future research were proffered.

Keywords: international students, Russia, internationalization of higher education, international student mobility, and bibliometric review.

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Библиометрический обзор исследований об иностранных студентах в России

Научная статья

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***Аннотация.** Россия занимает шестое место среди стран, наиболее привлекательных для иностранных студентов, и это привело к увеличению числа публикаций, посвящённых иностранным студентам в России. Эти исследования посвящены вопросам интернационализации российского высшего образования, мобильности иностранных студентов и проблемам аккультурации иностранных студентов. Цель данной работы – выявить базу знаний в области исследований иностранных студентов в России. В частности, данная работа представляет собой библиометрический обзор индексированных данных Scopus для определения основных авторов и текущих направлений исследований иностранных студентов в России. Результаты показывают экспоненциальный рост числа публикаций с 2015 г. по сравнению с медленным началом с 1999 г. Результаты также показывают, что ведущие авторы 59 % статей, проиндексированных в Scopus, связаны с государственными высшими учебными заведениями. Результаты также позволили определить наиболее цитируемые источники в соответствующей литературе и актуальные темы исследований, посвящённых иностранным студентам в России. Обсуждались практическая ценность исследования и его ограничения. Были предложены рекомендации для будущих исследований.*

***Ключевые слова:** иностранные студенты, Россия, интернационализация высшего образования, международная студенческая мобильность, библиометрический обзор.*

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Introduction

International student migration is expressed as students moving in search of educational opportunities absent in their home countries [1; 2]. International students are recognized as a future highly skilled labor force with a significant role to play in the development discourse of both home (origin or sending) and host (destination) countries. Thus, governments in home countries set up scholarships for their citizens to pursue studies abroad and return home with the acquired knowledge and skills [3; 4]. Equally, governments in host countries have set up similar scholarship schemes, less stringent immigration policies, and initiatives to facilitate the integration of highly skilled international graduate students [1; 5; 6].

The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) 2022 data indicates that the top five host countries for international students are the United

States of America, the United Kingdom, Australia, Germany, and Canada, with 15%, 8.7%, 7.2%, 5.8%, and 5.1% of the share of the global number of international students, respectively¹. The other attractive destinations for international students are Russia (4.4%), France (4.0%), China (3.5%), Japan (3.2%) and Turkey (2.9%). Similarly, the UIS 2022 data indicates that the largest group of international students were students from China, representing 17.1% of the total number of international students studying abroad. The other sending countries and their respective share of international students are India (8.1%), Vietnam (2.1%), Germany (1.9%), the USA (1.7%), France (1.7%), the Republic of Korea (1.6%), Nepal (1.5%), Kazakhstan (1.4%) and Brazil (1.4%).

¹ Global Flow of Tertiary-Level Students. (2022). UNESCO Institute for Statistics. <http://uis.unesco.org/en/uis-student-flow> (accessed 27.09.2022).

In the last two decades, the number of international students enrolled in tertiary education has risen steeply from 2 million in 1998 to 5.3 million in 2017, and this is expected to reach 7.2 million by 2025^{2,3}. The increasing statistics of international students have stirred research on the factors influencing students' mobility as well as their experiences in the new host countries. These studies advance that international students are influenced by push and pull factors such as the perceived importance of a foreign degree over a local one, intention to migrate after graduation, the reputation of the country, quality of the host institution, scholarships, recommendations of friends and family [7–9]. Equally, international students deal with issues of culture shock, discrimination, communication/language difficulties, educational system differences, financial hardships, lack of appropriate housing, isolation and loneliness, homesickness, and loss of established support and social networks with detrimental effects on their academic performances and general wellbeing [10–13].

International education was prominent during the Soviet era (1949–91) as an approximated 500,000 international students from 150 countries studied in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) under intergovernmental agreements [14]. The paper [15] observes that at the height of the Soviet era, the USSR was the third most attractive host country for international students, behind the USA and France. The authors advance that at the start of the Soviet era (1950) about 5900 foreign students were enrolled in in-

stitutions of higher education in the USSR, however by 1990, an estimated 126,500 international students were enrolled annually. The rise in enrollment is attributable to the significant financial aid provided by the Soviet government to foreign students, namely those from Eastern European countries and the emerging countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America [14; 15]. The collapse of the USSR saw a rapid decline in international student enrollment [16].

Post-Soviet Russia recognizes international student enrollment as a means to further Russia's long-term economic and political interests [17]. As such, the goal of internationalizing Russia's higher educational system has been driven by the Russian government. This push for internationalization has seen Russia's participation in the Bologna process in 2003 as means to enhance the presence of Russian universities globally and the introduction of the 2012 Russian education policy to boost international student enrollment [18]. The educational policy detailed with five key measures to improve enrolment: (1) increase cooperation in implementation of educational and scientific programs with international and foreign organizations; (2) granting scholarships to students, teachers and researchers of Russian educational institutions; (3) joint research, joint innovative activities, fundamental and applied scientific research in the sphere of education; (4) participation in the network of implementation of education programs; (5) participation in international, scientific research and technical projects, congresses, symposiums, conferences, seminars and the organization of these activities with the bilateral and multilateral exchange of academic and scientific literature [18].

According to the UIS 2022 data, Russia is the sixth most attractive host country, with an approximated 290,000 international students enrolled in Russian higher education institutions. The largest percentage of international students are from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) due to their shared cultural heritage with Russia. This includes students from Kazakhstan, who accounts for the highest share of international students, as well as students from Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan,

² Bohm, A., Davis, D., Meares, D., & Pearce, D. (2002). Global student mobility 2025: Forecasts of the Global Demand for International Higher Education. IDP Education Australia. <https://www.foresightfordevelopment.org/sobipro/55/333-global-student-mobility-2025-forecasts-of-the-global-demand-for-international-higher-education> (accessed 27.09.2022).

³ O.E.C.D. (2019). "What is the profile of internationally mobile students?" In *Education at a Glance 2019: OECD Indicators*. <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/17d19cd9-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/17d19cd9-en> (accessed 27.09.2022).

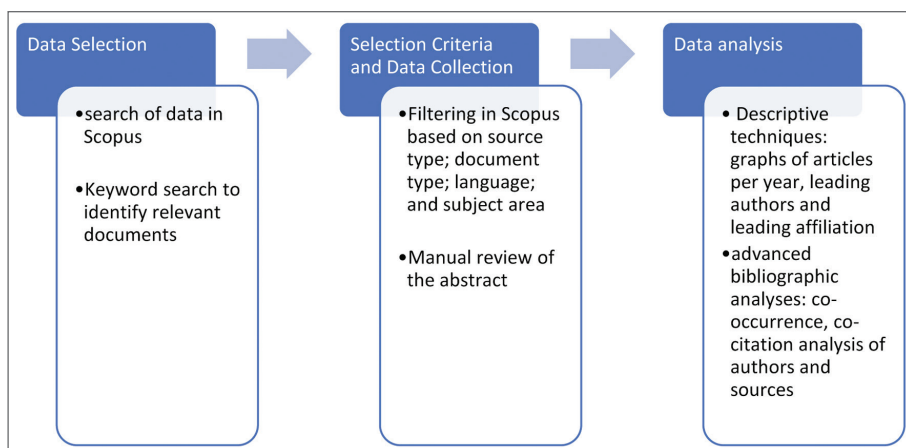


Fig. 1. Summary of methodology

and Tajikistan. Outside of the CIS countries, China and India students represent a significant share of the international students in Russia. Countries from Africa accounts for 4% of students whilst Europe, Northern America, Oceania, as well as Latin America, collectively account for 2% of the international students enrolled. The introduction of English as a language of instruction for degree programs is expected to improve the enrollment of students from English-speaking countries [19].

The present growth in international students' enrollment has translated into increased literature on international students in Russia to highlight the internationalization [14–18; 20; 21]; mobility [9; 22–24]; challenges and coping strategies [25–28]. These existing studies have contributed to the growing research of international students in Russia and have informed of current internationalization strategies and initiatives of the Russian government as well as institutions of higher education. Given the increased research on international students in Russia, it is necessary to take stock of the current knowledge base. This paper addresses this call with a bibliometric review of research on international students in Russia to inform future research and efforts to increase the enrollment of international students.

Methods

In this paper, the author uses bibliometric analysis to review the existing research on

international students in Russia. The following research questions guide this review:

RQ1. What is the growing trend of international student (IS) research in Russia?

RQ2. Who are the leading authors in IS research in Russia?

RQ3. Who are the leading institutions/affiliations in IS research in Russia?

RQ4. What are the most cited sources in IS research in Russia?

RQ5. Who are the most cited authors in IS research in Russia?

RQ6. What are the keywords in IS research in Russia?

Bibliometric analyses are quantitative techniques used to analyze existing studies to establish a research field's conceptual and intellectual structures. The technique has been employed to explore the trends and themes of research in numerous scientific fields [29]. The technique has been equally utilized to review the existing themes of research on international students [30–33]. Based on the methodologies of the aforementioned studies, the author adopted a 3-step process: 1) search and selection of data, 2) definition of selection criteria and data collection, 3) data analysis. This is summarized in figure 1.

Data Selection. The author sourced data for the bibliometric analysis from the Scopus

Table 1

Keywords applied in Scopus	
Keywords	Documents (n)
Initial search	
TITLE-ABS-KEY ((("international student*" OR "foreign student*" AND "Russia*" OR "Russian universities*")))	481
Selection – inclusion and exclusion	
1st Stage	
TITLE-ABS-KEY ((("international student*" OR "foreign student*" AND "Russia*" OR "Russian universities*"))) AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE , "ar")) AND (LIMIT-TO (SRCTYPE , "j"))	353
2nd Stage	
TITLE-ABS-KEY ((("international student*" OR "foreign student*" AND "Russia*" OR "Russian universities*"))) AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE , "ar")) AND (LIMIT-TO (SRCTYPE , "j")) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE , "English") OR LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE , "Russian"))	343
Final search	
TITLE-ABS-KEY ((("international student*" OR "foreign student*" AND "Russia*" OR "Russian universities*"))) AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE , "ar")) AND (LIMIT-TO (SRCTYPE , "j")) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE , "English") OR LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE , "Russian")) AND (EXCLUDE (SUBJAREA , "PHAR") OR EXCLUDE (SUBJAREA , "BIOC") OR EXCLUDE (SUBJAREA , "ENER") OR EXCLUDE (SUBJAREA , "CHEM") OR EXCLUDE (SUBJAREA , "IMMU") OR EXCLUDE (SUBJAREA , "NURS") OR EXCLUDE (SUBJAREA , "PHYS"))	328

database, because it offered a comprehensive database of indexed articles with options to refine the search parameters. The keyword search approach was utilized to obtain relevant publications on research on international student mobility in Russia. The initial keyword combination for the search accounted for the different possible definitions of international students (foreign or overseas students). With the study limited to Russia, the keywords are Russia and Russian Universities. The asterisk (*) was included in the search parameters to account for the different iterations in the wording of the keywords in the documents. The initial keyword search resulted in 481 documents.

Selection Criteria and Data Collection.

At this stage, the author refined the keyword search with a series of inclusion and exclusion criteria to realize the final dataset for analysis. The selection process was conducted in Scopus and involved using the database's filtering function for the fields on source type, document type, language, and subject area. For the source

and document type, the selection of documents was limited to peer-reviewed journal articles as such conference papers, book chapters, reviews, and books, among others, were excluded, resulting in a sample of 353 documents. The study focused on peer-reviewed journals because they reflect the contributions of academics to the field and are rooted in rigorous methodology.

Also, the author applied the language filter in Scopus to further refine the dataset. I limited the language of the articles to English and Russian, resulting in a sample of 343 documents. The final filtering process focused on the subject area of the journal articles. The excluded subject areas include pharmacology, toxicology, and pharmaceuticals; biochemistry, genetics, and molecular biology; energy; chemistry; immunology and microbiology; nursing; physics and astronomy. This exclusion resulted in a sample of 328 documents. Table 1 summarizes the results of the keyword search. The abstracts of the 328 individual documents were reviewed to identify studies with irrelevant research focuses (e.g., international

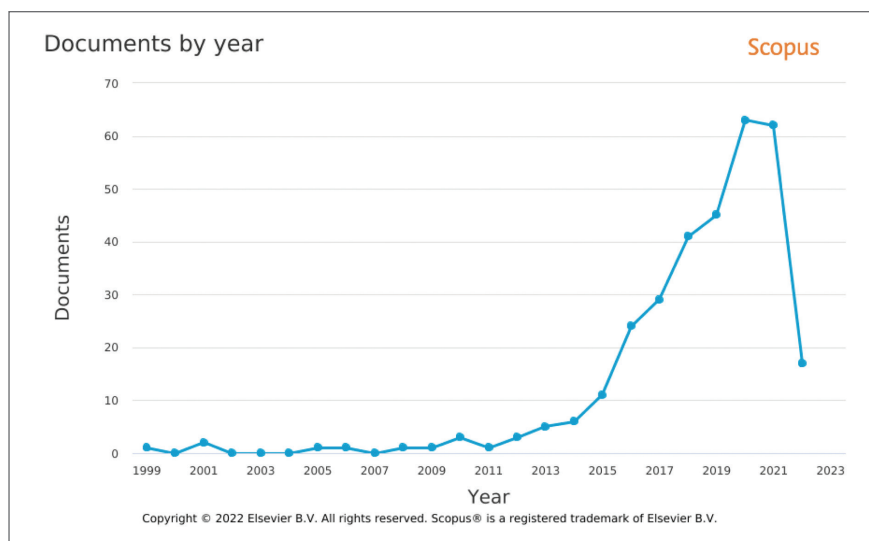


Fig. 2. Volume of publications on IS research in Russia (1999–2022)

assessments and mobility of Russian students, among others). The review led to the removal of 31 documents resulting in a sample of 297 documents. This metadata of 297 documents with abstracts and bibliographic data was downloaded in excel CSV format for data analysis.

Data Analysis. The collected data were treated to data cleaning procedures before analysis was conducted. This involved creating thesaurus files to merge the different iterations in the names of authors, sources as well as combine similar keywords (for instance, keywords in single form were merged with their plural versions). The author utilized both descriptive and advanced bibliometric analytical tools in analyzing the dataset. The descriptive analysis, conducted within the Scopus metrics, involved productivity measures of the documents and was used to answer research questions 1 to 3. The advanced bibliometric analyses include co-citation analysis of sources and authors and keyword co-occurrence analysis. The analysis was conducted in VOS viewer bibliometric software, and the results were presented in graphs.

Findings

The growth trend of IS research in Russia.

The first research question sought to explore

the growing trend of publications on related literature on international student research in Russia. From figure 2, it can be observed that from 1999 to 2014, the volume of publications on international students in Russia was limited as the volume remained steady within a single-digit number. From that period, there has been a considerable increase in the volume of publications as the numbers have reached double-digits. The results indicate that from 2015 to 2020 (at the time of data collection), the number of publications has gradually increased, reaching a record high of 63 publications in 2020. It must be reiterated the number of publications (273) from the period (2015 to 2022) is significantly greater than the number of published articles (24) in the earlier period. This suggests that presently there is an increased interest in research on international students in Russia.

The leading authors in IS research in Russia. The second research question explored the active researchers in the field of international student research in Russia. Figure 3 details the top ten authors who have published or contributed to articles on related literature on international students in Russia. These authors: Irina A. Novikova; Sergey Ryazantsev; Marina A. Bragina; Tatiana Khavenson; Alexey

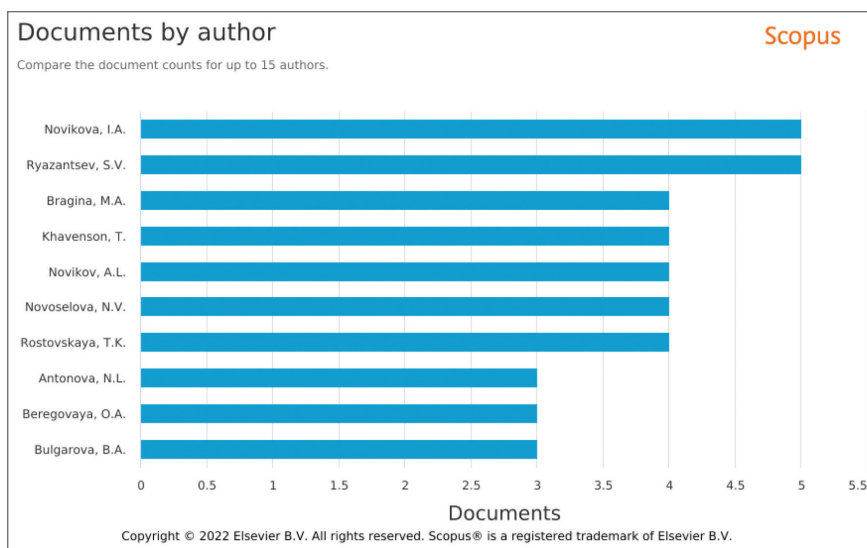


Fig. 3. Leading authors in International Students Research in Russia

Novikov; Natalia V. Novoselova; Tamara K. Rostovskaya; Natalya L. Antonova; Oksana Beregovaya; and Bella A. Bulgarova have collectively published or contributed to the publication of 39 articles in this field of study.

Though their individual contribution or publication within the field of study is within the single digits, their influence on research on international students in Russia cannot be understated. The results indicates that these authors are the most recent and active researchers within the field, and this confirms their positions as gatekeepers on research on international students in Russia.

The leading institutions/ affiliations in IS research in Russia. Related to the second research question, the third question sought to explore affiliations with the active number of publications in research on international students in Russia. An article with at least one author connected to the university is referred to as a publication from the affiliation. It can be observed that the leading affiliations in research on international students in Russia are the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (RUDN University); Kazan Federal University; Higher School of Economics (HSE University); Financial University under the Government of

the Russian Federation; Peter the Great St. Petersburg Polytechnic University; Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO); Russian Academy of Sciences; Plekhanov Russian University of Economics; Saint Petersburg State University; Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration, with authors who have collectively published or contributed to the publication of 175 articles in the field. The results reflect reality as the SCIMAGO institution's rankings include a considerable proportion of the highlighted leading affiliations in its list of the top twenty research-oriented institutions of higher education in Russia.

The most cited sources in research on IS in Russia. The results of the co-citation of sources establish the most cited sources in the related literature on international student in Russia. Figure 5 illustrates the most cited sources in the related literature grouped into four clusters: representing the major themes categorizing the sources. The red cluster consists of sources focused on publishing articles concentrated on international student pedagogy: *European Journal of Contemporary Education*; *Vysshee Obrazovanie v Rossii (Higher Education in Russia)*; *Integration of Education*; *Journal of*

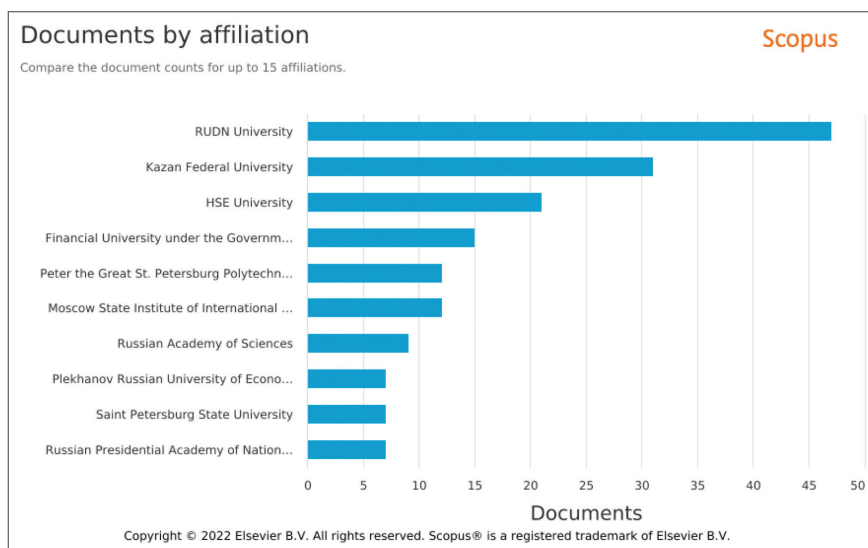


Fig. 4. Leading institutions in IS research in Russia

Social Studies Education Research; Pedagogy; Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences; Russian Language Abroad; and Xlinguae. The yellow cluster represents sources that publish articles on contemporary issues in international education: *International Higher Education*; and *International Journal of Educational Development*.

In addition, the green cluster consists of sources publishing articles focusing on the internationalization of higher education in Russia: higher education; *Journal of International Students*; *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*; *Journal of Research in International Education*; *Journal of Studies in International Education*; and *Studies in Higher Education*. Finally, the blue cluster represents sources that publish journals related to the sociocultural adaptation and adjustment of international students. The journals in this cluster include the *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*; *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*; *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*; and *RUDN Journal of Psychology and Pedagogics*.

The most cited authors in research on IS in Russia. The fifth research question sought to establish the most cited authors in the related literature on international students in Russia.

The results of co-citation analysis of cited authors, illustrated in figure 6, shows five clusters of the most cited sources within the field. It is observed that the red cluster comprises of authors: *P.G. Altbach*; *A.L. Arefev*; *I.V. Arzhanova*; *M. Chankseliani*, *H. De Wit*; *J. Knight*; *J.J. Lee*; *S. Marginson*; *S.V. Ryazantsev*; and *F.E. Sheregi*. These authors have published articles focusing on internationalizations of higher education. The green cluster consists of scholars: *E.G. Azimov*; *G. Hofstede*; *O.E. Khukblaev*; *V.G. Kostomarov*; *A.R. Masalimova*; *A.N. Shchukin*; and *I.V. Trotsuk* focusing on literature-related learning the Russian language and pedagogy. The blue cluster reflects literature on stress and consists of authors such as *J.W. Berry*, *S. Bochner*, *A. Furnham*, *S. Poyrazli* and *C. Ward*. The yellow cluster comprises of scholars such as *O.V. Maslova*, *A.I. Novikov* and *I.A. Novikova*. These authors concentrate on literature related to the sociocultural challenges and adaptation of international students. Finally, the relatively small purple cluster with scholars *E. Denisova-Schmidt* and *M.M. Lebedeva* reflect their focus on the internationalization of Russian Education.

The keywords in research on IS in Russia. The final research question sought to establish the trending themes in the related literature on

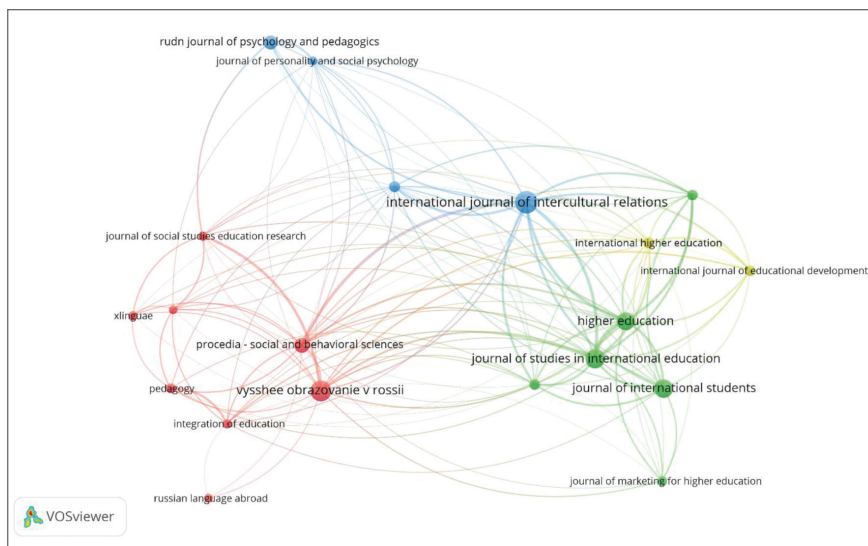


Fig. 5. Network map of the co-citation analysis of cited sources (532 sources, threshold of 15 sources, display 20 sources)

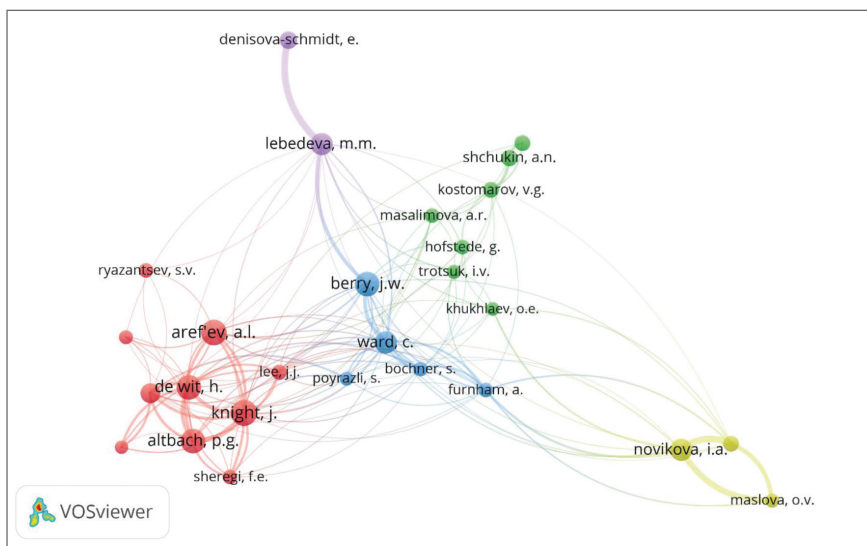


Fig. 6. Network map of the co-citation analysis of cited authors (10086 authors, threshold of 10 citations, display 27 authors)

international students in Russia. Figure 7 details the results of the co-occurrence analysis of keywords used in the articles in the data sample. The figure shows that the keywords are in four main clusters. The red cluster represents studies on the “coronavirus pandemic” within international student research. The most fre-

quently used keywords in this cluster are *China*, *COVID-19*, *distance learning*, *motivation*, *online learning*, and *Russian as a foreign language*. This strand of research focused on how the pandemic changed the pedagogical process as international students and higher education institutions struggled to accept the new reality.

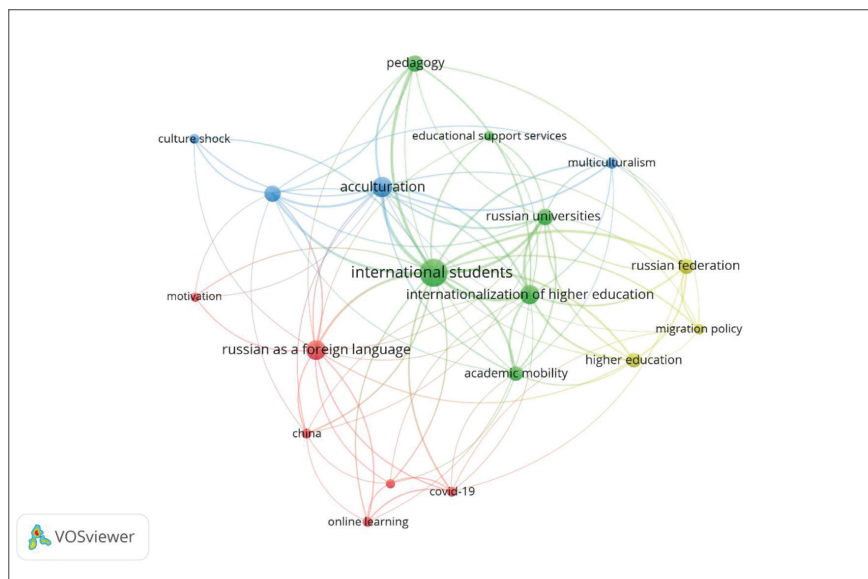


Fig. 7. Network map of the co-occurrence analysis of keywords (1239 keywords, threshold of 5 occurrences, display 19 keywords)

Similarly, the green cluster includes keywords such as *academic mobility*, *educational support service*, *international students*, *internationalization of higher education*, *pedagogy*, and *Russian universities*. The green cluster is centered around the theme ‘international students’ suggesting that this strand of research is focused on international student mobility specifically on the influencing factors in their decision to migrate to Russian Universities. The yellow cluster, closely related to the green cluster, represents research on internationalization of Russian higher education with keywords such as *Russian Federation*, *migration policy*, and *higher education*. This research explored themes and issues concerning the internationalization of higher education in Russia. Finally, the blue cluster represents the research on the “sociocultural adaption” of international students in Russia. The most frequent keywords used within a cluster are *acculturation*, *culture shock*, *intercultural communication competence*, and *multiculturalism*. This strand of research explored the challenges of international students in Russia.

Conclusion

Over the past few decades, there has been a significant increase in international students enrolled in tertiary education. This period has seen the movement of international students to traditional host countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia in search of educational opportunities not available in their home countries [34; 35]. There has been a considerable increase in international student enrollment in non-traditional host countries such as Russia, China, and Japan [36]. Russia is currently the sixth most attractive host country for international students. This development has translated into research on international students in Russia focusing on issues of internationalization, mobility, experiences, and adaptation, among others. Interestingly, to my knowledge, no existing studies have attempted to review the status of research on international students in Russia. Thus, this study sought to fill this gap with a bibliometric analysis of data sourced from Scopus to highlight the overall picture of research on international students in Russia.

This study established the growth trend of the related literature on international students in

Russia. The study showed that of the 297 Scopus indexed journal articles, only 29 articles were published between the period of 1999 to 2014. However, from 2015 to 2022, there is an exponential growth in the number of publications, with 273 articles published within the period. This confirms the findings of the paper [30] in their review of research on international student mobility (ISM). The authors established that the trend of publications in international student mobility reflects steady growth in the early years till an exponential growth in publications after 2015. The exponential growth in research on international students is tied to the growing enrollment of international students in Russia. The increasing international student enrollment can be attributed to the Russian government's internationalization of higher education, highlighted in the 2012 Russian Education Policy [18]. Thus, the presence of international students resulted in a surge in publications. It is expected that the publications will continue to increase as scholars will explore developments within the field of international students in Russia.

Also, the study highlighted the leading authors in research on international students in Russia. The ten leading authors are individuals who have sole-authored or contributed to the publication of the related literature and, as such, can be considered gatekeepers in the field. These authors have contributed to the existing body of knowledge with publications addressing issues of mobility, internationalization, students' experiences as well as adjustments. It was observed that none of these authors have reached double-digits, as the highest is five publications by two authors. The low volume of publications per leading author gives credence to the position that research on international students in Russia is a growing field. The list of leading authors is dominated by Russian scholars indicating their growing interest in explaining the phenomenon and access to funding and data to conduct the studies. This finding confirms the result of [32], who advanced that most leading authors in research on international student mobility in Asia were of Asian descent.

Similarly, the research highlighted the leading affiliations in research on international students in Russia. These ten leading affiliations are mainly government-sponsored higher education institutions and are collectively affiliated with authors who have published 59 % of the articles in the indexed Scopus data. It must be reiterated that all of these institutions are based in the two major cities in Russia: Moscow and St. Petersburg, except Kazan Federal University. As such, Moscow and St. Petersburg are the most attractive options for international students; as such, provide ready samples for these scholars affiliated with the institutions to conduct their related studies. Also, it can be argued that these higher education institutions are research-driven, as evident in their position in SCIMAGO rankings. Thus, the institutions use the carrot (by providing the necessary financial or technical support), or stick (publications are a requirement for maintaining a tenure position) approaches to encourage the scholars to conduct research, which explains the number of publications.

Furthermore, the co-citation of sources established the most cited sources in the related literature on international students in Russia. The related literature was published in journals with diverse specializations encompassing education, social studies, linguistics, and other subjects. In addition, the articles were published in journals both in Russia and other countries, such as the United States and countries based in Europe. Generally, the journals were published in top-tier journals such as the *International Journal of Educational Development*, *Studies in Higher Education*, and *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, as well as lower sources such as *Vysshee Obrazovanie v Rossii*, and *Integration of Education*. This suggests that this field of study attracts the attention of high performing as well as average scholars. The results of the co-citation analysis categorized the sources into four groups. These groups include research focused on: (1) international student pedagogy, (2) the internationalization of higher Education in Russia, (3) contemporary issues in international education, and (4) the sociocultural adaptation and

adjustment of international students. The categorized groups demonstrate the multidisciplinary nature of research on international students in Russia.

Related to identifying the most cited sources, the study highlighted the most cited authors in research on international students in Russia. The most cited authors were clustered into five groups. These groups are (1) internationalization of higher education, (2) pedagogy, (3) stress, (4) socio-cultural challenges and adaptation, and (5) internationalization of Russian education. It must be emphasized that the most cited authors consist of both established authors from Western countries and Russia, though dominated by the latter. The Western scholars include P.G. Altbach, H. De Wit, J. Knight, and C. Ward whilst the Russian scholars consisted of I.A. Novikova, A.L. Novikov, S.V. Ryazantsev and A.L. Arefev. These authors have produced body of knowledge that has significantly influenced research on international students in Russia and continue to define future research in this field of study.

Finally, the research established the topical foci of existing research on international students in Russia using the co-occurrence analysis of keywords. The nodes (see fig. 7) show that the most frequent keywords are “international students”, “acculturation”, “internationalization of higher education” and “Russian as a foreign language”. These keywords could be classified as classic topics in this field and must be duly considered during empirical analyses. Also, it can be observed that the research in this field can be devolved into four themes. The first theme explored the current development within the field with its focus on the covid pandemic. The remaining themes focused on international stu-

dent mobility, the internationalization of Russian higher education and sociocultural adaptation of international students in Russia. These themes reflect the building blocks of research on international students, which warrants attention from prospective authors. It must be reiterated similar themes and keywords have been highlighted in earlier bibliometric reviews of existing literature international student mobility [30] and Asian international student mobility [32].

In conclusion, the results highlight the current state of the related literature on international students in Russia. It is observed that despite a slow start in the early years, presently, publications within the field have increased exponentially. This has been attributed to the growing international student enrollments in Russia. The findings indicate that the existing studies focus on themes of international student mobility, sociocultural adaptation, the coronavirus pandemic and the internationalization of higher Education in Russia. These themes are expected to define future studies on international students as these studies should explore the relationship among these themes within current geopolitical occurrences. Though this study highlights the current state of research in this field, it is silent on the theories, methodologies, and results of these existing studies. This concern can be addressed with a systemic review of the existing studies to establish the central theoretical and conceptual themes. In addition, this study is limited with its use of journal articles indexed in Scopus. Subsequent bibliometric reviews could explore additional data sources such as Google Scholar and WoS as well as include different sources such as conferences, books, and book reviews, among others.

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