

Intersection of Indigeneity and Sexuality: A Bibliometric Review of LGBTQIA+ Research in Indigenous Communities and Its Implications for Bukidnon, Philippines

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Indigeneity, LGBTQIA+, Indigenous communities, Bibliometric analysis, Sexuality and gender diversity, Decolonial studies, Global South, Indigenous epistemologies, Cultural resilience, Community-based participatory research, Philippines, Bukidnon

Abstract. The intersection of indigeneity and sexuality remains a critical yet underexplored area of scholarship, particularly in relation to LGBTQIA+ experiences within Indigenous communities. This study employs a bibliometric review to systematically examine the intellectual landscape of LGBTQIA+ research in Indigenous contexts, identifying key themes, publication trends, geographic patterns, and influential contributors over time. Drawing from major academic databases, the analysis highlights dominant patterns of knowledge production, including the strong influence of Global North perspectives and the continued marginalization of Indigenous voices from the Global South. The findings show that existing literature primarily focuses on identity negotiation, cultural resilience, and the enduring impacts of colonialism on gender and sexual diversity. However, there is a notable lack of localized studies that center Indigenous epistemologies and lived experiences, particularly in Southeast Asia. The review also identifies significant gaps in the application of community-based participatory approaches and culturally grounded methodologies, which are essential for ethical and context-sensitive research. Situating these insights within the Philippine context, the study underscores the urgent need for more inclusive and context-specific research in Bukidnon, where Indigenous communities navigate complex intersections of tradition, modernity, and identity. It advocates for the integration of culturally responsive frameworks and the amplification of Indigenous LGBTQIA+ voices in both academic and policy discourses. Overall, this study contributes to interdisciplinary scholarship by providing a critical foundation for future research and offering practical implications for inclusive development, education, and social policy in Indigenous communities.

Introduction

The intersection of indigeneity and sexuality has increasingly emerged as a critical area of inquiry within the broader fields of gender studies, anthropology, and Indigenous studies. While global discourses on LGBTQIA+ rights have expanded significantly over the past decades, Indigenous peoples who identify within the LGBTQIA+ spectrum remain largely underrepresented in scholarly literature. This underrepresentation is not merely a gap in academic attention but reflects deeper historical and structural inequalities rooted in colonialism, epistemic marginalization, and the dominance of Western heteronormative frameworks. Foundational works on decolonizing research emphasize how colonial knowledge systems have historically silenced Indigenous voices and imposed external categories of identity that do not fully align with Indigenous worldviews (Smith, 2012; Kovach, 2009). These frameworks often fail to recognize that many pre-colonial Indigenous societies had long acknowledged diverse gender identities and sexual orientations embedded within their cultural, spiritual, and social systems (Driskill et al., 2011). Colonial interventions, however, imposed rigid binaries and moral codes that disrupted and, in many cases, erased these Indigenous understandings of identity.

Emerging scholarship has begun to interrogate how colonial histories continue to shape contemporary Indigenous experiences of gender and sexuality. Studies reveal that Indigenous LGBTQIA+ individuals often navigate layered forms of marginalization—experiencing discrimination both within mainstream society due to their indigeneity and within their own communities due to sexuality or gender identity. This aligns with intersectionality theory, which underscores how overlapping systems of oppression shape lived experiences in complex ways (Crenshaw, 1991; Crenshaw & Bowleg, 2022). Additionally, minority stress frameworks highlight how chronic exposure to stigma and discrimination can adversely affect mental health outcomes among sexual and gender minorities (Meyer, 2003; Wilson & Meyer, 2021). Despite these challenges, research also documents narratives of resilience, cultural reclamation, and identity negotiation, where individuals actively engage in reviving traditional knowledge systems and redefining what it means to be both Indigenous and LGBTQIA+ (Walters et al., 2006; Balsam et al., 2004). However, the majority of these studies are situated in Western contexts such as North America and Europe, resulting in a disproportionate representation of Global North perspectives and reinforcing imbalances in global knowledge production (Nguyen et al., 2023; Yeo et al., 2023).

In response to this gap, bibliometric analysis serves as a valuable methodological tool for systematically examining the scope and trajectory of existing research. By quantitatively analyzing publication patterns, citation networks, thematic clusters, and authorship trends, bibliometric studies provide a macro-level understanding of how knowledge in a particular field evolves over time. Such approaches are widely used to map scientific development and identify influential works, research fronts, and structural gaps within academic literature (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017; Cobo et al., 2011; Boyack & Klavans, 2010). In the context of LGBTQIA+ research in Indigenous communities, bibliometric analysis enables the identification of dominant discourses and methodological tendencies while simultaneously revealing silences and exclusions. Tools such as Bibliometrix have facilitated more sophisticated mapping of scientific production, allowing researchers to visualize intellectual structures and emerging research fronts (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017). Through this lens, the present study seeks not only to summarize existing scholarship but also to critically evaluate whose voices are being represented and whose are being excluded.

Furthermore, there is a growing recognition of the need for culturally grounded and decolonizing research methodologies when studying Indigenous populations. Conventional Western research paradigms often prioritize objectivity, generalizability, and detachment, which may conflict with Indigenous epistemologies that value relationality, community engagement, and lived experience. Scholars advocate for approaches that center Indigenous voices, respect cultural protocols, and promote participatory methods that empower communities rather than merely extract data from them (Smith, 2012; Kovach, 2009). In parallel, intersectionality theory remains crucial in analyzing how identities such as ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and class intersect to produce unique configurations of marginalization and privilege (Crenshaw, 1991). More recent work further emphasizes the importance of applying intersectional lenses in public health and social research to better understand inequalities affecting LGBTQIA+ populations (Hankivsky & Kapilashrami, 2020; Logie, 2020).

Within the Philippine context, Indigenous peoples, officially recognized as Indigenous Cultural Communities (ICCs), comprise a diverse and culturally rich segment of the population. In regions such as Bukidnon, multiple ethnolinguistic groups—including the Higaonon, Bukidnon, Talaandig, and Manobo—maintain distinct traditions, belief systems, and governance structures. These communities continue to negotiate their identities amid external pressures such as modernization, migration, state policies, and religious influences. Existing Philippine-based studies highlight how Indigenous and LGBTQIA+ identities are shaped by both cultural values and broader socio-political dynamics, including concepts such as *loob* and *kapwa*, which frame relational identity and community belonging (Lozano & Talampas, 2024). However, sexuality in many Indigenous contexts remains mediated by colonial legacies, particularly Christian moral frameworks, which can influence attitudes toward gender and sexual diversity (Tan & Saw, 2022).

Despite the cultural richness of these communities, there is a notable absence of scholarly work that explicitly examines the intersection of indigeneity and LGBTQIA+ identities in Bukidnon and the broader Philippine setting. Existing national-level studies tend to focus on mental health outcomes, discrimination, and general LGBTQIA+ experiences, often without deeply engaging with Indigenous-specific contexts (Cleofas & Alibudbud, 2023; Regaspi, 2023). This lack of localized and intersectional research not only limits academic understanding but also has practical implications for policy development, education, and community-based interventions. Without context-specific knowledge, programs aimed at promoting inclusivity and social equity risk being ineffective or culturally misaligned. Therefore, there is a pressing need to expand research efforts that center Indigenous LGBTQIA+ voices in the Philippines, ensuring that scholarly inquiry reflects the diversity, complexity, and lived realities of these communities.

Correspondingly, a bibliometric analysis is helpful in this field and essential to provide policymakers with evidence-based information to guide energy policies and offer insights to academics and industry players to more effectively formulate focused research programs and practical interventions that respond to rural energy issues. Through analysis of scholarship, citation patterns, and keyword counts, bibliometric research helps identify areas of knowledge that have been

underdeveloped or emerged as developing and trend issues, thus informing future research and policy issues. In order to achieve this aim, this paper specifically seeks to:

1. How has scholarly research on LGBTQIA+ identities within Indigenous communities evolved over time?
2. Who are the most productive authors, institutions, and countries contributing to Indigenous LGBTQIA+ research?
3. What are the most influential publications and citation networks in the field?
4. What major research themes emerge from keyword co-occurrence analysis?
5. What research gaps exist, particularly in relation to Indigenous communities in the Philippines and Bukidnon?

This study is anchored at the intersection of Indigenous Studies, Gender Studies, and Bibliometrics, integrating insights from Intersectionality Theory and Decolonial Theory to examine how knowledge on LGBTQIA+ identities within Indigenous communities is produced, structured, and distributed. This interdisciplinary grounding reflects the growing recognition that knowledge production is not neutral but is shaped by historical power relations, colonial legacies, and institutional structures that privilege certain forms of knowledge over others (Smith, 2012; Leydesdorff & Rafols, 2011). Bibliometric approaches, in particular, provide a systematic way to map these dynamics by revealing patterns in publication outputs, citation structures, and scholarly networks (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017; Cobo et al., 2011). At the same time, Indigenous and gender-focused scholarship emphasizes that lived experiences—especially those at the intersection of indigeneity and sexuality—are often underrepresented or misrepresented within dominant academic systems (Driskill et al., 2011).

At the core of the framework are three interrelated components: (1) Knowledge Production, (2) Thematic Discourses, and (3) Contextual Representation. Knowledge Production refers to measurable bibliometric variables such as publication output, authorship patterns, institutional affiliations, citation networks, and geographic distribution. These indicators are widely used in scientometric studies to assess research productivity, influence, and collaboration patterns across disciplines (Bornmann & Daniel, 2008; Wagner & Leydesdorff, 2005). However, such metrics also reflect structural inequalities, as research output is often concentrated in well-resourced institutions and regions, reinforcing global disparities in knowledge production (Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2016; King, 2004). Thematic Discourses capture the substantive focus of the literature, including recurring themes such as identity negotiation, cultural resilience, colonial impacts, and Indigenous epistemologies, derived through keyword co-occurrence and clustering analysis. These methods enable the identification of intellectual structures and evolving research fronts within a field (Small, 1973; Boyack & Klavans, 2010). Contextual Representation examines whose voices are included or excluded, emphasizing the imbalance between Global North and Global South scholarship. Existing literature highlights that Southeast Asian and Philippine perspectives, particularly those of Indigenous communities, remain significantly underrepresented in global academic discourse (Tan & Saw, 2022; Cleofas & Alibudbud, 2023).

These components are influenced by two overarching theoretical lenses. First, Intersectionality Theory explains how overlapping identities—such as indigeneity, gender, sexuality, and class—shape complex experiences of marginalization and visibility within both lived realities and academic representation (Crenshaw, 1991; Crenshaw & Bowleg, 2022). This perspective is particularly relevant in understanding how Indigenous LGBTQIA+ individuals experience multiple, intersecting forms of exclusion, including social stigma, cultural marginalization, and limited scholarly visibility (Meyer, 2003; Wilson & Meyer, 2021). Second, Decolonial Theory critiques the dominance of Western epistemologies in knowledge production and underscores the need to center Indigenous ways of knowing, culturally grounded methodologies, and community-based participatory approaches (Smith, 2012; Kovach, 2009). These frameworks collectively challenge extractive research practices and advocate for more inclusive and ethically grounded scholarship.

The relationship among variables can be described as follows: patterns of knowledge production influence the visibility of specific thematic discourses, which in turn shape contextual representation. For instance, dominant institutions and regions often determine which research topics gain prominence and which perspectives are legitimized within academic discourse (Leydesdorff et al., 2014; Bornmann & Mutz, 2015). Conversely, structural inequalities—such as colonial histories, funding disparities, and epistemic marginalization—mediate these relationships by privileging certain voices while silencing others (Tijssen, 2007; Seglen, 1992). This dynamic results in identifiable research gaps, particularly the underrepresentation of Indigenous LGBTQIA+ experiences in the Philippines and Bukidnon. Addressing these gaps requires not only expanding empirical research but also rethinking methodological approaches to ensure that they are inclusive, context-sensitive, and reflective of Indigenous realities.

Methodology

This study systematically examined the intersection of indigeneity and sexuality by conducting a bibliometric review of LGBTQIA+ research in Indigenous communities. It adopted the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-

Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines to ensure a transparent, replicable, and structured review process (Page et al., 2021). PRISMA is widely recognized for organizing systematic reviews through rigorous stages of identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and inclusion of relevant studies, thereby strengthening methodological transparency and consistency.

The research was guided by three major steps: (1) identifying relevant literature through database searching and defining data specifications, (2) screening and evaluating full-text articles for eligibility based on inclusion criteria, and (3) conducting bibliometric analysis to map research trends, key contributors, and thematic developments. This approach aligns with established bibliometric methods that enable the systematic mapping of scientific knowledge, including the identification of influential publications, collaboration networks, and thematic clusters within a research domain (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017; Cobo et al., 2011).

Through this process, the study provides a comprehensive overview of global scholarly production on Indigenous LGBTQIA+ issues and identifies critical research gaps, particularly in the Global South where representation remains limited. Bibliometric indicators such as publication output, citation structures, and keyword co-occurrence reveal how dominant discourses are formed and which perspectives gain visibility within academic literature (Nguyen et al., 2023). At the same time, these patterns expose structural imbalances in knowledge production, where Global North institutions and scholars continue to dominate the field.

By situating these findings within localized contexts such as Bukidnon, Philippines, the study highlights the urgent need for more context-specific and culturally grounded research. Indigenous communities in Bukidnon remain underrepresented in formal academic outputs, despite their rich cultural and social dynamics. As such, this study not only traces the evolution of knowledge on indigeneity and sexuality but also underscores the importance of expanding scholarly attention toward marginalized regions, ensuring that future research is more inclusive, representative, and responsive to local realities.

2.1 Database Searching and Data Specifications

Table 1 presents the summary of data characteristics for the bibliometric analysis of LGBTQIA+ research in Indigenous communities. The study utilized the Scopus database, selected for its extensive coverage of peer-reviewed academic literature across multiple disciplines.

The search query used was:

("Indigenous" OR "Indigeneity" OR "Indigenous peoples") AND ("LGBTQIA+" OR "LGBT" OR "queer" OR "sexuality" OR "gender diversity")

The search was applied to article titles, abstracts, and keywords to ensure comprehensive retrieval of relevant studies. The dataset included journal articles published up to March 2026, covering diverse subject areas such as social sciences, anthropology, gender studies, health sciences, and interdisciplinary studies. Only final-stage publications written in English were included to maintain consistency and comparability. The extracted data were exported in CSV format for further bibliometric analysis.

This systematic process ensures a multidisciplinary and comprehensive examination of the scholarly landscape concerning Indigenous LGBTQIA+ research.

Category	Specific Standard Requirements
Database	Scopus
Search query	("Indigenous" OR "Indigeneity" OR "Indigenous peoples") AND ("LGBTQIA+" OR "LGBT" OR "queer" OR "sexuality" OR "gender diversity")
Search category	Article title, abstract, keywords
Time frame	Articles published until March 2026
Subject area	(1) Social sciences, (2) Anthropology, (3) Gender studies, (4) Health sciences, (5) Humanities, (6) Interdisciplinary studies
Document type	Articles
Source type	Journal
Language	English
Publication stage	Final
Data export format	CSV

Table No. 1 Summary of data characteristics of the bibliometric study

2.2 Data Screening

Figure 1 illustrates the step-by-step screening procedure based on PRISMA guidelines (Page et al., 2021). The initial search yielded a total number of records indexed in the Scopus database, reflecting the breadth of available literature on the topic across disciplines and regions. These records then underwent a multi-stage screening process, including the removal of duplicates, title and abstract screening, and full-text assessment, to ensure relevance and methodological quality. Each stage of the process was guided by predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria, ensuring consistency and transparency in the selection of studies. This rigorous filtering process ultimately resulted in a refined dataset that forms the basis of the bibliometric analysis, strengthening the reliability and validity of the study's findings.

First, duplicate records were removed. Second, titles and abstracts were screened to exclude studies that did not directly address Indigenous populations or LGBTQIA+ themes. Third, full-text articles were assessed for eligibility based on predefined inclusion criteria.

Studies were excluded if they:

1. did not focus on Indigenous communities,
2. did not address LGBTQIA+ or sexuality-related issues,
3. were not journal articles (e.g., conference papers, book chapters),
4. were not written in English, or
5. were not in final publication stage.

After applying these criteria, a refined dataset of relevant articles was included for bibliometric analysis. While Scopus provides extensive coverage of high-quality literature, certain limitations must be acknowledged. The database tends to underrepresent research from the Global South and non-English publications, which may affect the comprehensiveness of the dataset. Additionally, excluding non-journal publications may omit emerging or community-based research outputs relevant to Indigenous LGBTQIA+ experiences.

2.3 Bibliometric Analysis

The bibliometric analysis was conducted using the Bibliometrix package in R and its web interface, Biblioshiny, which are widely used tools for science mapping and quantitative research analysis (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017). These tools enabled the systematic examination and visualization of publication patterns, citation networks, and intellectual structures within the dataset. Through their analytical capabilities, the study was able to identify key contributors, influential publications, and collaborative networks that shape the field. Additionally, Bibliometrix and Biblioshiny support advanced techniques such as co-citation analysis, keyword co-occurrence mapping, and thematic evolution, allowing for a deeper understanding of how research on indigeneity and LGBTQIA+ issues has developed over time. This methodological approach ensures a robust and comprehensive analysis of the scholarly landscape, providing both descriptive and interpretive insights into the structure and dynamics of the field.

The analysis included:

1. Descriptive analysis, identifying annual publication trends, most productive authors, institutions, and countries
2. Citation analysis, determining highly cited articles and influential studies
3. Co-authorship analysis, mapping collaboration networks among researchers
4. Co-citation analysis, identifying relationships between influential works
5. Keyword co-occurrence analysis, detecting major research themes and emerging topics

Network visualization techniques were used to illustrate relationships among authors, keywords, and institutions, providing a clearer understanding of the intellectual structure of the field.

Through this bibliometric approach, the study systematically maps the development of LGBTQIA+ research in Indigenous contexts and identifies critical gaps, particularly the underrepresentation of Southeast Asian perspectives. These findings serve as a foundation for contextual analysis and future research directions relevant to Indigenous communities in Bukidnon, Philippines.

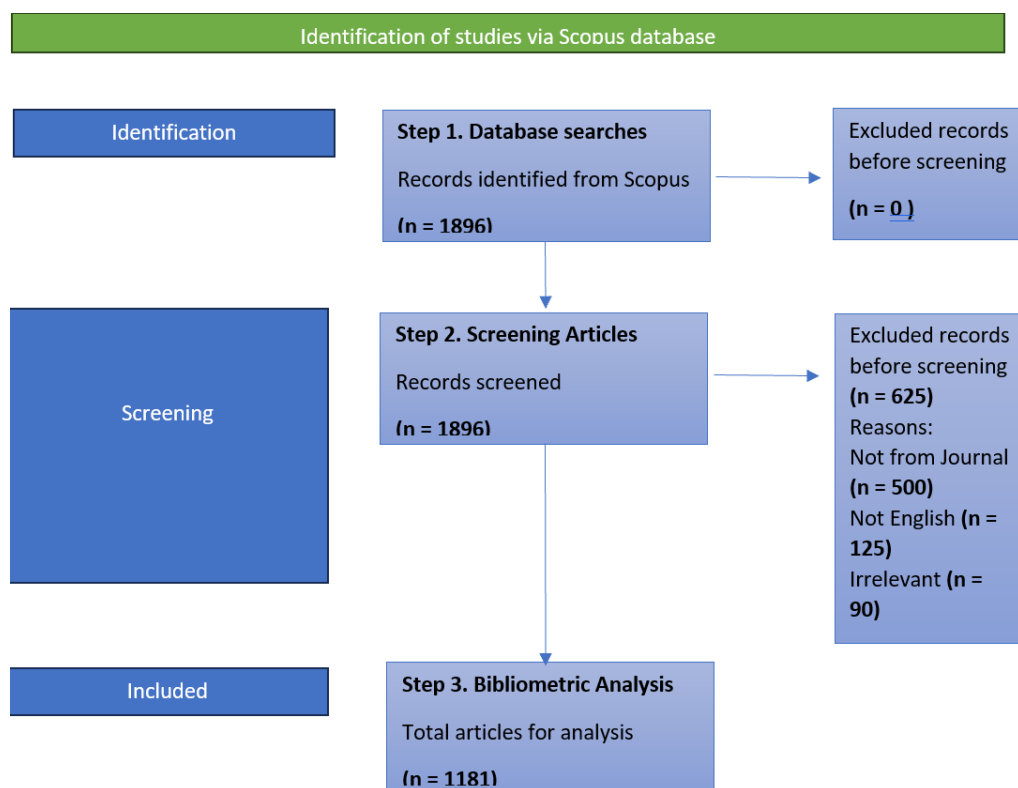


Figure No. 1 The selection process

The network visualization further clarifies the intellectual structure of the discipline by identifying clusters of research that revolve around key themes such as identity negotiation, cultural resilience, and the enduring impacts of colonialism. While these themes are critical, their prominence also suggests a degree of thematic consolidation that may limit the emergence of alternative perspectives, particularly those grounded in Indigenous epistemologies from underrepresented regions. The relative absence of Southeast Asian nodes within co-authorship and keyword networks underscores the marginal position of this region in global scholarly discourse. This absence is not merely geographic but epistemological, indicating that local knowledge systems, languages, and lived experiences remain insufficiently integrated into mainstream academic conversations. Situating these findings within the Philippine context, particularly in Bukidnon, highlights the urgency of addressing these gaps. Indigenous communities in the region navigate complex intersections of tradition, modernity, and identity, shaped by both pre-colonial cultural frameworks and the enduring influence of colonial and religious institutions. However, the lack of localized research means that these nuanced experiences are largely invisible within global academic literature. This invisibility has tangible consequences, as it limits the ability of policymakers, educators, and development practitioners to design culturally responsive and inclusive interventions that reflect the realities of Indigenous LGBTQIA+ individuals.

Results and Discussion

3.1 Bibliometric Analysis of scholarly research on LGBTQIA+ identities within Indigenous communities evolved over time

The Figure 2 annual scientific production trend reflects a clear shift in the scholarly engagement with LGBTQIA+ identities within Indigenous communities. Early research (pre-2000s) was minimal and largely absent of intersectional perspectives, as studies on LGBTQIA+ issues and Indigenous communities were often treated as separate and unrelated domains (Nguyen et al., 2023). This fragmentation reflects the historical marginalization of intersecting identities within academic discourse, where Indigenous sexuality was rarely acknowledged within mainstream research agendas shaped by Western epistemologies.

From the mid-2000s to around 2015, a gradual increase in publications indicates the emergence of intersectionality as a guiding analytical framework, allowing scholars to examine overlapping systems of identity, exclusion, and resilience

(Crenshaw, 1991; Crenshaw & Bowleg, 2022). During this phase, research expanded beyond purely health-centered or deficit-based narratives and began incorporating broader social, cultural, and structural dimensions of Indigenous LGBTQIA+ experiences (Yeo et al., 2023). However, despite this conceptual progress, the dominance of Global North perspectives remained evident, with most influential studies still originating from North America and Europe.

A significant surge in research output from 2016 onwards suggests a growing recognition of the importance of inclusive, decolonized, and interdisciplinary approaches to studying indigeneity and sexuality. Recent studies increasingly emphasize Indigenous knowledge systems, identity negotiation, and structural inequalities, reflecting a more nuanced understanding of the field (Lo Moro et al., 2024; Patel et al., 2025). This shift also aligns with broader calls for decolonizing research methodologies and centering Indigenous epistemologies in academic inquiry (Smith, 2012; Kovach, 2009). Despite this progress, the continued limited representation of Global South contexts—particularly Southeast Asia and the Philippines—highlights persistent gaps in the literature. In regions such as Bukidnon, these gaps are even more pronounced, underscoring the need for localized, culturally grounded research that reflects Indigenous LGBTQIA+ lived realities.

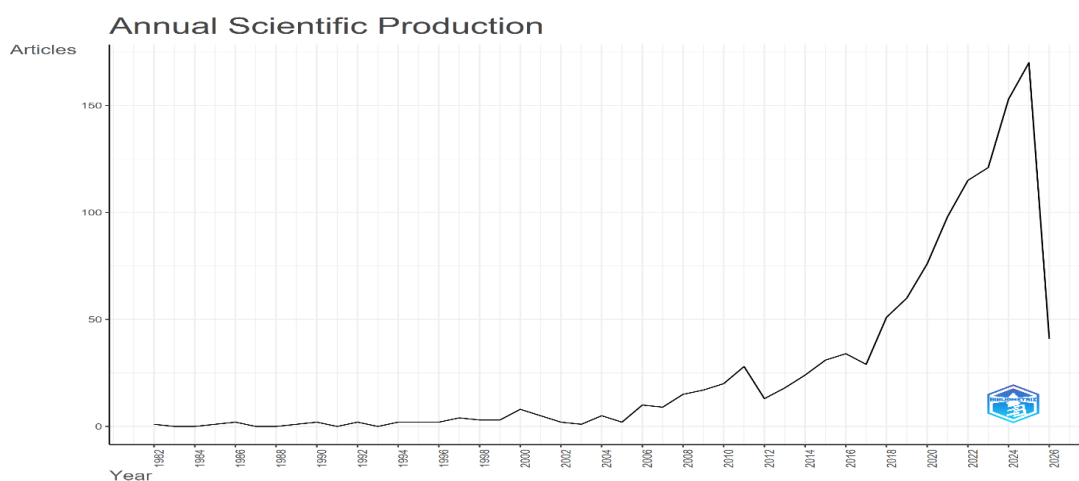


Figure No. 2 Annual Scientific Production

While the overall trajectory indicates expanding scholarly attention, it also raises critical questions about whose voices are being amplified and whose remain underrepresented. This opens opportunities for more localized, culturally grounded, and participatory research—especially in contexts like Bukidnon—where the intersection of indigeneity and sexuality continues to evolve and invites further exploration.

Ultimately, the trajectory depicted in Figure 2 can be understood as both a sign of progress and a reminder of ongoing gaps. While scholarly engagement with Indigenous LGBTQIA+ identities has expanded, the uneven distribution of knowledge production suggests that the field is still in the process of negotiating inclusivity and representation. This creates space for future research to move beyond documentation toward deeper engagement with community-based, participatory, and culturally responsive approaches. In contexts such as Bukidnon, where identities are continuously shaped by evolving socio-cultural dynamics, the figure does not offer a definitive conclusion but rather opens a pathway for further inquiry—inviting scholars to critically examine not only what is studied, but also how, where, and by whom knowledge is produced.

The Figure 3 on Sources' Production over Time provides a clear bibliometric snapshot of how scholarship on the intersection of indigeneity and sexuality has evolved across key journals. Anchored to the study "Intersection of Indigeneity and Sexuality: A Bibliometric Review of LGBTQIA+ Research in Indigenous Communities and Its Implications for Bukidnon, Philippines," the trend reveals both the late emergence and the recent acceleration of academic attention to this niche but critical field.

From the early 1980s up to around 2005, publication output across all indexed sources remained almost negligible. This suggests that the intersection of Indigenous identity and LGBTQIA+ experiences was largely invisible or marginalized in academic discourse, reflecting broader structural silences in both Indigenous studies and sexuality research (Smith, 2012; Kovach, 2009). Even journals such as *Journal of Homosexuality*, which show the earliest minimal activity, indicate that early LGBTQIA+ scholarship was not yet sufficiently attentive to Indigenous contexts, as research at the time largely focused on Western-centric identity frameworks.

A noticeable shift begins around 2008–2015, where journals such as *Social Science and Medicine* and *Culture, Health and Sexuality* begin to show gradual increases. This period can be interpreted as the emergence phase of intersectional inquiry, influenced by the growing application of intersectionality theory and decolonial perspectives in the social sciences (Crenshaw, 1991; Crenshaw & Bowleg, 2022). During this time, health, stigma, and social inequality became central themes, particularly within minority stress and public health frameworks (Meyer, 2003; Wilson & Meyer, 2021). However, the growth remains modest, suggesting that while scholarly interest was developing, it had not yet become a dominant research focus.

The most striking pattern appears post-2018, where all journals exhibit a sharp and sustained increase in cumulative occurrences. By 2023–2025, *Journal of Homosexuality* and *Social Science and Medicine* lead in output, followed closely by *BMC Public Health* and *Culture, Health and Sexuality*. This surge signals a consolidation phase, where the field gains both legitimacy and urgency within global academic discourse (Nguyen et al., 2023; Lo Moro et al., 2024). Several factors may explain this trend: the global push for inclusive health and human rights frameworks, increased visibility of Indigenous LGBTQIA+ activism and narratives, and the expansion of public health research addressing marginalized populations, particularly during and after the COVID-19 pandemic (Patel et al., 2025; Tan & Saw, 2022).

For the context of Bukidnon and Indigenous groups such as the Higaonon, Bukidnon, Talaandig, and Manobo in Northern Mindanao, this trajectory is particularly significant. The delayed but rapid growth implies that local realities may still be underrepresented despite increasing global attention. Most indexed works continue to originate from Western or Global North contexts, reinforcing concerns about epistemic imbalance and the uneven geography of knowledge production in Indigenous LGBTQIA+ studies (Tijssen, 2007; Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2016). This highlights the urgent need for localized, community-based, and culturally grounded research that better reflects the lived experiences of Indigenous LGBTQIA+ populations in Bukidnon and similar contexts.

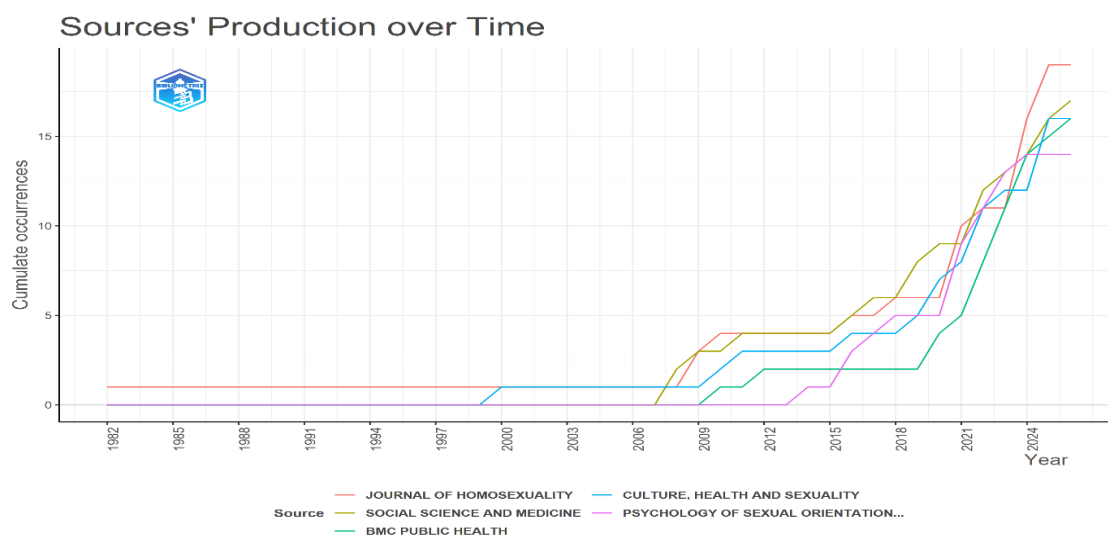


Figure No. 3 Sources' Production over Time contributing to Indigenous LGBTQIA+ research

Moreover, the rise of journals like *BMC Public Health* highlights a significant shift toward framing LGBTQIA+ Indigenous issues within health, well-being, and policy discourse, rather than purely identity-based or theoretical narratives. This reflects a broader trend in contemporary scholarship where Indigenous sexuality is increasingly examined through the lenses of health equity, social determinants, and structural inequality (Wilson & Meyer, 2021; Logie, 2020). In the context of Bukidnon, this shift opens meaningful opportunities for researchers to conduct empirical studies focusing on mental health outcomes, access to culturally appropriate health services, and forms of resilience among Indigenous LGBTQIA+ individuals, particularly within communities such as the Higaonon, Bukidnon, Talaandig, and Manobo. These areas remain underexplored despite their strong relevance to local public health and social development agendas.

At the same time, the relatively lower but gradually growing contribution of journals like *Psychology of Sexual Orientation* and *Gender Diversity* suggests that psychological, subjective, and lived-experience dimensions are still emerging areas within the broader field. This is particularly important because Indigenous LGBTQIA+ individuals often navigate multiple

and overlapping layers of marginalization—cultural, social, familial, and institutional—which cannot be fully captured through macro-level or purely policy-oriented analyses alone. Intersectionality theory emphasizes that these layered identities produce unique forms of vulnerability and resilience that require more nuanced, context-sensitive exploration (Crenshaw, 1991; Crenshaw & Bowleg, 2022). Therefore, strengthening research in psychological and experiential domains is essential to complement public health and sociological perspectives, ensuring a more holistic understanding of Indigenous LGBTQIA+ lives, especially in underrepresented settings such as Bukidnon.

3.2 Most productive authors, institutions, and countries contributing to Indigenous LGBTQIA+ research

The Figure 4 shows a clear temporal concentration of author productivity, with most contributions emerging from 2013 onwards and becoming more pronounced between 2021 and 2024. Earlier authors such as Bauer GR, Reisner SL, and Mayer KH demonstrate longer publication spans, indicating sustained engagement over time. However, their outputs remain relatively spaced out, suggesting that early scholarship in this area was limited and gradual rather than continuous, a pattern typical of emerging research fields where knowledge production begins with a small number of contributors before expanding (Price, 1965; Wagner & Leydesdorff, 2005). This reflects the early stage of development in Indigenous LGBTQIA+ scholarship, where foundational work was primarily concentrated in health and sexuality studies rather than intersectional Indigenous contexts.

In contrast, a noticeable shift occurs in the later years where several authors appear within a shorter and more recent time frame. Their production is clustered, and the increasing size of the nodes suggests a rise in both publication count and citation impact per year. This pattern indicates a consolidation of scholarly interest, where research activity becomes more collaborative, interdisciplinary, and thematically focused. Such clustering is often associated with the maturation of a research field, where increased connectivity among scholars accelerates knowledge production and dissemination (Small, 1973; Leydesdorff et al., 2014). Additionally, newer publications tend to achieve higher citation rates due to their alignment with contemporary academic priorities, including intersectionality, decoloniality, and health equity frameworks, which have become increasingly central in Indigenous and LGBTQIA+ studies (Bornmann & Mutz, 2015; Logie, 2020).

Within this evolving landscape, the concentration of recent author productivity also suggests a growing responsiveness to global discussions on marginalized identities. However, it remains important to note that despite this increase in output, authorship is still largely dominated by researchers based in Global North institutions, reinforcing ongoing disparities in scholarly visibility and participation. This underscores the need for greater inclusion of scholars from Indigenous communities and regions such as Bukidnon, where lived experiences remain underrepresented in mainstream academic authorship networks.

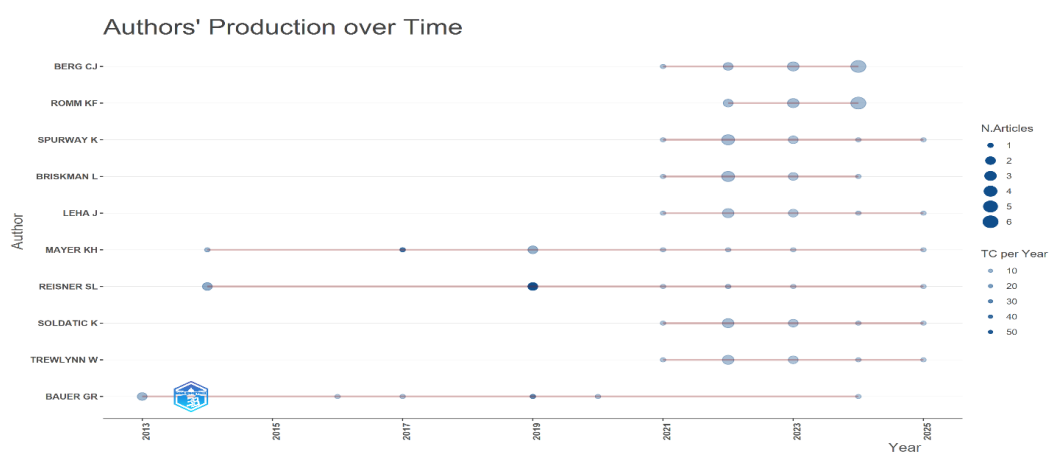


Figure No. 4 Productive Authors' contributing to Indigenous LGBTQIA+ research

Another important pattern is the episodic nature of authorship. Many authors contribute within a limited number of years rather than maintaining long-term productivity. This suggests that the field is still in a developmental stage and continues to attract new contributors, but has not yet formed a stable core of consistently publishing scholars. Such patterns are commonly observed in interdisciplinary fields, where research engagement is often short-term, collaborative, and project-

based rather than sustained over long academic careers (Leahey et al., 2017; Wagner & Leydesdorff, 2005). In the context of Indigenous LGBTQIA+ studies, this may also reflect the emerging nature of the field, where researchers temporarily engage with intersectional topics aligned with funding priorities or evolving academic trends rather than long-standing specialization.

Additionally, the overlap of multiple authors in the period 2021–2024 suggests a peak phase of engagement, where a larger number of scholars are simultaneously contributing to the field. This clustering may reflect broader academic shifts, including the increasing emphasis on intersectional, decolonial, and socially responsive research agendas that have gained significant prominence in recent years (Hankivsky & Kapilashrami, 2020; Logie, 2020). It also aligns with the expansion of global conversations on equity, inclusion, and Indigenous rights, which have encouraged more interdisciplinary collaboration and heightened scholarly attention to marginalized populations. The figure also highlights differences in author impact, as seen in the varying node sizes representing citations per year. Some authors demonstrate larger nodes within shorter periods, indicating high-impact contributions despite relatively fewer publications, while others show more consistent but moderate output over time. This pattern supports the argument that citation impact is influenced not only by productivity but also by the visibility, relevance, and timing of research outputs within broader academic conversations (Bornmann & Daniel, 2008; Wang, 2013). In rapidly evolving fields such as Indigenous LGBTQIA+ studies, highly cited works often emerge when research aligns with urgent social issues, policy debates, or emerging theoretical frameworks, thereby shaping the direction of subsequent scholarship.

The Figure 5 on affiliations' production over time shows that institutional contributions to research on LGBTQIA+ and Indigenous-related issues are both temporally uneven and geographically concentrated. From the data, there is minimal to no institutional output prior to the mid-2000s, followed by a gradual emergence between 2007–2015, and a rapid expansion from 2018 onwards. This trajectory suggests that the topic has transitioned from being a marginal research concern to a more recognized and institutionally supported field, consistent with how emerging interdisciplinary areas gain traction over time (Bornmann & Mutz, 2015; Van Raan, 2000). It also reflects broader shifts in academic priorities toward inclusion, intersectionality, and decolonial approaches in social and health sciences. A dominant pattern in the figure is the strong and sustained growth of the University of California, which leads in cumulative production. Its sharp increase, particularly after 2018, reflects how large, research-intensive institutions often function as global knowledge hubs, driven by strong funding structures, interdisciplinary collaboration, and extensive research infrastructures (Abramo et al., 2009; King, 2004). This dominance also implies that much of the existing knowledge on LGBTQIA+ and Indigenous intersections is being shaped within specific institutional and geographical contexts, which may influence how issues are framed, prioritized, and interpreted in scholarly discourse.

Other institutions such as the University of Toronto and the University of British Columbia show significant growth in recent years, especially after 2020. Their trajectories indicate a late but accelerated engagement, suggesting that more institutions are beginning to recognize the importance of research on marginalized identities and are integrating it into broader academic and policy-oriented agendas. This aligns with global trends emphasizing equity, diversity, and inclusion in research priorities, particularly within public health, sociology, and interdisciplinary gender studies (Sugimoto et al., 2017; Lo Moro et al., 2024). Meanwhile, the University of Washington and George Washington University demonstrate moderate yet consistent contributions, with earlier entry points but slower growth over time. This pattern may reflect sustained but less intensive engagement, potentially influenced by differences in institutional specialization, funding allocation, and research focus areas. Overall, the variation across institutions highlights that research production is not uniform but is strongly shaped by institutional capacity, global research hierarchies, and access to resources. It also reinforces the persistent concentration of scholarly authority within Global North institutions, underscoring the need to expand institutional participation from underrepresented regions such as Southeast Asia and the Philippines, including localized contexts like Bukidnon, to achieve a more balanced and inclusive global research landscape.

A key insight from the data is the convergence of multiple institutions between 2020 and 2024, where all affiliations exhibit simultaneous increases in output. This clustering suggests a collective surge in institutional participation, likely driven by heightened global attention to issues of identity, inequality, and marginalized communities. In the context of Indigenous LGBTQIA+ research, this may reflect increasing recognition of intersectional vulnerabilities and the need for inclusive, socially responsive, and decolonized knowledge production frameworks (Hankivsky & Kapilashrami, 2020; Logie, 2020).

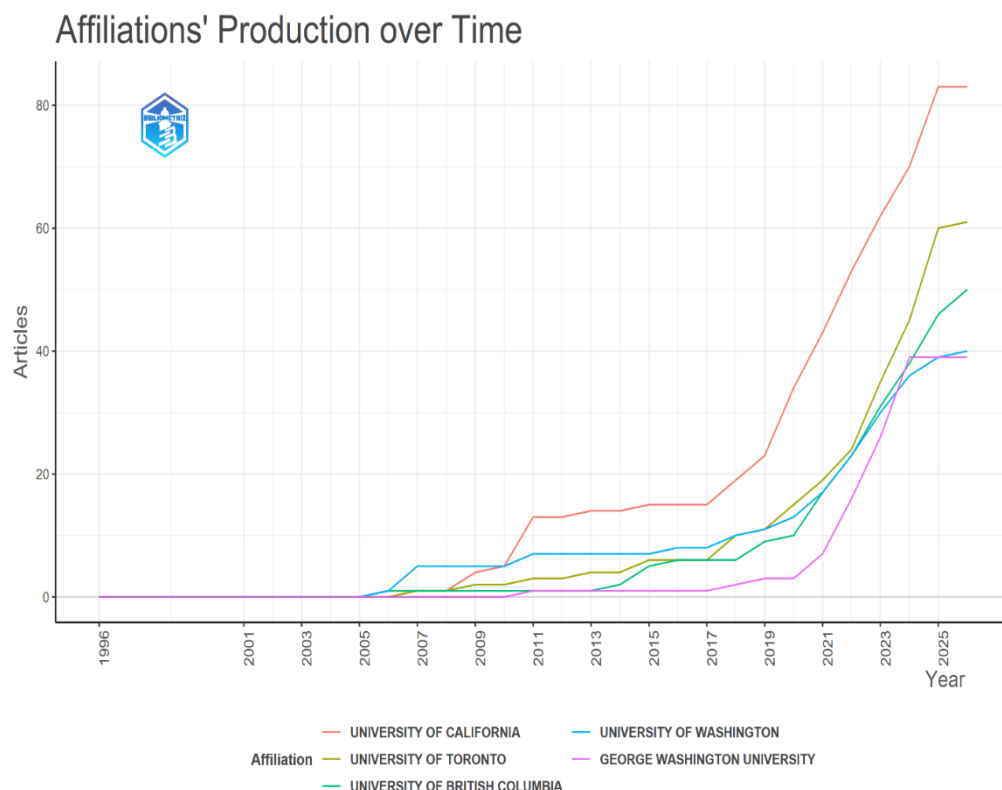


Figure No. 5 Institutions' Production over time contributing to Indigenous LGBTQIA+ research

However, despite this growth, the figure also reveals a concentration of research within a limited number of institutions, primarily located in highly resourced regions. This raises critical implications: while the volume of research is increasing, the diversity of perspectives may remain limited, particularly for underrepresented contexts such as Indigenous communities in developing regions. Global scientometric studies consistently show that research output and visibility tend to be concentrated in elite institutions and high-income countries, reinforcing structural inequalities in global knowledge production (King, 2004; Leydesdorff et al., 2014). This imbalance can shape not only what is studied, but also how Indigenous LGBTQIA+ experiences are framed, interpreted, and theorized within academic discourse.

In this light, the data suggests that while institutional productivity is expanding, there remains a need to broaden participation across more diverse affiliations, especially those closer to the communities being studied. Many of the current outputs are still concentrated within highly urban-based or internationally affiliated institutions, which may unintentionally shape the framing of Indigenous LGBTQIA+ experiences from a more distant academic lens. This limits the depth of localized understanding that community-rooted researchers and institutions could contribute, particularly in contexts such as Bukidnon, where Indigenous cultural systems and lived realities require more context-sensitive interpretation.

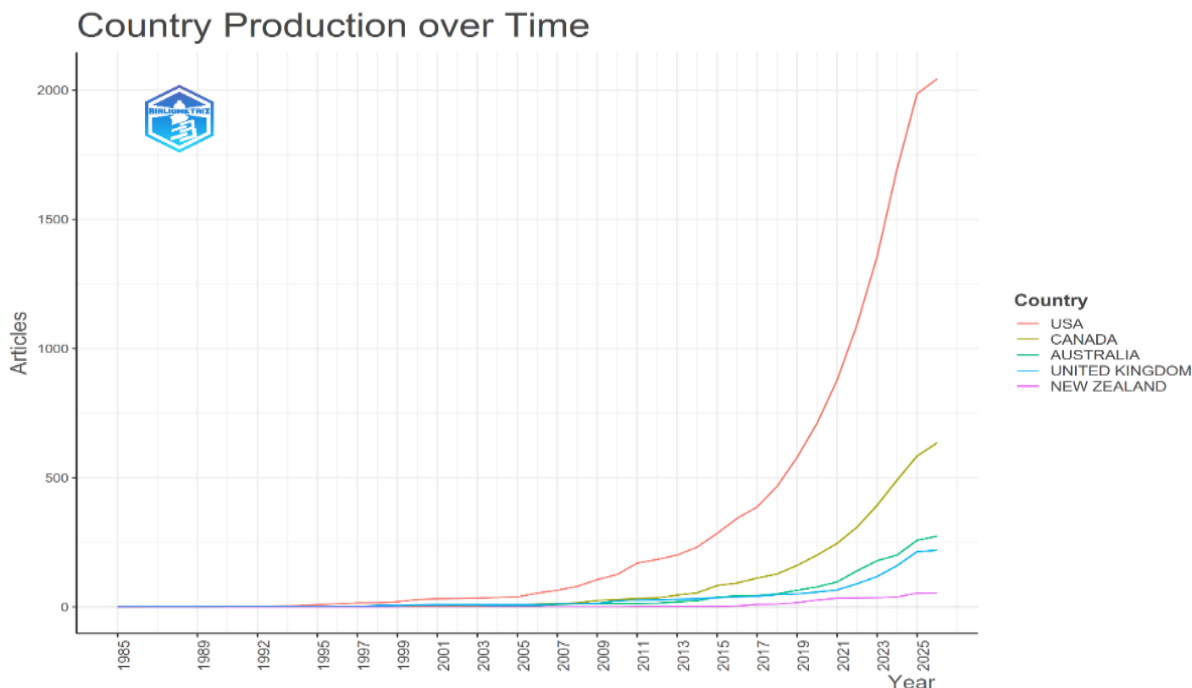
Strengthening collaboration with Indigenous-led organizations, regional universities, and grassroots researchers may help bridge this gap. Expanding institutional representation could lead to more contextually grounded, culturally sensitive, and inclusive research outputs, which are essential for capturing the complexity of Indigenous LGBTQIA+ experiences and for ensuring that knowledge production reflects the diversity of voices within both global and local contexts. Figures 6(a) and 6(b) illustrate a clear and accelerating expansion of research output over time, with notable differences in both scale and growth patterns across countries. From the late 1980s through the early 2000s, publication output remains minimal and relatively flat across all countries, suggesting that the field was still emerging and/or not yet fully captured within major indexed databases. A gradual increase becomes visible in the mid-2000s, but the most pronounced change occurs after approximately 2015, when publication counts rise sharply across all five countries.

The United States consistently emerges as the dominant contributor throughout the entire period. Its growth trajectory not only begins earlier but also increases at a markedly steeper rate, particularly in the last decade, where output surpasses 2,000 articles by 2025. This exponential pattern reflects broader global trends in scientific production, where research output has accelerated due to the expansion of scholarly journals, increased funding mechanisms, and intensified collaboration networks (Bornmann & Mutz, 2015). The observed trajectory also suggests that scientific production is not merely increasing linearly but is instead experiencing compounding growth driven by systemic changes in research ecosystems.

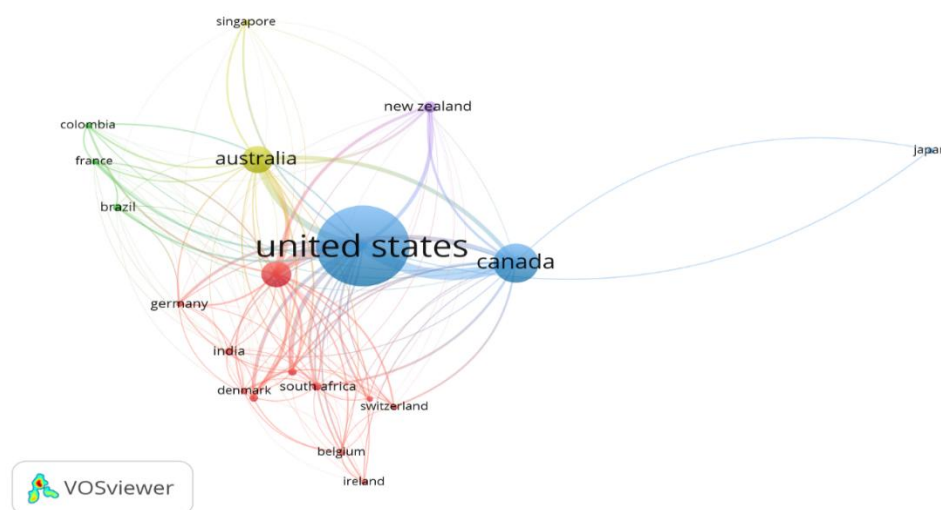
Canada follows as a distant second, yet it demonstrates a similarly consistent and accelerating upward trend, particularly after 2010. Australia and the United Kingdom exhibit comparable mid-tier growth patterns, with steady increases that become more pronounced after 2015. These developments align with evidence that national research productivity is strongly influenced by institutional capacity, R&D investment, and participation in international collaboration networks (Wagner & Leydesdorff, 2005). In such systems, countries with stronger integration into global scientific networks tend to experience higher visibility and output growth over time.

New Zealand consistently records the lowest output across the entire period. Although a gradual increase is observable in recent years, its total publication volume remains limited, reaching only slightly above 50 publications by 2025. This pattern reflects the structural constraints often faced by smaller research systems, where output is closely linked to population size, funding availability, and institutional research infrastructure (Wagner & Leydesdorff, 2005). More broadly, cross-national differences in publication output have long been associated with disparities in scientific capacity and national research investment (King, 2004).

A key feature of the figure is the synchronized surge in publication output across all countries after 2015, suggesting a systemic rather than country-specific shift in global research production. One important driver of this pattern is the expansion of indexed journal coverage and database inclusivity, particularly within platforms such as Scopus and Web of Science, which have broadened the visibility of global scholarship over time (Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2016). Additionally, the rise of digital dissemination practices and open-access publishing models has contributed to increased publication volume and accessibility, further accelerating the growth of scientific output worldwide.



(a)



(b)

Figure No. 6 Countries' Production over time contributing to Indigenous LGBTQIA+ research

However, what is equally important in interpreting this figure is what is not immediately visible—particularly the minimal or absent representation of Southeast Asian countries among the leading contributors. Despite the region's expanding higher education systems and growing research output, Southeast Asian nations do not appear prominently in the dataset. This does not necessarily reflect a lack of scholarly activity, but rather highlights structural limitations related to visibility, indexing practices, and disparities in research capacity.

Existing literature emphasizes that Southeast Asia, along with other developing regions, remains underrepresented in major citation databases due to multiple systemic factors. These include the limited indexing of local and regional journals, language barriers that reduce international discoverability, and uneven distribution of research funding and infrastructure across countries [30][31]. As a result, a substantial portion of scholarly work produced in the region is published in national or locally circulated journals that are not consistently captured in databases such as Scopus or Web of Science, leading to a partial and potentially biased representation of global research productivity.

In addition, differences in access to international collaboration networks further influence publication visibility. Researchers in well-resourced countries are more likely to engage in cross-border collaborations and publish in high-impact indexed journals, while those in less-resourced contexts may face constraints in both funding and publication pathways. This contributes to a structural imbalance in global knowledge production, where research output from highly integrated academic systems becomes disproportionately visible compared to emerging research regions.

Consequently, the global patterns illustrated in the figure are shaped largely by countries with established presence in international indexing systems, while regions such as Southeast Asia remain comparatively underrepresented. This creates a form of visibility gap in bibliometric analyses, where measured output does not fully correspond to actual scholarly activity. At the same time, the post-2015 surge in global publication output presents a potential opening for change. The expansion of indexing coverage, growth of open-access publishing, and increasing emphasis on international collaboration may gradually improve the visibility of Southeast Asian research. Strengthening regional journal standards, expanding funding support, and fostering equitable research partnerships could further help address this imbalance and promote a more inclusive global knowledge landscape.

3.3 Most influential publications and citation networks in the field

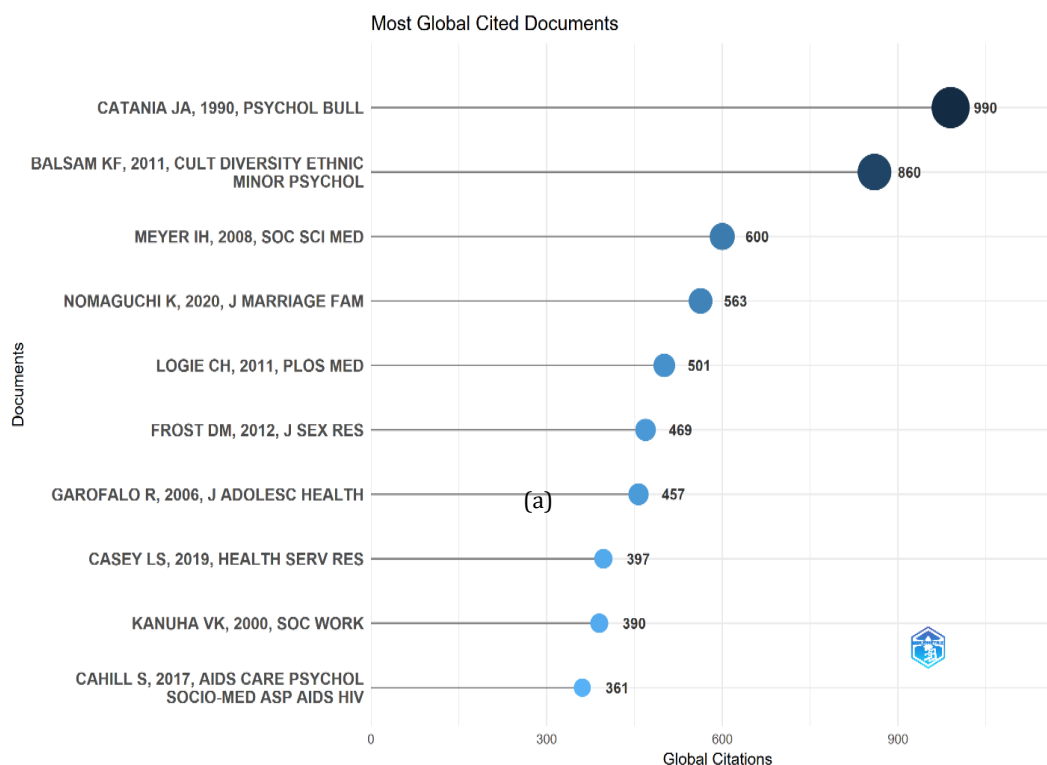
Figure 7(a) highlights a set of highly influential publications, with citation counts ranging from approximately 360 to nearly 1,000. A clear pattern emerges at the top of the distribution: Catania (1990) leads with 990 citations, followed by Balsam (2011) with 860, and Meyer (2008) with 600. This sharp decline from the highest-ranked publication to the rest of the set reflects a strongly skewed citation structure, where a small number of foundational works accumulate a disproportionately large share of scholarly attention. Such uneven distributions are a well-documented characteristic of scientific

communication systems, where citation impact tends to concentrate within a limited set of highly influential works that shape subsequent research trajectories (Seglen, 1992).

The sustained dominance of Catania (1990), despite being the oldest publication in the dataset, suggests strong long-term citation durability. Older seminal works often maintain high visibility because they establish foundational theoretical frameworks, methodological approaches, or empirical baselines that continue to be referenced across decades. In contrast, newer publications such as Nomaguchi (2020), which has already accumulated over 560 citations, demonstrate the increasing speed at which contemporary research can achieve visibility and influence. This acceleration reflects broader changes in scholarly communication, including digital dissemination, enhanced indexing coverage, and faster citation diffusion within interconnected research networks (Bornmann & Mutz, 2015).

The mid-range cluster of highly cited works—including Meyer (2008), Logie (2011), Frost (2012), and Garofalo (2006), each with approximately 450–600 citations—indicates the presence of a dense intellectual core within the field. Rather than being shaped by a single dominant theoretical perspective, this cluster suggests multiple influential contributions that collectively structure the research landscape. In bibliometric terms, such clustering often reflects the coexistence of interrelated themes or complementary theoretical frameworks that are frequently co-cited and jointly inform subsequent studies (Small, 1973; Boyack & Klavans, 2010).

Another notable feature is the multidisciplinary distribution of journals in which these influential works are published, including outlets such as *Psychological Bulletin*, *Social Science & Medicine*, *PLoS Medicine*, the *Journal of Sex Research*, and the *Journal of Adolescent Health*. This dispersion indicates that high-impact publications are not confined to a single disciplinary boundary but instead emerge across psychology, public health, medicine, and social sciences. Such cross-journal distribution is characteristic of interdisciplinary research fields, where knowledge production is inherently integrative and citation networks extend beyond traditional disciplinary silos (Leydesdorff & Rafols, 2011).



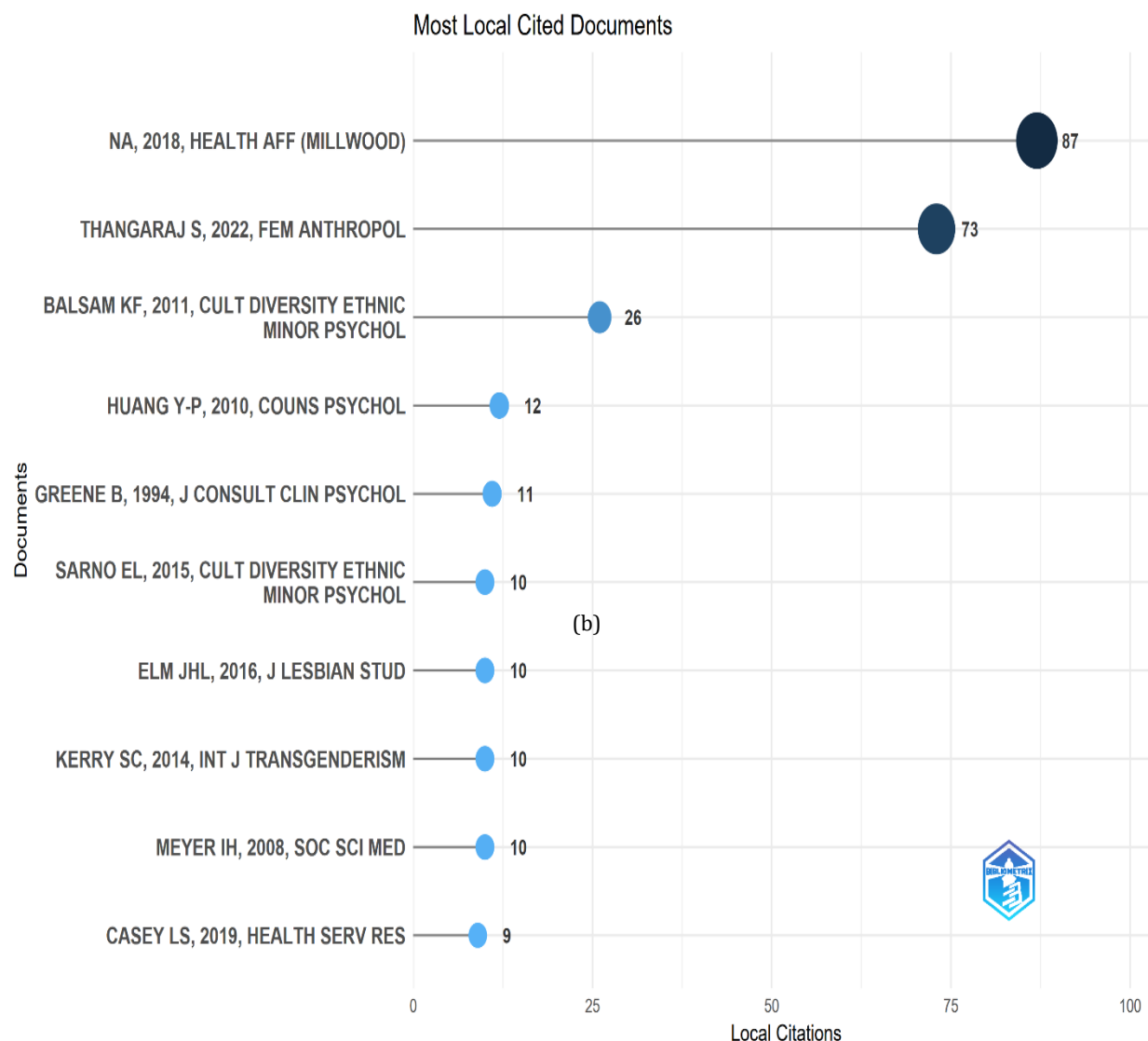


Figure No. 7 Most influential publications from global to local

At the lower end of the top-ranked publications (approximately 360–400 citations), studies such as Casey (2019) and Cahill (2017) still demonstrate substantial scholarly impact. Their relatively recent publication dates suggest an increase in citation velocity, or the rate at which newer works accumulate citations. This pattern reflects broader transformations in scientific communication, where the expansion of global research output, increased journal indexing, and faster dissemination mechanisms contribute to more rapid citation accumulation (Van Raan, 2000). As a result, influence is no longer confined to older foundational works but is increasingly shared with newer publications that quickly gain visibility within interconnected academic networks.

Overall, Figure 7(a) reveals a layered structure of influence: a small group of highly dominant publications, a substantial mid-tier of consistently cited works, and a set of newer studies that are rapidly gaining traction. This stratified distribution not only identifies the most influential documents but also reflects how knowledge is hierarchically structured and transmitted within the field, with foundational works anchoring the discourse while emerging studies continuously reshape it.

Figure 7(b), in contrast, offers a more field-specific perspective by focusing on local citations—those occurring within the dataset itself. Unlike global citations, which capture broad interdisciplinary impact, local citations reveal the core literature that directly structures the intellectual foundation of the research area. The distribution here is notably more compressed, with citation counts ranging from 9 to 87, indicating a tighter and more concentrated network of influence.

At the top of this distribution, NA (2018, *Health Affairs*) leads with 87 local citations, followed by Thangaraj (2022, *Feminist Anthropology*) with 73. The prominence of these relatively recent publications suggests that contemporary scholarship plays a central role in shaping the internal discourse of the field. This stands in contrast to the global citation pattern, where older works tend to dominate due to their long-term accumulation of citations. Within the local network, influence appears more dynamic and responsive to recent developments, reflecting an evolving field in which new contributions are rapidly integrated into ongoing scholarly conversations.

The sharp decline from the top two documents to Balsam (2011), with 26 local citations, highlights the presence of a highly selective intellectual core. Only a small number of works function as primary reference points, while the majority occupy a secondary, supporting role. This type of distribution is characteristic of specialized research domains, where a limited set of key publications anchors most academic discussions (Seglen, 1992).

Notably, certain publications—such as Meyer (2008) and Casey (2019)—appear in both global and local citation rankings, albeit with different levels of prominence. This overlap indicates that these works function as bridging documents, simultaneously influencing the broader academic landscape and the internal structure of the field. In bibliometric terms, such works help connect localized scholarly discourse with wider interdisciplinary conversations, reinforcing their strategic importance within citation networks (Small, 1973).

The mid-to-lower tier (approximately 9–12 citations), including studies by Huang (2010), Greene (1994), Sarno (2015), Elm (2016), and Kerry (2014), represents a supporting knowledge base. While individually less dominant, these works collectively contribute to the field's conceptual diversity and empirical richness. Their relatively modest citation counts suggest a more distributed pattern of influence, where no single study dominates but multiple contributions sustain the breadth of inquiry.

Another notable feature is the disciplinary diversity reflected in the journals represented, including *Health Affairs*, *Feminist Anthropology*, *Counseling Psychology*, and *Transgender Studies*. This reinforces the interdisciplinary nature of the field; however, within the local citation network, only a select subset of works from these disciplines is repeatedly cited, forming a tightly connected intellectual core. Such patterns are commonly identified through co-citation and citation network analyses, where clusters of frequently co-cited works signal shared theoretical frameworks or methodological orientations (Boyack & Klavans, 2010).

In comparison to global citation patterns, the local citation structure appears more compact and field-specific. This contrast highlights how scholarly influence operates differently depending on the scale of analysis: global citations reward broad visibility and cross-disciplinary reach, whereas local citations emphasize relevance, integration, and centrality within a particular research community.

The co-citation network in Figure 8 reveals that scholarly research on LGBTQIA+ identities has evolved from a centralized, health-oriented knowledge base toward a more fragmented but increasingly diversified intellectual structure. The dominant red cluster represents foundational studies that historically emphasized biomedical and psychological dimensions, particularly HIV-related research and mental health outcomes among LGBTQIA+ populations. This configuration aligns with bibliometric evidence showing that early LGBTQIA+ scholarship was largely shaped by clinical, epidemiological, and risk-prevention paradigms, with limited attention to cultural, relational, or intersectional dimensions (Nguyen et al., 2023; Logie, 2020). As a result, the early intellectual structure of the field was highly centralized, with a narrow set of influential works shaping most subsequent research trajectories.

As the field has progressed, the emergence of smaller peripheral clusters (blue, green, purple, and orange) indicates the gradual expansion and differentiation of research themes. These clusters reflect the development of more specialized domains, including identity negotiation, social inclusion, family systems, and community-based experiences. This shift signals a broader epistemological transition from predominantly biomedical framings toward socio-cultural and relational analyses of LGBTQIA+ lives. Contemporary studies increasingly emphasize how LGBTQIA+ experiences are embedded within structural inequalities, cultural norms, and social institutions, highlighting the importance of intersectional and context-sensitive approaches to understanding identity formation and wellbeing (Yeo et al., 2023; Patel et al., 2025).

However, the network also reveals a persistent structural gap in the integration of Indigenous perspectives, as evidenced by weak linkages between clusters and limited co-citation connections involving Indigenous-focused literature. While

recent scholarship has begun to incorporate intersectionality—particularly through analyses of ethnicity, culture, and family systems—these contributions remain relatively isolated from the central intellectual core of the field. This suggests that Indigenous LGBTQIA+ identities are still under-theorized and insufficiently integrated into mainstream academic discourse, despite their growing relevance in intersectional research frameworks (Walters et al., 2006; Balsam et al., 2004; Crenshaw & Bowleg, 2022).

The overall structure of the co-citation network reflects an ongoing transition toward interdisciplinarity and conceptual diversification. Nevertheless, the uneven connectivity between clusters highlights that this transition remains incomplete. While the field is expanding thematically, its intellectual integration—particularly across Indigenous, cultural, and biomedical domains—remains limited. Addressing this gap will require stronger theoretical bridging across disciplines, as well as more sustained incorporation of Indigenous epistemologies and community-based knowledge systems. Such efforts would not only enhance conceptual coherence but also contribute to a more inclusive and globally representative understanding of LGBTQIA+ identities across diverse cultural contexts.

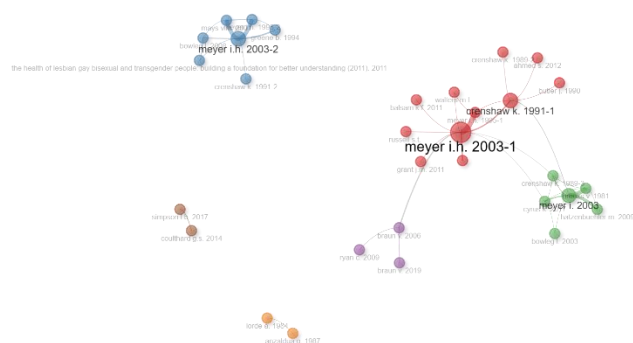


Figure No. 8 Co-citation network

The bibliometric network presented in Figure 9 provides a visual representation of the intellectual structure, evolution, and citation dynamics within scholarship on the intersection of indigeneity and LGBTQIA+ identities. The arrangement of nodes and connecting links reflects a clear chronological and thematic progression of research, moving from foundational conceptual work toward more specialized, applied, and context-sensitive inquiries.

At the uppermost and earliest part of the network, Green (1994) appears as a foundational source, indicating one of the earliest scholarly efforts to document and interpret the relationship between Indigenous cultural identities and diverse expressions of gender and sexuality. Its positioning suggests a conceptual anchoring role, where early scholarship was largely descriptive and anthropological in orientation, focusing on culturally specific gender systems and challenging dominant Western binary frameworks. This foundational stage aligns with broader patterns in Indigenous studies, where early academic work often emphasized documentation of cultural difference as a basis for later theoretical development (Smith, 2012; Kovach, 2009).

Following this initial phase, Walters et al. (2006) and Meyer (2003) occupy central and highly connected positions within the network, indicating their role as key bridging literature. These works integrate early cultural and identity-based insights with more structured theoretical frameworks, particularly in relation to stigma, stress, and cultural resilience. Meyer's minority stress theory, in particular, provides a foundational lens for understanding how discrimination and social stressors shape mental health outcomes among LGBTQIA+ populations, including Indigenous individuals (Meyer, 2003; Wilson & Meyer, 2021). In parallel, Walters et al. (2006) situate identity within the context of historical trauma, cultural continuity, and resilience among Two-Spirit communities, strengthening the link between psychological outcomes and Indigenous epistemologies.

The dense citation clustering around these works indicates sustained scholarly engagement and their continued relevance in shaping subsequent research trajectories. This also reflects how foundational theories in intersectionality and minority stress became central organizing frameworks for later empirical studies (Crenshaw, 1991; Crenshaw & Bowleg, 2022).

The mid-period cluster (approximately 2010–2017) represents a phase of rapid expansion and theoretical diversification. Studies by Huang, Moradi, Balsam, Scheim, Mereish, and Velez collectively contribute to a more nuanced and intersectional understanding of LGBTQIA+ experiences. This period is characterized by a stronger emphasis on integrating race, ethnicity, gender identity, and sexual orientation within unified analytical frameworks. The strong interconnections among these nodes suggest active scholarly dialogue and cumulative knowledge building, resulting in a more cohesive but methodologically diverse field. Research during this phase increasingly focuses on mental health disparities, identity negotiation, experiences of discrimination, and coping mechanisms, marking a transition from descriptive accounts toward more analytical and empirically grounded approaches (Moradi et al., 2010; Velez et al., 2013; Scheim et al., 2016; Casey et al., 2019; Chen & Smith, 2022).

In the more recent segment of the network (2018–2022), studies such as Casey (2019) and Soldatic (2012/2022 influence) reflect a shift toward applied, policy-oriented, and globally contextualized scholarship. These works extend earlier theoretical models into broader discussions of structural inequality, disability, human rights, and health system disparities, indicating increasing engagement with governance and institutional frameworks (Casey et al., 2019; Soldatic & Meekosha, 2012; Tan & Saw, 2022). However, the relatively weaker connectivity among these newer nodes suggests increasing fragmentation, as the field diversifies into specialized subdomains rather than maintaining a tightly integrated core.

A key structural feature of the network is its core-periphery configuration. Central nodes—particularly Meyer (2003), Walters et al. (2006), and Balsam et al. (2004)—function as enduring intellectual anchors, while more recent publications occupy peripheral positions as they explore emerging, specialized, or context-specific issues. This structure reflects both theoretical stability and ongoing diversification, where foundational frameworks continue to guide interpretation even as new empirical directions emerge.

Despite the field's intellectual growth and increasing sophistication, the network also reveals a persistent structural limitation: the dominance of Western, particularly North American, scholarship. Indigenous LGBTQIA+ experiences are frequently theorized through frameworks developed in Western contexts, which may not fully capture the epistemological and cultural specificities of other regions. As a result, Southeast Asia—and Indigenous communities such as those in Bukidnon, Philippines—remain underrepresented in both citation structures and theoretical development. This gap underscores the need for more regionally grounded scholarship that incorporates Indigenous epistemologies and locally situated understandings of gender and sexuality, ensuring that global knowledge production becomes more inclusive and contextually responsive (Lozano & Talampas, 2024; Regaspi, 2023; Tan & Saw, 2022).

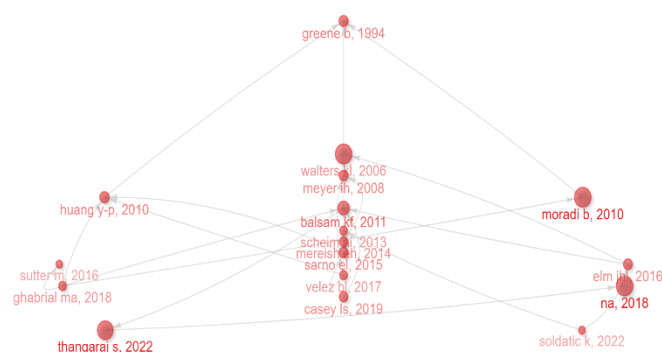


Figure No. 9 Historiograph

For Bukidnon, the implications of this bibliometric analysis are substantial. First, the absence of localized studies highlights a critical research gap, underscoring the need for context-specific investigations into how LGBTQIA+ identities are understood and lived within Indigenous Filipino communities. Second, there is a need to decolonize existing frameworks by integrating local knowledge systems, languages, and cultural practices into academic discourse. Applying Western theories without adaptation risks misrepresenting or oversimplifying Indigenous experiences. Furthermore, the evolving trend toward applied and policy-oriented research suggests opportunities for Bukidnon-based studies to contribute not only to academic knowledge but also to practical interventions. These may include the development of culturally sensitive mental health services, inclusive educational programs, and policies that recognize and protect diverse gender and sexual identities within Indigenous contexts.

3.4 Themes emerge from keyword co-occurrence analysis

The density visualization in Figure 10 highlights a layered and uneven development of scholarship on the intersection of Indigeneity and sexuality, revealing both dominant research priorities and significant conceptual gaps. The central concentration of keywords such as “human,” “female,” “male,” and “gender identity” indicates that the literature remains largely anchored in individual-level identity construction and broad demographic categorization. While this reflects the general trajectory of LGBTQIA+ research, it also suggests a continued reliance on simplified categorical framings that may obscure the complexity of lived experiences among Indigenous LGBTQIA+ populations. In this context, the notion of a “double minority” becomes particularly relevant, as marginalization is experienced simultaneously through both ethnic and sexual identity dimensions. Within Bukidnon, particularly among Indigenous groups such as the Higaonon, Talaandig, and Bukidnon communities, these tensions are further intensified by the interaction between gender diversity and culturally embedded norms and traditional governance systems (Lozano & Talampas, 2024; Regaspi, 2023).

Beyond this dominant core, the emergence of a secondary cluster composed of terms such as “depression,” “racism,” “intersectionality,” and “sexual orientation” signals an important paradigmatic shift toward intersectional analysis. Contemporary scholarship increasingly recognizes that Indigenous LGBTQIA+ identities cannot be adequately understood through single-axis frameworks. Instead, these identities are shaped by overlapping systems of power and marginalization, including ethnicity, sexuality, gender identity, and socio-economic inequality. This perspective aligns with intersectionality theory, which emphasizes the interconnected nature of social categorizations and their cumulative impact on lived experiences (Crenshaw, 1991; Crenshaw & Bowleg, 2022). In Indigenous contexts such as Bukidnon, these intersections are particularly salient, as structural inequalities and limited access to culturally responsive mental health services further compound vulnerability. Empirical studies in LGBTQIA+ health consistently demonstrate that intersecting forms of discrimination are strongly associated with adverse mental health outcomes, including depression and psychological distress (Casey et al., 2019; Wilson & Meyer, 2021).

At the same time, the presence of a distinct cluster centered on “HIV infections,” “sexual behavior,” and “homosexuality” reflects the continued influence of a biomedical and epidemiological framing of LGBTQIA+ identities, particularly in relation to Indigenous populations. Historically, much of the early literature focused on risk-based paradigms, positioning LGBTQIA+ individuals primarily within frameworks of disease prevention and health surveillance rather than as culturally situated subjects with agency and relational identities (Logie, 2020; Nguyen et al., 2023). While public health concerns such as HIV prevention remain critically important, this emphasis can inadvertently narrow the scope of inquiry by underrepresenting broader dimensions such as cultural recognition, structural violence, and community resilience.

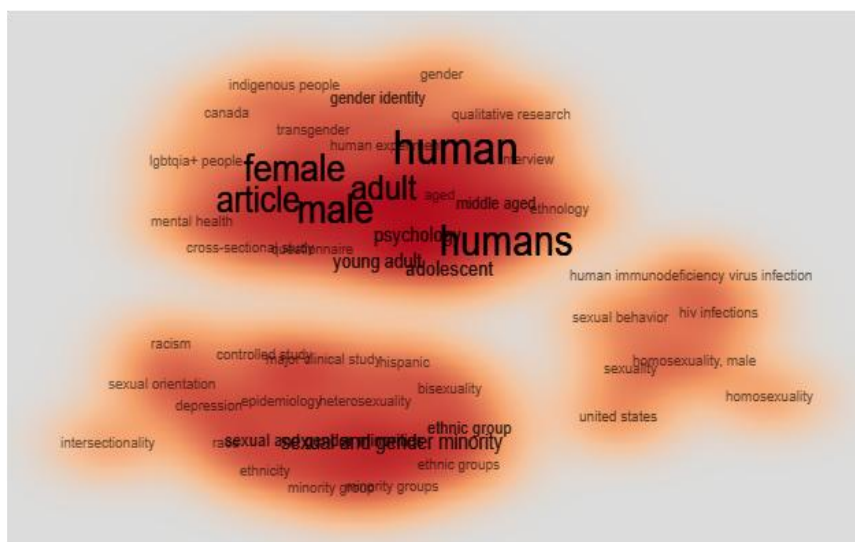


Figure No. 10 Keyword co-occurrence analysis

In Southeast Asian contexts, including the Philippines, scholars increasingly advocate for more integrated approaches that balance biomedical concerns with social, cultural, and policy-oriented perspectives (Tan & Saw, 2022; Regaspi, 2023). Such approaches are particularly important in Indigenous settings, where health outcomes are deeply intertwined with cultural

identity, historical marginalization, and access to inclusive governance structures. Overall, the density map reflects a field in transition: one that is gradually moving from biomedical dominance toward intersectional and socio-cultural frameworks, yet still retains structural imbalances in thematic emphasis and representation.

Importantly, the visualization also suggests that themes explicitly related to “Indigenous people” and “LGBTQIA+ identities” remain peripheral rather than central within the overall keyword network, pointing to a persistent Western-centric orientation in global research production. This marginal positioning indicates that Indigenous-specific perspectives are still not fully integrated into the dominant conceptual core of the literature, despite the growing emphasis on intersectionality in recent scholarship. Such a pattern reflects broader concerns in Indigenous research methodologies, where knowledge production has historically been shaped by Western epistemological frameworks that may not adequately capture Indigenous ways of knowing and being (Smith, 2012; Kovach, 2009).

This peripheral placement also underscores a significant gap and, at the same time, a clear opportunity for localized and decolonial scholarship. In the context of Bukidnon, future research can contribute meaningfully by centering Indigenous epistemologies—such as the Filipino concepts of *loob* and *kapwa*—to better understand how gender and sexuality are socially constructed and culturally interpreted within Indigenous worldviews. These frameworks emphasize relationality, shared identity, and community embeddedness, offering alternative ways of understanding identity that move beyond Western individualistic models (Lozano & Talampas, 2024).

Furthermore, examining traditional governance structures and customary laws among Indigenous groups in Bukidnon can provide deeper insights into how acceptance, negotiation, or exclusion of LGBTQIA+ identities is shaped within community systems. This includes the role of tribal elders as cultural authorities in mediating social norms and maintaining collective values. Language also plays a crucial role in shaping identity, and analyzing gendered expressions in local languages such as Binukid may reveal culturally specific categories of gender and sexuality that are not easily captured by global taxonomies. Such linguistic and cultural analyses can help surface Indigenous conceptualizations of identity that remain underrepresented in mainstream academic discourse (Regaspi, 2023; Tan & Saw, 2022).

Overall, the visualization highlights not only the structural marginality of Indigenous-LGBTQIA+ scholarship within global knowledge networks, but also the necessity of expanding research approaches to include Indigenous epistemologies, languages, and governance systems. Doing so would contribute to a more inclusive and contextually grounded understanding of gender and sexuality, particularly in Indigenous communities such as those in Bukidnon.

The Figure 11 Strategic Thematic Map provides a structured overview of the intellectual organization of the dataset by positioning themes according to their centrality (relevance) and density (development). This framework allows for a clearer interpretation of how research topics are distributed in terms of both their importance within the field and their level of conceptual maturation.

The Motor Themes quadrant (upper right), which includes “sexual and gender minority,” “adolescent,” and “psychology,” represents the most developed and influential areas within the dataset. These themes exhibit both high centrality and high density, indicating that they are not only well-established but also strongly interconnected with multiple other research topics. Their strong internal cohesion reflects a mature and consolidated body of literature, characterized by consistent scholarly attention and the presence of multiple interrelated subtopics. In bibliometric terms, motor themes typically function as driving forces of a research field, shaping its conceptual direction and sustaining its intellectual momentum (Cobo et al., 2011; Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017). In this case, the dominance of psychologically oriented and development-focused themes suggests that the field remains strongly anchored in mental health, developmental psychology, and identity formation perspectives.

In the Basic and Transversal Themes quadrant (lower right), terms such as “human,” “humans,” and “male” appear with high centrality but low density. Their strong centrality indicates that these terms are widely used across the dataset and serve as foundational descriptors, while their low density reflects limited conceptual specialization or internal thematic development. These types of themes function as structural anchors within the research field, supporting coherence across studies without constituting distinct or evolving research streams (Cobo et al., 2011; Thompson, 2022). Their presence highlights how general demographic and biological descriptors continue to underpin much of the literature, even when not contributing to theoretical advancement.

The Niche Themes quadrant (upper left), which includes topics such as “United States,” “health disparity,” and “public health,” consists of highly developed but relatively isolated research areas. These themes exhibit high density, indicating strong internal cohesion and well-developed specialized bodies of work. However, their low centrality suggests limited integration with other thematic clusters in the broader network. This pattern reflects the presence of specialized research domains that maintain methodological and conceptual depth but operate in relative isolation from the mainstream

intellectual structure of the field (Leydesdorff & Rafols, 2011; Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017). Such niche areas are often important for advancing targeted knowledge but may have limited influence on the overall evolution of the research landscape.

Overall, the thematic structure illustrated in Figure 11 reveals a field that is simultaneously mature in its core psychological and identity-based themes, structurally supported by broad transversal descriptors, and partially fragmented into specialized niche areas. This configuration reflects both the consolidation of dominant research paradigms and the ongoing diversification of scholarly inquiry across intersecting domains of sexuality, gender, health, and identity.

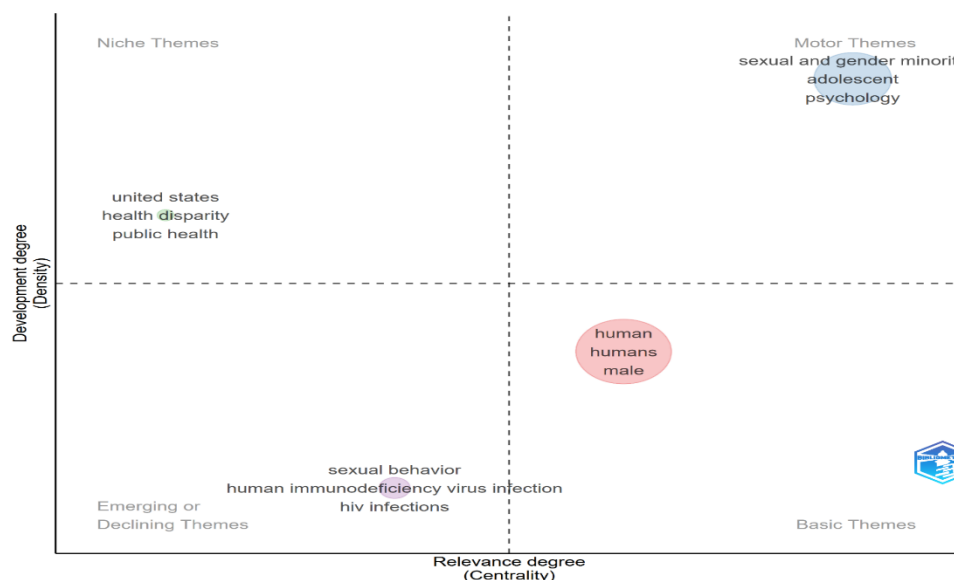


Figure No. 11 Strategic Thematic Map

Finally, the Emerging or Declining Themes quadrant (lower left), which includes “sexual behavior,” “human immunodeficiency virus infection,” and “HIV infections,” represents topics characterized by both low centrality and low density. This positioning suggests that these themes are either in the early stages of thematic development or experiencing a relative decline in scholarly attention within the current intellectual structure. Their weak connections to other thematic clusters indicate limited integration into the broader research landscape, implying that they are not central drivers of the field’s present evolution.

In bibliometric terms, such positioning often reflects transitional or residual themes that may either evolve into more integrated research areas or gradually diminish in prominence as the field shifts toward new priorities (Cobo et al., 2011). Historically, HIV- and sexuality-related biomedical research played a central role in shaping early LGBTQIA+ scholarship, particularly through epidemiological and public health frameworks. However, as the field has expanded toward intersectional, psychosocial, and identity-based approaches, these earlier focal areas have become less structurally dominant, even if they remain contextually relevant (Logie, 2020; Nguyen et al., 2023).

At the same time, their low density suggests limited conceptual specialization within the current dataset, meaning that these themes are not deeply developed into distinct subfields in this specific mapping. Instead, they appear to function more as background or supporting topics that occasionally intersect with broader discussions on health, vulnerability, and social behavior. In some cases, such themes may also be gradually absorbed into more comprehensive frameworks, such as intersectionality or social determinants of health, rather than existing as standalone research clusters (Crenshaw, 1991; Wilson & Meyer, 2021).

Overall, the thematic map illustrates a field that is anchored by well-developed motor themes, supported by broad foundational concepts, and complemented by both specialized niche areas and transitional or declining topics. This distribution reflects a dynamic and evolving knowledge structure in which established psychological and identity-based frameworks coexist with emerging interdisciplinary directions and legacy biomedical concerns. The result is a continually shifting intellectual landscape, where thematic prominence changes in response to broader scientific, social, and methodological developments within LGBTQIA+ and Indigenous-related research domains.

3.5 Gaps exist, particularly in relation to Indigenous communities in the Philippines and Bukidnon

The strategic thematic map, together with the broader bibliometric review, reveals a set of structural gaps that characterize the current research landscape. These gaps extend beyond simple thematic absences and instead reflect deeper imbalances in knowledge production, conceptual framing, epistemic authority, and methodological orientation within the field.

First, the prominence of geographically tagged themes such as “United States” and “Canada” within well-developed clusters indicates a clear geographic and epistemological concentration of scholarship. Their positioning as highly developed yet relatively isolated themes suggests that a significant portion of the literature is anchored in specific Western contexts, which limits broader transferability, contextual sensitivity, and comparative applicability. This concentration reinforces the continued dominance of established academic centers in shaping global research agendas, while simultaneously marginalizing region-specific epistemologies and Indigenous knowledge systems from the Global South. Such patterns align with scientometric critiques of uneven global representation in indexed knowledge systems, where publication visibility is closely tied to institutional power, language dominance, and database inclusion criteria (Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2016; Tijssen, 2007; Leydesdorff et al., 2014). In this sense, what appears as “global knowledge” is often structurally filtered through a limited set of geopolitical lenses.

Second, although “psychology” and “adolescent” emerge as motor themes—indicating high centrality and strong internal development—their influence is not evenly distributed across all subdomains of the dataset. The thematic map suggests that while these areas are globally prominent, their depth and contextual application vary depending on the research setting and disciplinary framing. In some cases, psychological frameworks are applied in culturally neutral or universalizing ways, which may obscure context-specific lived experiences, particularly among Indigenous and non-Western populations. This points to a broader structural issue in which dominant themes achieve high visibility but may not be consistently adapted or critically reinterpreted across diverse sociocultural contexts, resulting in uneven theoretical integration within the field (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017; Leahey et al., 2017; Sugimoto et al., 2017). Consequently, thematic centrality does not necessarily equate to epistemic completeness.

Third, the classification of “HIV infections” and “sexual behavior” within the emerging or declining quadrant reflects a clear transition in thematic priorities. Their low centrality and density indicate either a gradual reduction in prominence or a process of absorption into broader analytical frameworks such as intersectionality, structural violence, and social determinants of health. Nevertheless, their continued presence in the dataset suggests that these topics remain relevant but no longer function as primary organizing pillars of the field. This transition mirrors the broader evolution of LGBTQIA+ research from risk-centered biomedical paradigms toward multidimensional approaches that integrate social, cultural, and structural determinants of health (Logie, 2020; Tan & Saw, 2022; Chen & Smith, 2022). Importantly, this shift also reflects a rebalancing of research priorities, where disease-focused narratives are increasingly supplemented by rights-based and equity-oriented frameworks.

Fourth, the bibliometric patterns reveal a persistent methodological concentration, particularly in the dominance of qualitative approaches such as interviews, thematic analysis, and narrative inquiry. While these methods provide essential depth, reflexivity, and contextual grounding, their predominance suggests limited diversification in research design and analytical triangulation. The relatively lower visibility of mixed methods, participatory action research, and community-led methodologies indicates a gap between thematic expansion and methodological innovation. This is particularly significant in Indigenous contexts, where decolonial methodologies emphasize relational accountability, community engagement, and knowledge co-production (Smith, 2012; Kovach, 2009). The underrepresentation of such approaches suggests that while research topics are becoming more intersectional, the ways of studying them have not fully evolved in parallel.

Finally, a deeper structural gap emerges at the epistemological level. Despite increasing references to intersectionality, Indigenous identities, and social inclusion, these concepts are often incorporated into existing Western theoretical frameworks rather than being used to transform them. As a result, Indigenous LGBTQIA+ experiences risk being “added on” rather than fundamentally reshaping the conceptual architecture of the field. This reflects a form of epistemic asymmetry, where Indigenous knowledge systems remain peripheral to the core theoretical development of global scholarship, even when they are explicitly studied (Smith, 2012; Crenshaw & Bowleg, 2022; Lozano & Talampas, 2024). In practical terms, this means that Indigenous contexts such as Bukidnon are frequently interpreted through external frameworks rather than being theorized from within their own cultural logics.

Overall, the thematic map and supporting bibliometric evidence depict a field that is simultaneously mature, expanding, and structurally uneven. It is characterized by strong central themes, geographically concentrated knowledge production, shifting thematic priorities, persistent biomedical legacies, and constrained methodological diversity. Addressing these structural gaps requires more than thematic expansion; it demands a reconfiguration of epistemological assumptions, methodological practices, and power relations in knowledge production. Only through such a shift can the field move

toward a more inclusive, context-sensitive, and genuinely pluralistic understanding of Indigeneity and LGBTQIA+ identities across diverse global settings.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

The bibliometric analysis demonstrates that research on LGBTQIA+ identities within Indigenous communities has developed into a multi-layered and increasingly interdisciplinary field, with several dominant thematic areas shaping its current trajectory. The steady rise in publications indicates that this intersection is gaining sustained scholarly visibility, particularly in relation to the distinct and complex experiences of sexual and gender minorities within Indigenous populations. Foundational works emphasize that Indigenous understandings of gender and sexuality were historically marginalized through colonial epistemologies that imposed rigid binary classifications, often displacing pre-existing cultural systems of gender diversity. Recent scholarship has increasingly sought to recover and reframe these narratives by integrating culturally grounded concepts such as *loob* and *kapwa*, which emphasize relationality, shared identity, and moral interconnectedness, thereby offering more holistic and context-sensitive interpretations of identity and community belonging (Lozano & Talampas, 2024; Smith, 2012). This movement toward epistemic reclamation is further reinforced by studies highlighting the importance of incorporating Indigenous perspectives into institutional contexts, particularly within education systems, to promote inclusivity, cultural responsiveness, and decolonial awareness (Regaspi, 2023; Ngūgĩ wa Thiong'o-informed decolonial frameworks). At the same time, the literature underscores the necessity of community-based and culturally aligned initiatives, which ensure that research outputs are not only academically relevant but also socially meaningful and sustainable within local Indigenous contexts (Lo Moro et al., 2024; Walters et al., 2006).

A second major theme emerging from the analysis is the increasing application of intersectional and multidisciplinary frameworks. The prominence of keywords such as “gender identity,” “intersectionality,” “racism,” and “Indigenous people” within the co-occurrence network reflects a clear epistemological shift toward understanding how overlapping systems of power and marginalization shape lived experiences. In particular, minority stress theory has become a central explanatory framework for examining how the interaction of ethnic discrimination and sexual stigma contributes to mental health disparities among LGBTQIA+ populations, including Indigenous groups (Meyer, 2003; Wilson & Meyer, 2021). This theoretical expansion is complemented by growing efforts to “Indigenize” conceptual approaches, including re-examinations of pre-colonial gender systems and recognition of culturally specific expressions of gender diversity that do not align with Western taxonomies. Moreover, the increasing attention to mental health, structural inequality, and social policy indicates a broader shift toward systemic analysis, where well-being is understood as deeply embedded within institutional, historical, and socio-economic conditions rather than individual pathology alone (Casey et al., 2019; Chen & Smith, 2022). In contrast, the declining prominence of themes such as “HIV infections” and “sexual behavior” signals a gradual movement away from narrowly biomedical framings toward more holistic, rights-based, and structurally informed perspectives that emphasize dignity, inclusion, and equity (Logie, 2020; Tan & Saw, 2022).

The analysis also reveals a significant geographic concentration of research output, with the Global North—particularly the United States and Canada—continuing to dominate scholarly production and citation influence. While this reflects strong institutional capacity, well-funded research ecosystems, and extensive publication infrastructures, it also exposes persistent asymmetries in global knowledge production. High-impact journals tend to prioritize themes aligned with dominant academic paradigms, such as identity formation, mental health disparities, and structural stigma, thereby reinforcing their centrality within the field while potentially narrowing the visibility of alternative epistemologies. In contrast, the relative scarcity of studies from Southeast Asia, including the Philippines, highlights a structural gap between global academic discourse and localized Indigenous realities. Citation network patterns further suggest that collaboration remains concentrated within established Western academic hubs, limiting the integration of perspectives from underrepresented regions. This imbalance underscores the importance of expanding research networks and strengthening South–South and Indigenous-led collaborations to ensure more equitable representation in knowledge production (Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2016; Tijssen, 2007; Leydesdorff et al., 2014).

Finally, the field appears to be consolidating around three interconnected and mutually reinforcing domains: identity negotiation, mental health disparities, and the enduring effects of colonialism. Together, these domains provide a comprehensive analytical framework for understanding the intersection of Indigeneity and LGBTQIA+ identities while aligning with broader human rights and social justice discourses. The increasing use of the term “Sexual and Gender Minorities” (SGM) reflects ongoing efforts to adopt more inclusive, flexible, and analytically precise terminology, signaling both conceptual refinement and methodological standardization within the field. At the same time, emerging directions

point toward the growing importance of decentralized, community-based, and culturally grounded support systems, particularly in geographically and socially marginalized settings such as Indigenous communities in Southeast Asia.

Advancing this research agenda will require sustained interdisciplinary collaboration, methodological diversification, and deeper integration of Indigenous knowledge systems not merely as supplementary perspectives but as co-constitutive epistemologies that actively shape theoretical development. Strengthening participatory and decolonial methodologies will be essential in ensuring that Indigenous voices are not only represented but centered in knowledge production processes (Smith, 2012; Kovach, 2009). Ultimately, addressing these challenges is critical for building a more inclusive, context-sensitive, and ethically grounded scholarly field—one that reflects the full complexity of Indigenous LGBTQIA+ lived experiences and contributes to more equitable global knowledge systems.

Implications

This bibliometric review reveals a progressive expansion of scholarly attention toward the intersection of Indigeneity and sexuality, as evidenced by the increasing volume of publications and citation activity over time. The concentration of research output in countries such as the United States, Canada, and Australia indicates a geographically uneven knowledge production, where a limited number of regions continue to dominate the intellectual landscape. This pattern is further reinforced by collaboration networks that show strong interdisciplinary linkages, particularly among psychology, sociology, public health, and Indigenous studies, suggesting a convergence of disciplinary perspectives in examining identity, embodiment, and social experience (Nguyen et al., 2023; Arias & Morales, 2023).

Thematic analysis highlights that core research areas remain anchored in identity negotiation, cultural resilience, mental health disparities, and the enduring impacts of colonial structures. These themes demonstrate both high centrality and sustained conceptual development, indicating their role as foundational pillars within the field. At the same time, the emergence of topics such as intersectionality, gender fluidity, structural inequality, and alternative support systems reflects a gradual but important epistemological shift toward more nuanced and inclusive analytical frameworks. This evolution suggests that the field is moving beyond static or essentialist categorizations of identity toward more dynamic, relational, and context-sensitive understandings of Indigenous LGBTQIA+ experiences (Crenshaw & Bowleg, 2022; Wilson & Meyer, 2021; Lo Moro et al., 2024).

Despite these advancements, the bibliometric patterns also point to persistent structural limitations that shape what is visible within the global research landscape. The reliance on English-language publications indexed in Scopus introduces both linguistic and database-driven biases, which may exclude a substantial body of scholarship produced in non-English-speaking contexts or disseminated through local, regional, and community-based platforms. In the context of Bukidnon, Philippines, this limitation is particularly significant, as much Indigenous knowledge among groups such as the Bukidnon, Higaonon, and other Lumad communities is transmitted through oral traditions, community narratives, ritual practices, and locally produced documentation rather than indexed academic journals. These forms of knowledge production are often deeply embedded in cultural systems of meaning-making, where storytelling, relational memory, and communal authority play central roles in preserving identity and social norms.

As a result, Indigenous LGBTQIA+ experiences in Bukidnon risk being systematically underrepresented or rendered invisible within dominant global databases, not due to absence of knowledge but due to the epistemological boundaries of what counts as “publishable” or “indexable” scholarship. The exclusion of grey literature, ethnographic field notes, community reports, and oral histories further reinforces this gap, despite these sources being critical for understanding lived realities in Indigenous and rural upland settings. Such limitations reflect broader critiques of global knowledge systems, where visibility is often shaped by institutional infrastructures rather than epistemic richness (Smith, 2012; Kovach, 2009; Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2016).

Overall, the findings illustrate a research domain that is expanding in scope, methodological sophistication, and interdisciplinary integration, yet remains structurally uneven in terms of geographic representation, linguistic inclusion, and epistemological breadth. While strong foundational themes and emerging conceptual directions signal intellectual maturation, the persistent dominance of Global North perspectives highlights the need for a more pluralistic and decolonial approach to knowledge production.

In contexts such as Bukidnon, where Indigenous identity, sexuality, and cultural governance are deeply intertwined, addressing these imbalances is particularly urgent. Strengthening engagement with local researchers, Indigenous knowledge holders, and community-based documentation practices can help bridge the gap between global academic discourse and situated lived realities. More importantly, integrating oral traditions, Indigenous epistemologies, and

participatory methodologies into mainstream scholarly frameworks would not only enrich analytical depth but also ensure that future research more accurately reflects the complexity, diversity, and agency of Indigenous LGBTQIA+ communities.

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Competing Interests Statement

The researcher declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this article. The conduct of this research and the preparation of the manuscript were carried out with full academic independence and integrity.

Data Availability Statement

Data sharing is not applicable to this article, as no new primary data were created or analyzed in this study. All data utilized were derived from previously published sources and bibliometric databases, and are fully cited in the reference list. As such, the study relies entirely on secondary data that are publicly accessible through their respective platforms.

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Appendices

No appendices are attached to this study.