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# Stress in Organisations: A Bibliometric Analysis

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### ABSTRACT:

Various exploratory, conceptual and empirical studies on organizational stress have been conducted concerning multiple contexts. However, a all-inclusive science mapping of the realm has not been presented up to now. Therefore, the study plans to explain the trends within the research field with the help of the fusion of information structures. Bibliometric analysis within the domain of organizational stress was conducted on a sample of 869 documents. Biblioshiny (Bibliometrix package, R software (Ariaa and Cuccurullo, 2017)), was used for the analysis. Significant authors, articles, journals, countries, and themes were identified using the software; social network analysis and citation and co-citation analysis were also done. Findings confirm that the themes in the domain of organizational stress have progressed gradually as an interdisciplinary phenomenon. Along with the conceptual structure, this study divulges the social as well as intellectual structure of organizational stress. This study offers vital insights on topics which need further study by providing research gap. The present study is a bibliometric analysis and therefore, limitations associated with such studies are applicable. A scientific literature review (SLR) in the domain can assist future researchers to derive a strong conceptual framework. Science mapping for this study is restricted to the Scopus database and more data bases can be included in the study for wider coverage.

Keywords: Organisational Stress, Job Stress, Bibliometric analysis, Bibliometrix, Science mapping

### I. Introduction:

Occupational stress has been frequently mentioned and studied in in the field of organisational behaviour and psychology, since it has manifestation in daily life as a reason which has the psychological as well as physical health risk for people (Chen & Wong, 2009; Ford, Matthews, Wooldridge, Mishra, Kakar, & Strahan, 2014; Mihaila, 2015; Schaufeli & Taris, 2014). There are three major viewpoints for approach towards stress: i) one emphasizing on the physiological reactions and responses of a person to stress; ii) one seeking an investigation of stressors in the environment which adversely affect the individuals health and well-being; and iii) the psychological one which is focused the way in which an individual perceives and evaluates the stressors (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Rothmann & Malan, 2011; Scheibe & Zacher, 2013; Wu, Ren, Wang, He, Xiong, Ma, Fan, Guo, Liu, & Zhang, 2021). According to Lazarus (1999), an individual's emotional reaction to an event is determined by his evaluation of that event. Therefore, stress related to work is affected by the employee' perception of the work demands and their ability to deal with thnem. In other words, for the occurrence of process of work stress, employees perceive the circumstances and the environmental demands as stress causing factors, and feel that they lack the resources required for dealing with them, producing reactions which may have adverse impact on their well-being. In view of the complex nature of the phenomenon, infused by various biological, social, and psychological procedures which include interaction between human and environment, new studies have tried to comprehend the interference of these processes on the individual's well-being and health (Hausser, Mojzisch, Niesel, & Schulz-Hardt, 2010; Malik & Noreen, 2015; Shallcross, Troy & Mauss, 2015; Sehsah, Gaballah, El-Gilany, & Albadry, 2021; Wu, et.al. 2021). Occupational welfare includes a various experiences including good psychological health, affective states, and mental states such as enthusias

In addition to workplace stressors, individual factors such as emotional stability, self-esteem and the interface between work and family life are also observed to effect the variations in the well-being of the employee (Sonnentag, 2015). The level of work-stress experienced by the personnel has been constantly linked with negative impact on them which have been measured by various indicators of both physiological as well as psychological well-being (Lang, Ochsmann, Kraus & Lang, 2012; Ganster & Rosen, 2013; Sehsah, et.al., 2021). However, work-stress has different impact on different individuals depending upon their perception of the stressors and the way they confront these stressors. While many studies have concluded a adverse relationship between stress and well-being at work (WBW) (Chen & Wong, 2009; Ganster & Rosen, 2013; Lang, Ochsmann, Kraus & Lang, 2012; Bell, Rajendran & Theiler, 2012) there are other studies which explain the situations in which work-stress may not impact WBW (Sonnentag, 2015; Ilies, Aw & Pluut, 2015; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2015). Many researches highlight the importance of resilience and emotional self-regulation, and of dealing with traumatic circumstances, that can reduce stress and improve health and well-being (Hoeve, de Bruin, van Rooij, & Bögels, 2021; Karlsen, Dybdahl & Vitterso, 2006; Kashdan, Barrios, Forsyth & Steger, 2006; Kvillemo & Bränström, 2014; Troy & Mauss, 2011; Sehsah, et.al., 2021).

To understand a concept, it is important to carefully study the available literature. The bibliometric analysis presented in the paper seeks to explore and understand the research gap that exist in the research domain of occupational stress and well-being at work. This research gap will help in enhanced

research in the domain of occupational stress, development of new theories and thus, contributing to the enrichment of discipline. By the help of this analysis, the research gap identified in the present study will be churned out in a systematic manner which can be used as a foundation for future research in the area and thereby augmenting advances in the subject.

The bibliometric analysis will help in finding out the research gap with respect to different aspects such as keywords, geographical area, the contextual background, most relevant authors and research articles, the network structure.

### Research questions:

- i. Which authors and journals are most significant in the area of occupational stress?
- ii. What is intellectual structure of the researchers in the area of occupational stress?
- iii. What are the collaboration networks in the area of occupational stress?
- iv. How has the concept of occupational stress advanced and which issues have been addressed the most in the latest researches?

The following research objectives are worked upon in this research paper by keeping in mind the above research questions:

- i. To show the patterns or trends in development of knowledge in occupational stress domain.
- ii. To synthesize the knowledge and examine the knowledge structure.

Subsequent article is organized in four more sections. The second section explains the methodology. The third section explains the analysis of data. The fourth section includes the discussion of the results. The last that is the fifth section consists of future research directions and conclusion.

I. Research Methodology:

Data collection and analysis procedure:

The analysis begins with the identifying the database. Thereafter, data was collected based on the specified search strategy. The procedure is clearly depicted in the following flowchart:

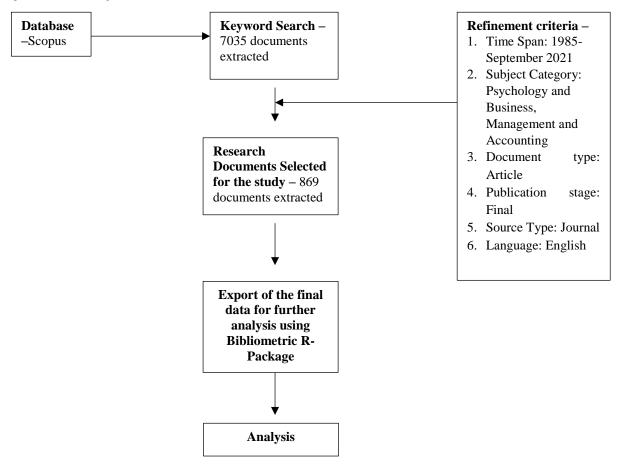


Figure 1: Flowchart of selecting research papers for bibliometric analysis.

The first step of probing for documents was conducted in September 2021 in Scopus. The keywords for the search were "occupational stress". Further limitations were put on the search criteria in terms of

i. Subject area: Psychology and Business, Management and Accounting,

ii. Language: English

iii. Document type: Article

iv. Publication stage: Final

v. Source Type: Journal

As a search result 869 research articles were found and a bibliometric analysis was conducted on them. Bibliometric analysis studies do the analysis of the patterns in the available literature by using statistical and mathematical techniques (Singh and Dhir, 2019). It helps in studying and mapping published literature in a particular domain and thus helping in finding out the research gap.

### Database Selection:

A main pre-requisite for bibliometric analysis is a organized portrayal of articles indexed in the database. For the present study, data has been retrieved from Scopus database as it has huge article coverage and classification of journals and it is also compatible with Bibliometrix software by R-studio. It is the major abstract and citation database of peer-reviewed literature consisting of research articles, book chapters, editorials, trade publications and conference proceeding. Scopus delivers a complete summary of the global research in the area of arts and humanities, social sciences, medicine, science, and technology. Scopus not only has the collection of literature but also consists of smart tools for tracking, analysing and visualizing research.

### Data collection:

Data were downloaded from Scopus on 25th September 2021. The documents retrieved were selected on the basis of following conditions:

### Keywords for search strategy:

Keyword search criteria was "occupational stress". The data was further refined by:

i. Scopus Categories: Psychology and Business, Management and Accounting AND

ii. Document types: Article AND

iii. Languages: English AND

iv. Timespan: 1985- September 2021

The details of the documents retrieved, like title of the document, authors, abstract, and other details were downloaded in a CSV data format. It was then uploaded to Biblioshiny software for subsequent analysis. Ultimate dataset comprised of 869 documents.

## Selection of bibliometric tool:

There are many softwares such as Histcite (Garfield, 2004), CiteSpace (Jayantha & Oladinrin, 2019), Publish or Perish, BibExcel and Pajek and Gephi which has been used earlier for bibliometric analysis including VOSviewer (Rialti et al., 2019) for data visualisation. In this study, data has been analysed by using Bibliometrix R-package developed by Ariaa & Cuccurullo, 2017. It can do a complete bibliometric study that is data analysis as well as data visualisation. It is an open-source software. Therefore, it is widely used and has become extremely pertinent in the area of bibliometric analysis. The present study uses Biblioshiny, a web-based application contained within Bibliometrix package for data analysis.

### II. Data Analysis and Findings:

Data was analyzed with the help of descriptive analysis and network analysis (Figure 2).

- 1. Descriptive analysis studies bibliometric dataset with respect to basic structure of the dataset, such as authors, journals, and documents
- Network Analysis does wide science mapping with the help of visualisation methods like three-field plots, and thematic maps. It also helps in deriving the knowledge structure to ease additional analysis.

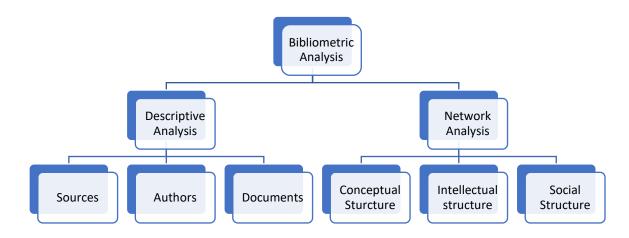


Figure 2: Levels of Bibliometric Analysis

## Descriptive analysis:

a. **Dataset:** Following table (Table 1) shows a complete summary of the dataset consisting of 869 articles which were retrieved from Scopus database after systematic refinement.

Description	Results
MAIN INFORMATION ABOUT DATA	
Timespan	1985:2021
Sources (Journals, Books, etc)	358
Documents	869
Average years from publication	6.9
Average citations per documents	19.12
Average citations per year per doc	2.496
References	1
DOCUMENT TYPES	
article	869
DOCUMENT CONTENTS	
Keywords Plus (ID)	2730
Author's Keywords (DE)	2147
AUTHORS	
Authors	2722
Author Appearances	3135
Authors of single-authored documents	86
Authors of multi-authored documents	2636
AUTHORS COLLABORATION	
Single-authored documents	89
Documents per Author	0.319
Authors per Document	3.13
Co-Authors per Documents	3.61
Collaboration Index	3.38

Table 1: Dataset Summary

b. **Three field plots:** Three field plot (Figure 3) shows the relationship among three different fields with the help of Sankey Plots, wherein size of the share is proportional to the value of the node (Riehmann et al., 2005). On the Sankey Plot, the left row shows the authors, the middle row shows the countries, and the right row shows the keywords which were included in the analysis. As can be seen in the plot, the major contributor has been USA trailed by Australia and the focus of study has been on occupational stress and burnout.

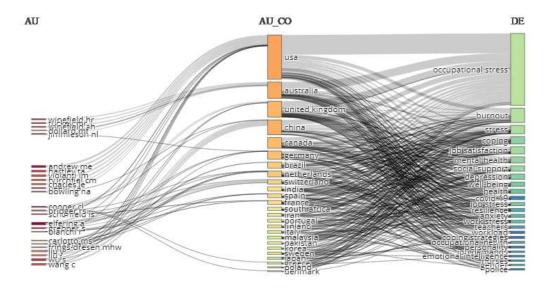


Figure 3: Three-field plot

c. **Sources:** The journals which have grown the most in past few years are Journal of Occupational Health Psychology and Stress and Health (Figure 4). They have shown a tremendous growth in terms of the number of times they have occurred.

## Source Growth

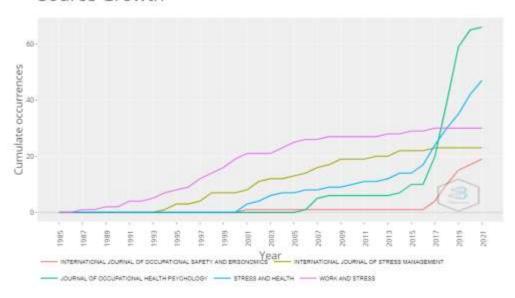


Figure 4. Cumulative Occurrence of Sources

Journal of Occupational Health Psychology has the highest H-index, followed by Work and Stress and Health is the most relevant source having 66 and 47 documents in the data set respectively (Figure 5). The top 20 journals with highest citation which indicate the journal quality in the area are mentioned in following figure. Journal of Occupational Health Psychology has the maximum H-index, followed by Work and Stress (Figure 6).



Figure 5: Most relevant sources

## Source Local Impact by H index

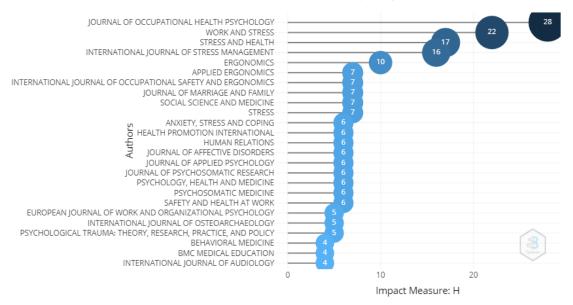


Figure 6: Most impactful sources

d. **Authors:** Figure 7 presents most relevant authors in the field, on the basis of h-index. This system of measurement measures the relative journal quality on the basis of their citation effect and production. Journals with the highest H-index can not only indicate journal contributions to the field but also indicates the quality and quantity or effectiveness of the journal. The most relevant author in the field of Occupational stress is A. Elfering with an H index of 11 and 14 documents to his attribution which are included in the data set. He started making contribution in 2010 and had major set of contributions around 2015. He is followed by C.L. Cooper which has an H index of 8 and 9 documents to his attribution which are included in the data set.



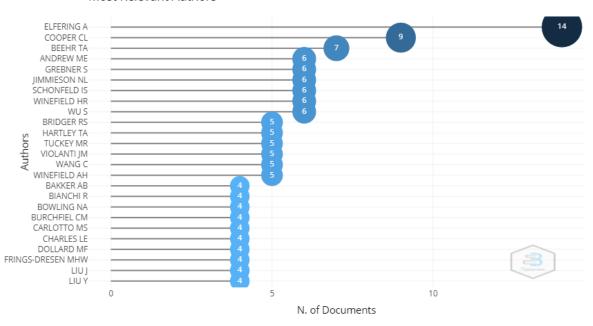


Figure 7: Most Relevant Authors

# Top-Authors' Production over the Time

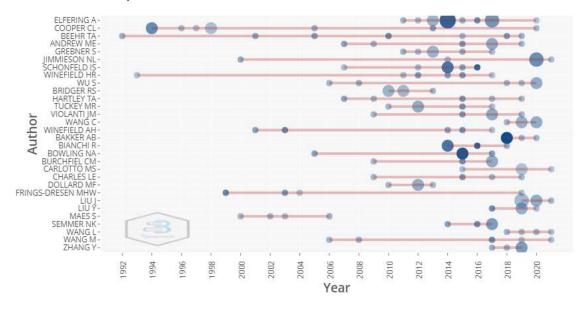


Figure 8: Top-Authors' Production over the time

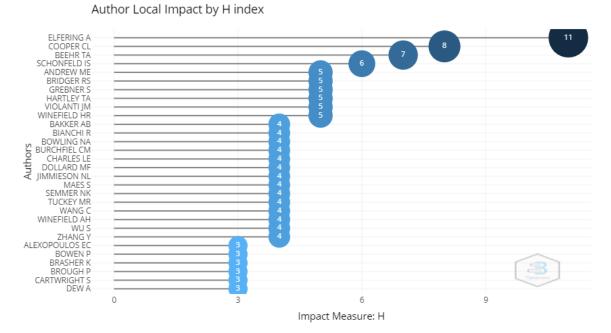


Figure 9: Author Local Impact by H-index

e. Countries: Figures 10, 11 and 12 indicate the cooperation of various countries in this field, indicating that developed nations have had most contribution in literature in the region. While the United States has the largest number of publications in the region, Australia ranks second. The United States has got the highest citations score in the region, indicating a research focus in the region. It is clear that the highest number of related authors are from the United States, after Australia, as well as the United States having the highest amount of scientific production in the country. In addition, bibliographic data showed that the United States outperformed other parts of the world with respect to received number of citations.

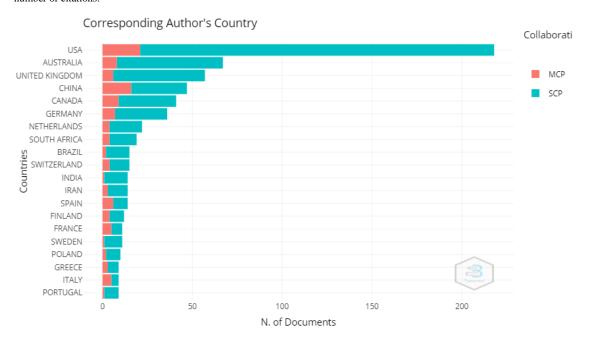


Figure 10: Corresponding Author's Country

# Country Scientific Production

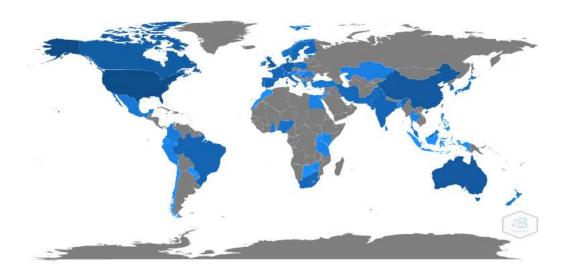


Figure 11: Scientific production of countries

## Most Cited Contries

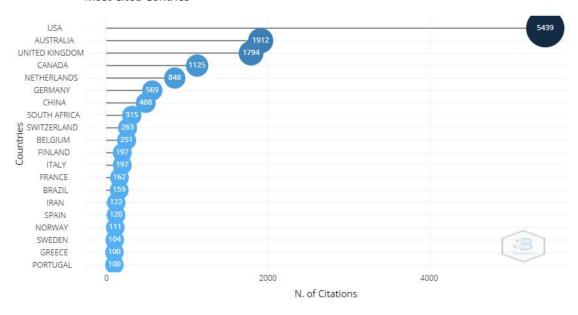
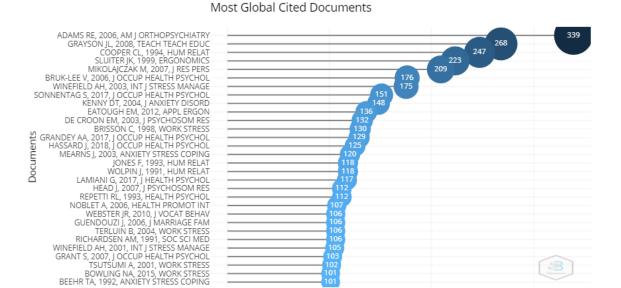


Figure 12: Most cited countries

f. **Documents:** Figure 13 provides the 30 most cited documents in the area of occupational stress. All of these articles contain more than 100 citations. The most cited article was authored by R. E. Adams representing his key contribution to the field of occupational stress. Four other articles authored by J.L. Garyson, C.L. Cooper, J.K. Sluiter and M. Mikolajczak had more than 200 citations.



### Figure 13: Most cited documents

Keywords: Apart from the generic terms such as "male", "female", "adult" and "human", the term job stress has been observed to have occurred 502 times making it the most frequently appearing keyword in the data set. The appearance of terms "male" and "female" show the number of studies that have been conducted with gender in focus. The other keywords that were of great significance were "occupational stress", "middle aged", "workplace", "job satisfaction", "workload", "social support", "mental stress", "occupational health", "depressed" and "burnout" among other keywords.

100

200

Global Citations

### 349 336 336 502 496 544 female adult human job stress middle aged occupational stress psychology workplace job satisfaction **Keywords Plus** oung adult workload social support ntrolled study surveys and questionnaires mental stress occupational health stress psychological aged priority journal depression major clinical study coping behavio cross-sectional study human experiment 200 400 600 800 Occurrences

# Most Relevant Words

Figure 14: Most relevant words

## **Network Analysis:**

### **Conceptual Structure:**

Thematic evolution: The appearance of broad and core themes is shown with the help of three-field plot (Figure 15). The following thematic map shows how the major themes have evolved in the past 36 years. The evolution has been divided into three periods that is from 1985-2010, 2011-2018 and the latest being 2019-2021. In the first segment, the major themes for the studies were "workload", "personality", "job stress", "questionnaire" among others whereas in the segment from 2011 to 2019, the theme "physiology" was also included in the analysis. With the change in the time and working conditions the conceptual structure has eventually evolved towards the physiology of the employees. This change has been observed mainly because of the physical as well as the psychological impact of stress on the health of the employees. Lately the employers have started priortising the health of ther employees.

From 2019 onwards the studies have been focusing on a new theme "coping behaviour" among the existing themes. The evolution of the themes towards coping can be attributed to the adverse effects of stress in the health of the employees. Another considerable aspect of this thematic change is COVID-19. Due to COVID-19, people were left left at their homes in isolation which had a drastic effect on their mental health (Evans, Noureddine, Curry, & Nam, 2021; Grandey, Sayre, & French, 2021; Yaghy, Dalvin, & Shields, 2020). Therefore, coping became an important theme from 2019 onwards.

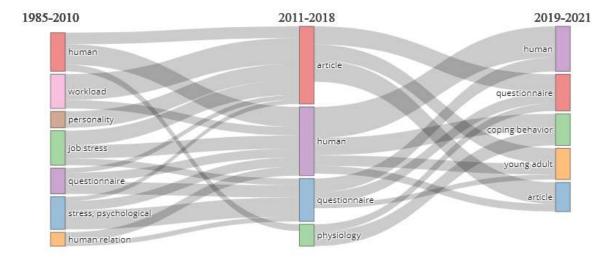


Figure 15: Three-field plot

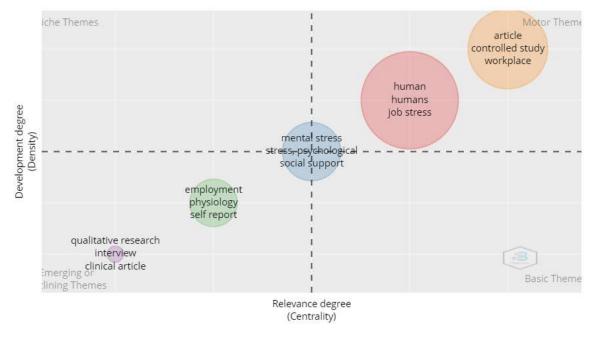


Figure 16: Thematic evolution with time

b. Intellectual Structure: It explains the manner in which different authors influence the research community by reviewing the association between the countries and the authors. It divulges the degree of co-operation among research fraternity and academic groups and their affiliation to numerous institutions (Mendes et al., 2017; Cobo et al., 2011). Intellectual structure, with the help of citation and co-citation analysis, divulges various schools of thought and diverse perceptions which have grown gradually. Citation analysis assumes that authors cite documents which are significant from the point of view of their research. Greater number of citations indicate greater quality and relevance of an article in academic search by the academic society (Ruggeri et al., 2019). The highest number of citations can be observed in the case of USA as it is the highest cited country. Also, the most cited authors hail from USA and the most cited documents have been published in the

journals which are published in USA. This high intellectual aspect of the country proves its dominance in the field of research in occupational stress.

Co-citation analysis studies the association between the citing and cited articles. Co-citation frequency shows the frequency at which a particular set of research papers is cited together (Liu et al., 2013). It helps in measuring the similarity between research papers, authors and journals.

In the data set, the most co-citations were observed among the authors from USA and other nations followed by Australia and United Kingdom. However, it is noteworthy that the researchers from USA are intellectually far more ahead in almost all the aspects than the researchers of other countries. There was almost negligible co-citation observed among the authors from developing countries. A huge intellectual gap can be observed in case of developing countries where the phenomenon has not been given much deliberation. This provides a huge opportunity to the researchers to collaborate with the authors of other developing countries and conduct studies in these countries to enhance the phenomenon in the respective countries.

c. Social Structure: Social network analysis was conducted to unravel the interrelation in the area of research in occupational stress (Low and Siege, 2019). Nodes represent authors, organizations/institutions or sources of publication, and the set of nodes refers to the relationships that are connected on the social web. The subtleties of the network are characterized by the relationships that link these fields. Geographical distribution and cooperation were analyzed using a cooperative network drawn on the basis of 30 countries. From geographical viewpoint, the United States dominates academic research and the scholars from USA have collaborated with scholars from European countries and developing economies in while pursuing research in the area of occupational stress.

## Clusters by Documents Coupling

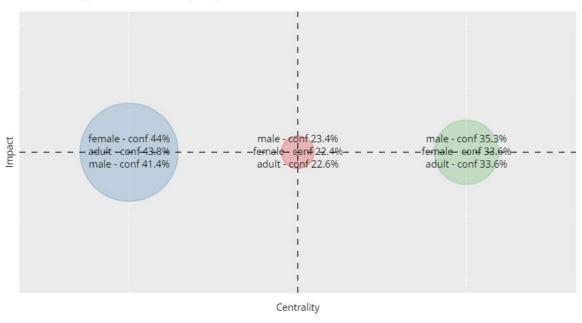


Figure 17: Clustering

### III. Future research directions:

Gaps identified by the help of this study are discussed in this section. The major limitations of the study are

- a. This bibliometric study is based on the Scopus database. Other databases such as google scholar or Web of Science can be used to extract data in future studies.
- b. Only one keyword "occupational stress" was used for data extraction. Some other keywords such as "job stress", "burnout" and others can be used to extract more data for further research so that more articles, which are relevant in the area of occupational stress, are comprised in the study.
- c. Network analysis requires to be augmented with reading of abstracts and selecting the articles manually for comprehensive study of full text of the articles to understand the research domain completely. Hence, a literature review and a meta-analysis can be pursued by researchers in the future in the area of occupational stress.
- d. Content analysis of articles in the domain of occupational stress can help in having better insight on the pertinent theories and models of the domain

- e. There has been little contribution of developing counties as compared to the developed nations. It shows the contextual gap in the area of occupational stress and floors way for possible collaborations between authors of the countries in future.
- f. More inter-disciplinary research in the area of business and management and psychology can be conducted. Research can also be done in context of medicine and work stress.

The arena has experienced eventual growth in behavioural facets and personality traits which influence the level of occupational stress experienced by the employees. The whole gamut of these variables require to be considered to understand the relationship between them. A theme based study and review of literature has also been suggested.

### **Conclusion:**

This article defines the evolution of the occupational stress domain over the period 1985-2021. It provides a complete evaluation of the theoretical, social and intellectual structure of research that has been conducted in the area of occupational stress. The main contribution of this bibliometric study is the consolidation of uneven literature in the field by tracing the relevant and important sources, authors and documents pertaining to the domain of occupational stress. The Bibliometrics R-Package is a useful tool for bibliography as it is very flexible and user-friendly in nature. The dataset for this study was taken from the Scopus database because of its official structure and it had good quality of resources research and was compatible with the software used for the analysis. The dataset depicts that there was a steady rise in number of publications in the early years, and a revival in publication number in current years. The work of leading scholars in this area of research has taken place from the United States, followed by research in Australia and its contribution to developing economies is moving from the initial stage to the expansion stage. The influx of new writers and countries extended the research's social structure in the area of occupational stress. This will help in better understanding of the different aspects of occupational stress. In essence, this research article establishes the development in research in the field of occupational stress. It builds a knowledge base and helps in identifying unexplored sides of occupational stress and its relationship with other variables may be in form of antecedents or the outcomes. It will help in stimulating further research with regards to antecedents of occupational stress, the various aspects of the outcomes of occupational stress and other related aspects of occupational stress taking leads from the existing literature.

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