

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Trends and current topics in child and family-centered care research: A bibliometric analysis and visual mapping

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This study aimed to examine the developmental trends and research focus of the child and family-centered care literature through a bibliometric analysis of articles published between 1990 and 2023. The bibliometric analysis method was used in the study. Data were obtained from the Web of Science Core Collection and Scopus databases. Bibliometric analysis and visualization were conducted using the R language, along with the bibliometrix and openxlsx libraries and the biblioshiny interface. The study included citation, co-occurrence, co-authorship, co-word analysis, and trend topic analysis. Between 1990 and 2023, a total of 1.613 publications related to child and family-centered care were published. Of these publications, 1.598 were original research articles, and the majority (%95) were written in English. The United States was the country with the highest number of publications and the most co-authorship collaborations. Collaborating countries included Canada, Brazil, Iran. Journal of Pediatric Nursing was the most prolific journal (n=149). The author with the highest number of publications on the topic was Shields (n=23). The most cited works related to child and family-centered care were by Gorski (2021), Kerr (2002), and Snow (2009). The institution producing the most publications on the topic was McGill University. In trend topic analysis, key terms such as “family-centered care”, “nursing”, “parents”, “child”, and “child-centered care” emerged.

Child- and family-centered care research is widespread in developed countries but lacks interdisciplinary collaboration, particularly outside pediatric intensive care units. Future studies should promote co-authorship and international cooperation, providing healthcare professionals and researchers with insights into unexplored areas and opportunities for collaboration.

Keywords: Bibliometrics, child, family-centered care, visual

Citation: Çevik Özdemir HN., Ural MN. Trends and current topics in child and family-centered care research: A bibliometric analysis and visual mapping. Health Sci Q. 2025;5(3):271-82. <https://doi.org/10.26900/hsq.2709>

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Introduction

Child and family centered care (CFCC) is a philosophical approach that focuses on services for children within the context of basic and acute healthcare services. It is gaining increasing attention internationally as a fundamental approach to children's healthcare [1-3]. It is defined as the participation of both children and family members in decision-making and care processes during primary healthcare services, clinical visits, medical procedures, and active care [4].

The importance of CFCC is increasing in institutions providing healthcare to children. The common elements of CFCC include the child, family, and healthcare providers. Healthcare providers respect the perspectives of children and families, honor them by listening to their choices. In this regard, the priorities, beliefs, and information of the child and family are considered in the planning and delivery of care. They are encouraged to participate directly in care and are given the opportunity to participate in decision-making [4,5].

In contemporary healthcare, children are increasingly acknowledged as social actors, leading to a shift from "family-centered care" to CFCC [1]. Reports suggest that CFCC practices alleviate child and parent anxiety, enhance satisfaction, and result in accelerated recovery times, shorter hospital stays, and potential cost savings [6]. Studies indicate that involving children in decision-making improves their physical and psychological well-being [1,2]. Despite efforts by healthcare professionals like family physicians, pediatricians, and pediatric nurses to integrate children and families into care, sustaining successful CFCC policies within institutions remains a challenge [5].

CFCC practices reduce child and parental anxiety, increase child and family satisfaction. In addition, children's recovery times can be accelerated, hospital stays can be shortened, and the costs of healthcare services can be reduced. Evidence shows that some children want to learn more about their own health conditions and prefer to participate in interactions and decisions related to their own care. When a child has a say in their care, they can improve physically

and psychologically [1,3]. Nevertheless, the implementation of CFCC varies by healthcare provider and institution. Many healthcare professionals, such as pediatric nurses and pediatric specialists, try to include children and families in treatment and care. However, these initiatives are insufficient to sustain a successful CFCC policy in institutions [5].

In pediatric settings, active participation of children and families is deemed crucial for the implementation of CFCC [1,4]. The International Network for Child and Family-Centered Care (INCFCC) underscores the continuous facilitation of child and family-centered care in pediatric environments for the physical and psychological well-being of children. The contribution of both health teams and families to the health of children and family participation is emphasized. Institutions should collaborate efficiently and coordinatively, utilizing all available resources to ensure optimal CFCC [4].

In a systematic review, patient and family-centered care has been found effective in enhancing healthcare quality [7]. Kuhlthau et al. (2011) conducted a systematic review on family-centered care in children with special needs, highlighting its association with efficiency, satisfaction, and enhanced access [8]. Definitions, policies, and interventions regarding CFCC necessitate diverse empirical evidence from various perspectives. Bibliometric analyses offer an objective means to assess the impact of scientific research. Evidence derived from bibliometric analysis underscores the global significance of research topics by mapping networks of individuals and institutions [9,10].

Evidence regarding the global trends of publications related to CFCC is needed. Bibliometric analysis of scientific publications provides an in-depth perspective, enabling researchers to track developments in the field and make necessary improvements [10]. However, there are limited bibliometric analyses available on similar topics [11,12]. This study will contribute to filling this gap in the field.

This study aims to explore research trends related to CFCC from a bibliometric perspective, to describe the current state, identify gaps in the literature, and provide a comprehensive

overview of the topic. This will facilitate summarizing the results of recent scientific publications to increase their visibility. The findings of the study may offer new insights to healthcare professionals or researchers working in the field of CFCC.

The research questions are as follows:

1. What is the distribution of the most cited publications on CFCC?
2. What are the most influential authors, countries, and sources in terms of publication count and citation analysis?
3. What are the most frequently used keywords in this study?
4. What are the trending topics indicated by these studies?

Materials and Methods

Description of the area of the study

This research conducted a comprehensive

bibliometric analysis of CFCC studies, aiming to elucidate the intellectual structure of the field and provide insights into scientific productivity, collaborative networks, and key research trends. The study followed the PRISMA-ScR guidelines and adhered to five steps outlined by Archambault et al. (2009): defining research areas, selecting the database, adapting search criteria, coding research areas, and validating information [13]. Figure 1 summarizes the process.

Selecting the data base

To define the data for this study, the Web of Science (WoS) Core Collection database (Clarivate Analytics, Philadelphia, PA, USA) and the Scopus database, both recognized as globally accepted and reliable databases, were utilized. The search was conducted on September 2, 2023, and publication years were limited to the period from 1990 to 2023.

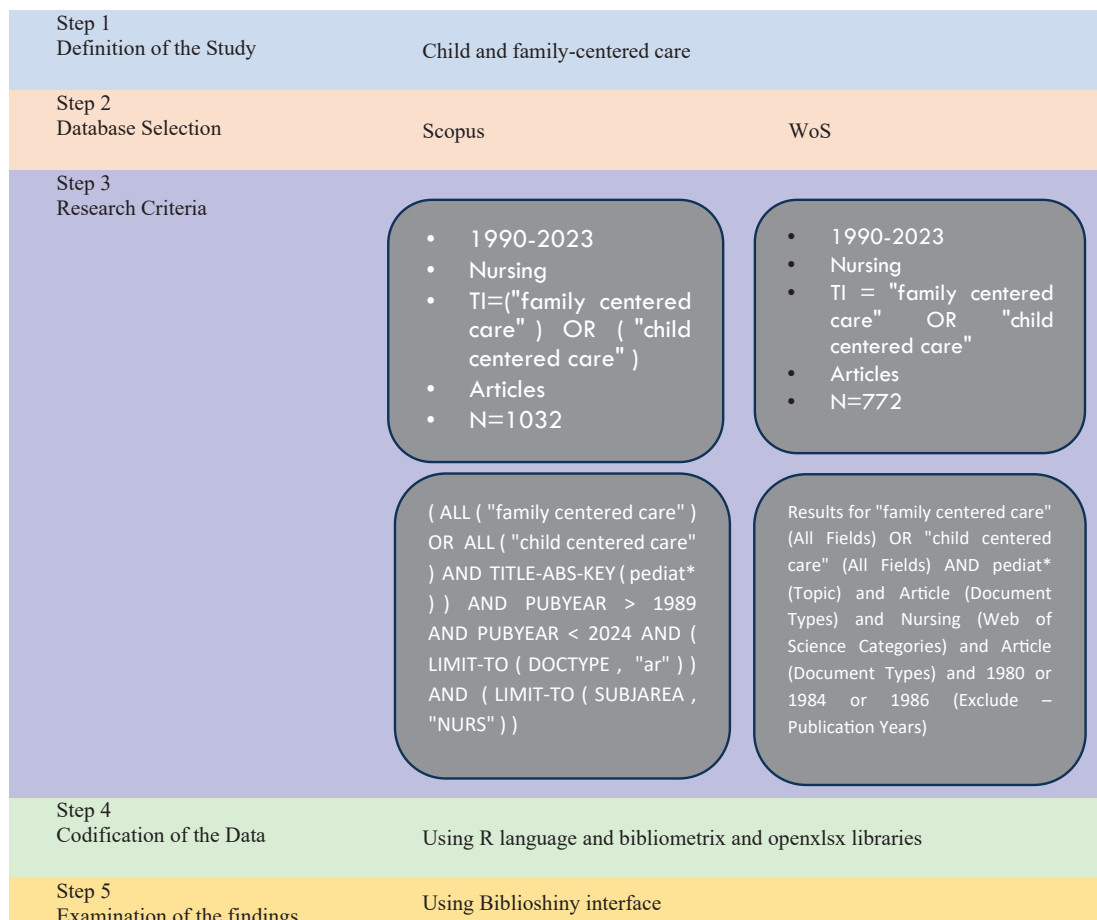


Figure 1. Steps in bibliometric analysis.

Determination of research criteria

In bibliometric analyses, precise search criteria are crucial [14]. This study employed the parameters “TITLE-ABSTRACT-KEYWORDS” and screened literature using keywords like “family-centered care”, “child-centered care”, and “pediatric nursing”. Both databases were categorized under “nursing”. For the WoS analysis, the search included “family centered care” OR “child centered care” in all fields and “pediatric*” in topics, with the document type limited to articles and the category set to Nursing. Publications after 1990 were considered, resulting in 772 articles. In Scopus, the search covered “family centered care” OR “child centered care” in all fields AND “pediatrics*” in titles, abstracts, and keywords, with publication years from 1989 onwards, limited to articles, and subject to nursing. This yielded 1032 articles. In total, 1804 articles were obtained from both databases.

Coding of research areas

In this bibliometric study, bibliometric data for 772 articles from the WoS database and 1032 articles from the Scopus database were downloaded in .bib format and integrated using the R language. The “Bibliometrix” library and the “openxlsx” library were preferred for data integration. The merging process, conducted through RStudio, resulted in the elimination of 180 duplicate articles, reducing the sample to 1624 articles. Microsoft Excel was then used for preliminary data analysis. Articles with duplicate DOI numbers, not automatically eliminated during merging, were identified and removed, resulting in a final sample of 1613 articles.

Examination of the data and analysis methods

For data analysis, the Biblioshiny software, an R language application [15], was utilized to identify recently prominent keywords. This analysis can assist researchers in identifying hotspots in the field [16].

In this study, performance analysis was used to identify the most productive authors, countries, and journals in the field of CFCC and to explore developmental trends [17,18]. Also, citation analysis, co-authorship analysis, keyword analysis, and trend topic analysis [17] were conducted.

Results

Bibliometric analysis of the publication output

In this study, 1613 publications from 1990 to 2023 were identified across 267 journals. The vast majority (95%) were in English, with additional publications in Portuguese, Chinese, German, and Spanish. Key bibliometric data are summarized in Table 1.

Figure 2 illustrates the countries and regions of publication production, with the United States being the most productive country, accounting for 96% of publications (1548). Canada (359) and Australia (225) follow suit.

Additionally, information on the top 10 countries producing the most scientific research in the field of CFCC is presented in Table 2.

Bibliometric analysis of key terms

The analysis included the top 50 keywords provided by authors and most frequently repeated in the database. The word cloud in Figure 3 displays keywords with the highest frequencies, with the top five being “family-centered care (259)”, “nursing (123)”, “parents (116)”, “family (103)”, and “child (94)”. “Family-centered care” was the most frequently used keyword.

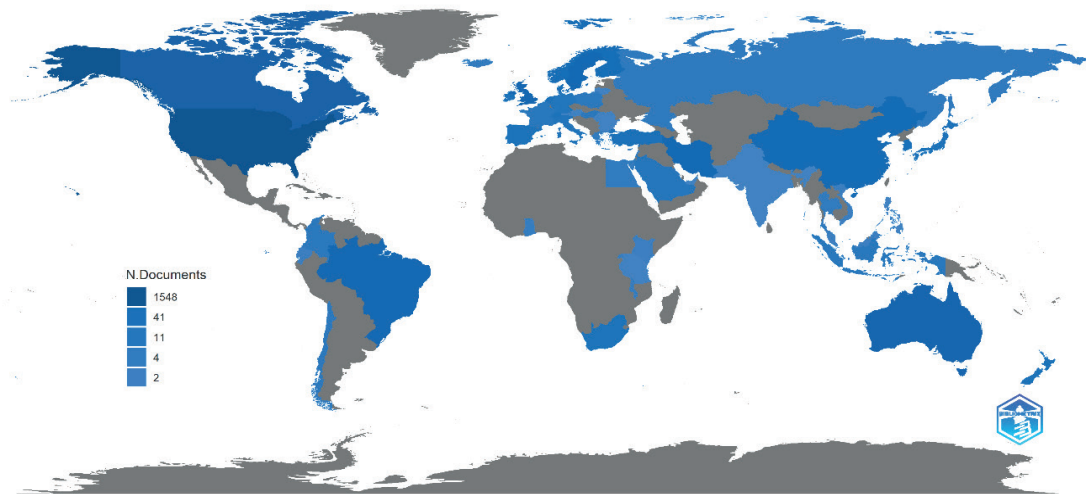
Figure 4 presents network visualizations of keywords associated with publications. Node size indicates frequency of occurrence, and curves between nodes represent co-occurrences within the same publication. Closer nodes indicate more frequent co-occurrences. “Family-centered care” is central in the blue cluster, “nursing” in the red cluster, and “nurse” in the green cluster.

Bibliometric analysis of citations and publications

Figure 5 displays the annual publication count and citation counts. The earliest work identified, dating back to 1990, is the article titled “Strategies for family-centered care in the critical care setting” by Rushton C.H., published in the Pediatric Nursing Journal. Since 1990, the number of articles on CFCC has shown a steady increase, particularly surpassing 100 articles annually after 2017.

Table 1. Bibliometric data of publications.

Main information about data	
Timespan	1990:2023
Sources (Journals, books, etc)	297
Documents	1613
Annual growth rate %	15.97
Document average age	7.4
Average citations per doc	12.1
References	50889
Document contents	
Keywords plus (ID)	3227
Author's keywords (DE)	2973
Authors	
Authors	5083
Authors of single-authored docs	182
Authors collaboration	
Single-authored docs	208
Co-Authors per doc	3.93
International co-authorships %	5.952
Document types	
Article	1598
Article; book chapter	6
Article; early access	5
Article; proceedings paper	4

**Figure 2.** Publications and countries.**Table 2.** The top 10 countries producing the most scientific research in the CFCC field.

Country	Publication	SCP	MCP	Freq
USA	595	582	13	0.369
Canada	117	103	14	0.073
Australia	100	96	4	0.062
United Kingdom	89	83	6	0.055
Sweden	72	65	7	0.045
Brazil	70	67	3	0.043
Iran	48	39	9	0.03
China	40	36	4	0.025
Korea	32	32	0	0.02
Denmark	25	19	6	0.015

SCP: Single Country Publications, MCP: Multiple Country Publications, Freq: Frequency

In Table 3, the 20 most frequently cited articles related to CFCC are listed. The top three most

cited works are, in order, Gorski [19], Kerr [20], and Snow [21].



Figure 3. Bibliometric analysis of the top keywords in publications of CFCC.

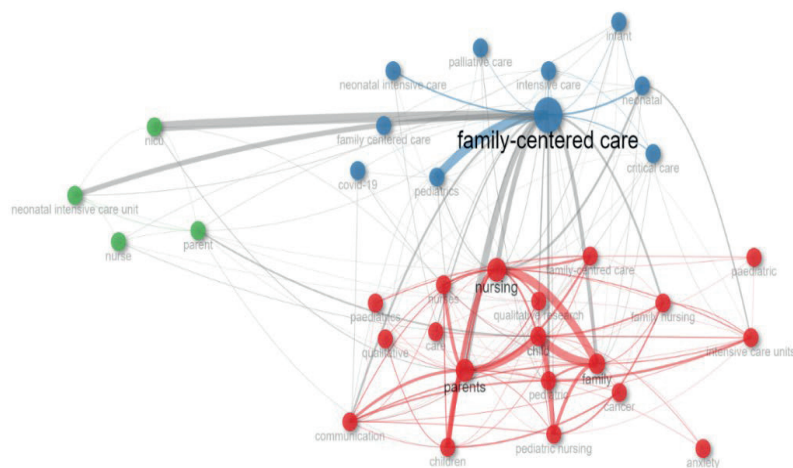


Figure 4. Co-occurrence of keywords.

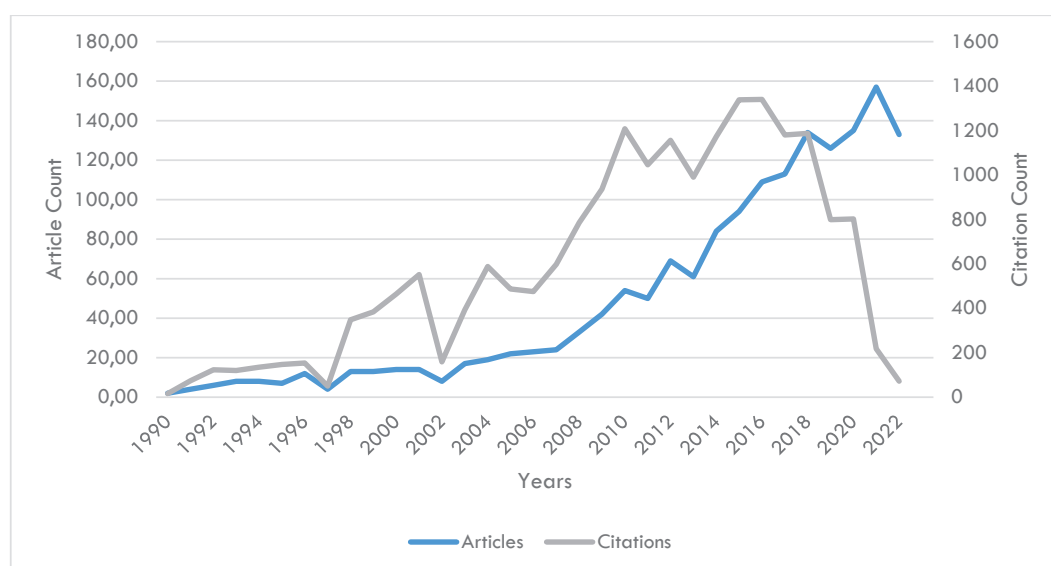


Figure 5. Annual publication and citations outputs of CFCC from 1990 to 2023.

Table 3. The top 20 most cited publications in the CFCC field.

No	Title	Authors	Year	Source	Total Citations (TC)	TC per Year	Normalized TC
1	Infusion therapy standards of practice	Gorski et al.	2021	Journal of Infusion Nursing	344	114.67	57.91
2	A qualitative study of shift handover practice and function from a socio-technical perspective	Kerr	2002	Journal of Advanced Nursing	168	7.64	4.26
3	Transitions of care consensus policy statement: American college of physicians, society of general internal medicine, society of hospital medicine, American geriatrics society, American college of emergency physicians, and society for academic emergency medicine	Snow et al.	2009	Journal of Hospital Medicine: An Official Publication of The Society of Hospital Medicine	165	11.00	6.94
4	Family-centred care of children in hospital—a concept analysis	Mikkelsen and Frederiksen	2011	Journal of Advanced Nursing	161	12.38	7.20
5	Family-centered pediatric nursing care: state of the science	Harrison	2010	Journal of Pediatric Nursing	149	10.64	6.69
6	Family-centred care: a concept analysis	Hutchfield	1999	Journal of Advanced Nursing	140	5.60	5.23
7	Parent participation in the care of hospitalized children: A systematic review	Power and Franck	2008	Journal of Advanced Nursing	138	8.63	5.54
8	The importance of including both a child perspective and the child's perspective within health care settings to provide truly child-centred care.	Söderbäck et al.	2011	Journal of Child Health Care	134	10.31	5.99
9	Influence of stress and nursing leadership on job satisfaction of pediatric intensive care unit nurses	Bratt	2000	American Journal of Critical Care	123	5.13	4.16
10	Parenting and childhood chronicity: Making visible the invisible work.	Ray	2002	Journal of Pediatric Nursing	122	5.55	3.09
11	Positive effects of a nursing intervention on family-centered care in adult critical care	Mitchell	2009	American Journal of Critical Care	119	7.93	5.00
12	Striving to survive: Families' lived experiences when a child is diagnosed with cancer.	Björk et al.	2005	Journal of Pediatric Oncology Nursing	116	6.11	3.75
13	Family-centered care: meeting the needs of patients' families and helping families adapt to critical illness.	Davidson	2009	Critical Care Nurse	103	6.87	4.33
14	Challenging the philosophy of partnership with parents: A grounded theory study	Coyne and Cowley	2007	International Journal of Nursing Studies	100	5.88	4.84
15	A natural history study of adolescents and young adults with sickle cell disease as they transfer to adult care: A need for case management services	Wojciechowski et al.	2002	Journal of Pediatric Nursing	93	4.23	2.36
16	Partnership in care: parents' views of participation in their hospitalized child's care	Coyne	1995	Journal of Clinical Nursing	90	3.10	5.33
17	What does family-centred care mean to nurses and how do they think it could be enhanced in practice.	Coyne et al.	2011	Journal of Advanced Nursing	89	6.85	3.98
18	Involving parents in managing their child's long-term condition—a concept synthesis of family-centered care and partnership-in-care.	Smith et al.	2015	Journal of Pediatric Nursing	88	9.78	6.30
19	Family-centered care: do we practice what we preach?	Petersen et al.	2004	Journal of Obstetric, Gynecologic, & Neonatal Nursing	86	4.30	3.72
20	The initiative for pediatric palliative care: An interdisciplinary educational approach for healthcare professionals	Browning and Solomon	2005	Journal of Pediatric Nursing	84	4.42	2.71

Studies on CFCC were published across various sources, with the top 10 journals listed in Table 4. Journal of Pediatric Nursing ranked first with 149 articles, followed by Journal of Child Health Care (70 articles) and Journal of Clinical Nursing (52 articles). Table 5 presents the top 10 journals in terms of H-index and other indices. The most productive journals include Journal of Pediatric

Nursing, Journal of Advanced Nursing, and Journal of Clinical Nursing, all with H-indices above 15. Journal of Pediatric Nursing, with 149 articles, has been cited a total of 2226 times.

The citation counts of journals (a), the number of publications (b), H-index (c), and graphs related to the annual increase in publications (d) are presented in Figure 6.

Table 4. Top10 journal that published articles in the CFCC field.

Journals	Articles
Journal of Pediatric Nursing	149
Journal of Child Health Care	70
Journal of Clinical Nursing	52
Journal of Perinatal & Neonatal Nursing	46
Advances in Neonatal Care	42
Journal for Specialists in Pediatric Nursing	42
Pediatric Nursing	38
Journal of Advanced Nursing	37
Intensive and Critical Care Nursing	32
Hospital Pediatrics	29

Table 5. The index information for journals.

Element	h_index	g_index	m_index	TC	NP	PY_start
Journal of Pediatric Nursing	25	40	0.781	2226	149	1992
Journal of Advanced Nursing	20	37	0.645	1418	37	1993
Journal of Clinical Nursing	19	30	0.594	1043	52	1992
Journal of Perinatal & Neonatal Nursing	18	28	0.72	834	46	1999
Journal of Child Health Care	17	26	0.68	933	70	1999
American Journal of Critical Care	14	21	0.583	653	21	2000
Advances in Neonatal Care	13	20	1.182	476	42	2013
Intensive and Critical Care Nursing	13	18	0.419	383	32	1993
International Journal of Nursing Studies	13	17	0.394	468	17	1991
Journal of Pediatric Oncology Nursing	13	23	0.448	572	26	1995

TC: Total citations, NP: Number of articles published on each journal, PY_start: Stands for the year of first publication.

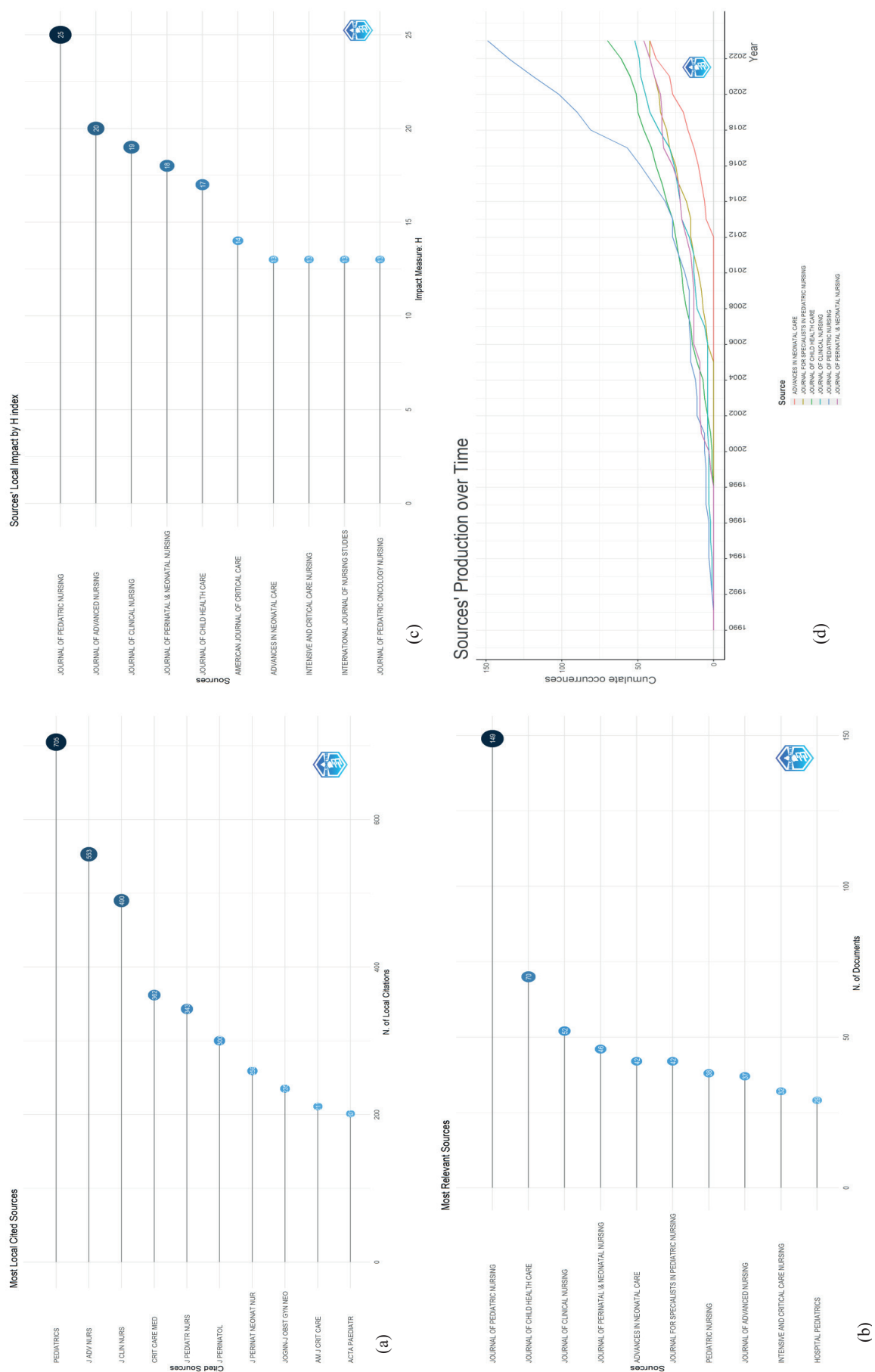


Figure 6. The data on sources.

Discussion

This study presented a bibliometric analysis of research on CFCC conducted over the past thirty-three years. The results, indicating that studies on CFCC are conducted globally, can provide researchers with further research suggestions.

The most productive years were particularly between 2013 and 2018, with an average publication count exceeding 60. Although there was a declining trend in the number of publications until 2020, an increase in the number of publications continued in the subsequent years. These results are consistent with the occurrence of low productivity in the early years.

The USA, Canada, and Australia are the most prolific countries in CFCC research, located in North America and Oceania. Publications from developed countries like the USA and Canada tend to have a greater impact based on citations per study and H-index. These countries, including the USA, Canada, and the UK, prioritize CFCC principles in pediatric hospitals [22]. Family-centered care is accepted and implemented as a hospital institutional policy in these nations [23], possibly due to their early exploration of CFCC and robust healthcare systems.

After visually analyzing keywords, we explored popular topics in the field. The keyword analysis revealed recurring keywords such as “family-centered care”, “nursing”, “parents”, “family”, and “child”, encompassing components of the family-centered care model [5,24]. “Family-centered care” was often associated with keywords like pediatrics, nursing, neonatal intensive care, and parents. Co-occurrences of keywords indicated research areas, with “family-centered care” often co-occurring with terms like neonatal intensive care, palliative care, and critical care.

The most prolific author in child and family-centered care was Shields, followed by Coyne, Ahmann, and Foster. Corresponding authors were predominantly from countries like the USA, Canada, and Australia. Gorski’s publication (2021) received the highest number of citations, followed by Kerr (2002) and Snow (2009). Shields, Coyne, and Foster were the most collaborative authors

in the co-authorship analysis, contributing to the development of the family-centered care model and pioneering research in the field. Co-authorship indicates intellectual collaborations and identifies trend-setting researchers [17]. The rise in multi-authored articles after the 2000s suggests that collaboration enhances publication quality.

High-impact journals such as the *Journal of Pediatric Nursing* and the *Journal of Child Health Care* featured numerous articles on CFCC. The *Journal of Pediatric Nursing*, in particular, stood out for its high publication count and citations, with over five hundred articles on “family-centered care”. This journal serves as a valuable resource for up-to-date information and future research directions.

McGill University in Canada emerged as the most productive institution in CFCC research, with 33 publications by corresponding authors affiliated with this university. Following McGill University, the University of Pennsylvania also made significant contributions. These institutions, being among the oldest and top-ranked universities globally, wield significant influence in the field of CFCC.

Limitations

This study represents the comprehensive analysis of CFCC publications to our knowledge. Utilizing bibliometric methods, we identified trends and collaborations among authors, institutions, countries, and regions. However, despite its strengths, our study had limitations. We primarily relied on databases like WoS and Scopus for quantitative analyses, potentially excluding some publications. The software used, including R and the biblioshiny library, has inherent limitations. Lastly, our study covers publications from 1990 to 2023.

Conclusion

This study examines the current state of CFCC research and identifies research gaps using bibliometric techniques. Results show an increase in annual publication count, particularly in the last decade, indicating a shift towards both quantitative and qualitative studies. International collaborations are evident, but there’s a need to

bolster partnerships and multicenter studies, especially in developing countries. Many researchers focus on the benefits of CFCC in healthcare, suggesting its adoption as a care philosophy. Future research should test CFCC components and employ mixed-methods approaches.

Funding

The authors have declared that this study had received no specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Conflict of interest

There is no conflict of interest among the authors.

Data availability statement

Data sets generated and/or analyzed during the study will be made available by the corresponding author upon request.

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