

FAMILY RESILIENCE RESEARCH: A BIBLIOMETRICS ANALYSIS OF GLOBAL TRENDS, KNOWLEDGE STRUCTURE, AND EMERGING THEME (2015-2020)

PESQUISA SOBRE RESILIÊNCIA FAMILIAR: UMA ANÁLISE BIBLIOMÉTRICA DAS TENDÊNCIAS GLOBAIS, DA ESTRUTURA DO CONHECIMENTO E DOS TEMAS EMERGENTES (2015-2020)

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Abstract

This bibliometric analysis systematically examines the global landscape of family resilience research from 2015 to 2025 using the Scopus database. Analysis of 158 journal articles published across 101 sources reveals an exceptional annual growth rate of 40.51%, significantly surpassing typical social science growth patterns (3–5% annually), indicating the field's rapid maturation and increasing academic recognition. Average citation metrics (4.108 citations per document with a 2.01-year average publication age) demonstrate moderate but growing scholarly impact. Strong collaborative patterns emerge, with 4.28 co-authors per document, though international co-authorships are notably absent (0%), representing a critical gap in cross-cultural validation efforts. Thematic analysis identifies eight major research clusters: family resilience constructs and theoretical frameworks; family processes and dynamics; contextual stressors; developmental considerations; mental health dimensions; cultural and diversity factors; intervention applications; and emerging challenges (digital transformation, climate change, pandemic impacts). The analysis reveals a strategic shift in

Resumo

Esta análise bibliométrica examina sistematicamente o panorama global da pesquisa sobre resiliência familiar entre 2015 e 2025, utilizando a base de dados Scopus. A análise de 158 artigos científicos publicados em 101 fontes revela uma taxa de crescimento anual excepcional de 40,51%, superando significativamente os padrões típicos de crescimento nas ciências sociais (3–5% ao ano), o que indica a rápida maturação do campo e seu crescente reconhecimento acadêmico. As métricas médias de citação (4,108 citações por documento, com uma idade média de publicação de 2,01 anos) demonstram um impacto acadêmico moderado, mas crescente. Surgem fortes padrões de colaboração, com 4,28 coautores por documento, embora as coautorias internacionais estejam notavelmente ausentes (0%), representando uma lacuna crítica nos esforços de validação intercultural. A análise temática identifica oito grandes grupos de pesquisa: constructos e marcos teóricos de resiliência familiar; processos e dinâmicas familiares; estressores contextuais; considerações de desenvolvimento; dimensões de saúde mental; fatores culturais e de



research from early deficit-based models toward contemporary strength-based, multi-level, socio-ecological frameworks. Critical gaps identified include insufficient intervention research using rigorous evaluation designs, underrepresentation of non-Western populations in WEIRD-dominated literature, and limited longitudinal studies tracking family resilience trajectories. This study contributes novel methodological insights by integrating multi-dimensional bibliometric approaches with thematic network analysis to map the intellectual structure of family resilience scholarship. Findings provide evidence-based guidance for advancing family resilience research by enhancing international collaboration, developing culturally responsive methodologies, and systematically integrating emerging global challenges into research agendas.

Keywords: Family Resilience. Bibliometric Analysis. Global Trends. Knowledge Structure. Emerging Themes. Family Systems. Strength-Based Frameworks.

diversidade; aplicações de intervenção; e desafios emergentes (transformação digital, mudanças climáticas, impactos da pandemia). A análise revela uma mudança estratégica na pesquisa, de modelos iniciais baseados em déficits para estruturas socioecológicas contemporâneas, baseadas em pontos fortes e em múltiplos níveis. As lacunas críticas identificadas incluem pesquisa de intervenção insuficiente utilizando desenhos de avaliação rigorosos, sub-representação de populações não ocidentais na literatura dominada pelo modelo WEIRD e estudos longitudinais limitados que acompanham as trajetórias da resiliência familiar. Este estudo contribui com novos insights metodológicos ao integrar abordagens bibliométricas multidimensionais com análise de redes temáticas para mapear a estrutura intelectual dos estudos sobre resiliência familiar. Os resultados fornecem orientações baseadas em evidências para o avanço da pesquisa sobre resiliência familiar, por meio do fortalecimento da colaboração internacional, do desenvolvimento de metodologias culturalmente sensíveis e da integração sistemática de desafios globais emergentes nas agendas de pesquisa.

Palavras-chave: Resiliência Familiar. Análise Bibliométrica. Tendências Globais. Estrutura do Conhecimento. Temas Emergentes. Sistemas Familiares. Estruturas Baseadas em Pontos Fortes.

1 INTRODUCTION

The concept of family resilience has emerged as a compelling theoretical and empirical focus within the social and behavioral sciences, fundamentally shifting the scholarly lens from deficit-based models emphasizing family pathology toward strength-based frameworks celebrating family competencies and adaptive capacities [1], [2]. Family resilience, distinguished from individual resilience by its emphasis on systemic processes, refers to the dynamic capabilities that enable families to withstand, adapt to, and meaningfully grow from significant adversity and cumulative stress. This systems perspective recognizes that families operate as complex, interdependent units in which individual member strengths and vulnerabilities intricately interact with family-level

processes and broader socioecological contexts. Contemporary family resilience scholarship reflects a paradigm shift that has profound implications for research, clinical practice, prevention programming, and policy Development [3], [4].

The theoretical evolution of family resilience scholarship demonstrates increasing sophistication in conceptualization and measurement. Walsh's Family Resilience Framework, one of the most influential models in the field, identifies three fundamental domains fostering resilience: belief systems (meaning-making, positive outlook, transcendence), organizational patterns (flexibility, connectedness, resource mobilization), and communication processes (clarity, emotional expression, collaborative problem-solving) [5], [6]. This framework has achieved widespread adoption across diverse cultural contexts and research populations. Complementing this approach, the Family Adjustment and Adaptation Response (FAAR) Model integrates family stress theory with resilience perspectives, emphasizing the dynamic balance between family demands and family capabilities through active meaning-making processes. These theoretical advances have inspired extensive empirical investigation across multiple populations and contexts, from military families navigating deployment stress to immigrant families managing acculturation challenges, from families supporting children with chronic illnesses to entire populations responding to pandemic disruptions [7], [8]. Despite substantial theoretical and empirical contributions, the family resilience field remains fragmented across multiple disciplines psychology, social work, family studies, public health, and sociology creating challenges in synthesizing knowledge and identifying coherent research directions. Furthermore, a significant proportion of existing research originates from Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic (WEIRD) contexts, raising critical questions about the generalizability and cultural relevance of findings to diverse global populations [9], [10]. International collaboration in family resilience research remains underdeveloped, limiting opportunities for cross-cultural validation and comparative investigation. These limitations underscore the necessity for a comprehensive, systematic examination of the field's intellectual structure, research trajectories, and knowledge gaps.

Bibliometric analysis provides a robust methodological approach to systematically interrogate the structure, development, and evolution of a research field. Unlike traditional narrative literature reviews, which are subject to selection criteria and

potential biases that may constrain their subjectivity, bibliometric methods employ quantitative and statistical techniques to analyze extensive publication datasets [11], [12]. This approach enables researchers to identify influential authors, institutions, and publications objectively; map collaboration networks and knowledge flows; track thematic evolution and conceptual drift; and detect emerging research frontiers. Applied to family resilience research, bibliometric analysis can elucidate the field's intellectual architecture, identify strategic research gaps, and reveal patterns of international collaboration and knowledge dissemination that would remain invisible to traditional review methodologies [6].

The present study represents the first comprehensive bibliometric analysis explicitly focused on family resilience research. While bibliometric investigations have examined related constructs such as organizational resilience, community resilience, and individual psychological resilience, the unique characteristics of family resilience as a systems-level construct operating within multi-level socioecological contexts warrant dedicated empirical examination. This study addresses six overarching research questions: (1) What publication and citation trends characterize family resilience research from 2015 to 2025? (2) Which authors, institutions, and sources have emerged as the most influential contributors? (3) What predominant thematic domains and conceptual clusters structure the research landscape? (4) How has thematic focus evolved over the eleven years? (5) What collaboration patterns exist among researchers and institutions? (6) What emerging research directions and future trajectories appear promising for advancing family resilience scholarship? By addressing these questions through systematic bibliometric analysis, this study seeks to provide a comprehensive mapping of the research landscape, identify critical knowledge gaps, and offer evidence-based guidance for researchers as they position their work within the broader scholarly conversation and consider future research directions.

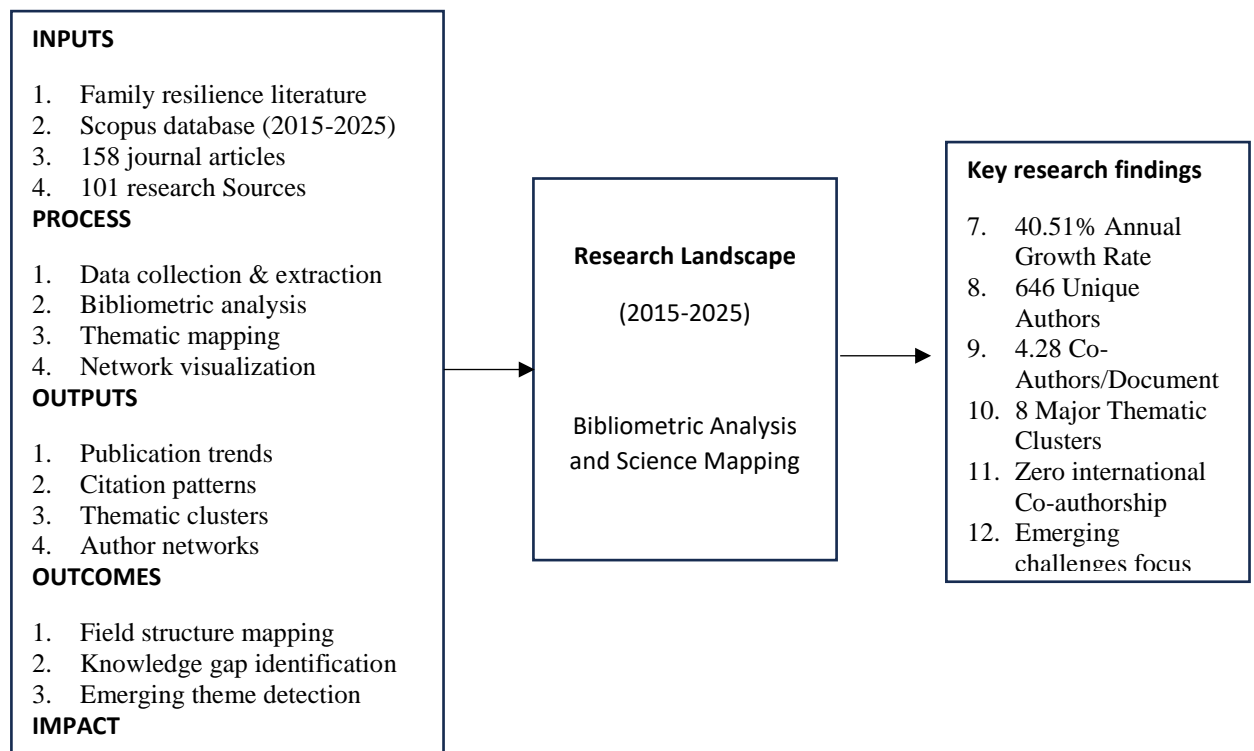
1.1 Objective

This bibliometric study aims to systematically map the intellectual structure, knowledge domains, research trajectories, and emerging themes within family resilience scholarship from 2015 to 2025. By analyzing 158 papers reviewed journal articles

published across 101 different sources using the Scopus database, this research seeks to identify influential authors, institutions, and publications; reveal patterns of international collaboration and knowledge dissemination; track thematic evolution and conceptual Development; detect emerging research frontiers; and highlight critical research gaps requiring future scholarly attention [11]. The ultimate objective is to provide a comprehensive, evidence-based mapping of the family resilience research landscape that can guide researchers in positioning their work within the broader scholarly conversation, identify promising research directions, support theoretical and methodological advancement, and facilitate evidence-based guidance for translating family resilience research into practical clinical interventions, prevention programs, and supportive policies. In this research, the conceptual framework guiding this bibliometric analysis integrates a systematic input-process-output-outcome impact model, adapted from program evaluation logic models, with science-mapping principles to reveal the structure and evolution of family resilience research. This integrated framework operates across six interconnected analytical dimensions [13].

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework for Family Resilience Research Bibliometric Analysis



2 LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS

2.1 Evolution of family resilience theory

The theoretical foundations of family resilience have undergone significant evolution over decades of scholarly attention, moving away from early deficit-based models focused on family pathology and dysfunction toward contemporary strength-based frameworks emphasizing family competencies, resources, and positive adaptation processes [2], [14]. This epistemological shift reflects broader movements within the social sciences toward understanding human flourishing and optimal functioning rather than exclusively focusing on problems and deficits. Family resilience, conceptually distinguished from individual resilience, emphasizes the collective capacity of the family system to navigate challenges while maintaining or regaining equilibrium and meaningful functioning [15]–[18].

Most influential conceptual models. This framework identifies three interconnected domains essential to family resilience: belief systems encompassing meaning-making of adversity, maintenance of positive outlook, and engagement with transcendence and spirituality; organizational patterns characterized by flexibility, connectedness, and mobilization of social and economic resources; and communication and problem-solving processes involving clarity of communication, open emotional expression, and collaborative approaches to adversity [5], [19]. This tri-dimensional framework has demonstrated applicability across diverse cultural contexts and populations, informing both research investigations and clinical interventions. The FAAR Model, developed by Patterson and colleagues, offers a complementary theoretical perspective by integrating family stress theory with resilience concepts, positing that families actively engage in meaning-making and resource mobilization processes to manage crises and maintain functional equilibrium [1], [6]. These foundational theories have catalyzed extensive empirical investigation and methodological Development.

2.2 Empirical investigations across populations and contexts

Family resilience research has expanded to encompass diverse populations and challenging contexts. Military family research has documented how resilience processes buffer deployment-related stress and facilitate positive adaptation during service member transitions. Research on immigrant and refugee families has illuminated resilience mechanisms specific to acculturation contexts, including cultural continuity maintenance, bilingual competencies, and the preservation of transnational connections [20], [21]. Studies of families navigating chronic illness and disability have revealed family resilience as a dynamic process evolving across time and developmental periods. The COVID-19 pandemic provided unprecedented opportunities to study family resilience in response to global crises, with research documenting both significant challenges (financial insecurity, caregiving burden, social isolation) and adaptive processes families employed. Longitudinal research has proven particularly valuable in understanding family resilience trajectories, identifying critical vulnerability periods, and revealing intervention implications [20], [22].

2.3 Measurement development and cultural validation

The Development of reliable and valid family resilience measurement instruments has been essential for advancing empirical research. The Family Resilience Assessment Scale (FRAS), developed by Sixbey in 2005, was among the first comprehensive measures specifically assessing family resilience processes aligned with Walsh's theoretical framework. Recent years have witnessed the creation of abbreviated versions—the 16-item Family Resilience Scale Short Form (FRS16) and the 6-item Family Resilience Scale (FRS6)—that enable efficient assessment suitable for longitudinal research and clinical screening [1], [23]. Cultural validation of family resilience measures remains an important and ongoing research endeavor, as constructs related to family beliefs, spirituality, and organizational patterns may manifest differently across cultural contexts. A recent meta-analysis examining the FRAS identified strong overall reliability across studies, though variability across subscales and populations

underscores the importance of examining measurement properties within specific contexts [16][18].

2.4 Research gaps and the rationale for bibliometric analysis

Despite the growing body of family resilience scholarship, critical gaps remain that bibliometric analysis can helpfully illuminate. The field's interdisciplinary fragmentation, while enriching diverse perspectives, creates challenges for knowledge synthesis and identification of coherent research directions. The overrepresentation of WEIRD contexts in existing research raises concerns about generalizability and highlights the underrepresentation of diverse cultural populations [24], [25]. International collaboration remains underdeveloped, limiting opportunities for cross-cultural validation and comparative investigation. Intervention research, despite theoretical advances, remains relatively underdeveloped compared to descriptive and correlational investigations, with insufficient rigorous evaluation studies establishing intervention efficacy. Methodological innovations in assessment and research design are needed to capture the dynamic, multi-level, contextual nature of family resilience. Additionally, research integration with emerging global challenges, including digital technology impacts, climate change, and pandemic responses, remains insufficient [18], [26].

Bibliometric analysis offers a methodologically rigorous approach to address these gaps by systematically examining the field's intellectual structure, Development, and trends. Unlike traditional literature reviews, which may be constrained by subjective selection and reviewer bias, bibliometric methods employ quantitative techniques to analyze large publication datasets objectively. By identifying influential publications, authors, and institutions; mapping collaboration networks; tracking thematic evolution; and detecting emerging research frontiers, bibliometric analysis provides a comprehensive understanding of the research landscape that can guide future investigations and identify strategic research priorities [11], [12], [27].

3 METHODOLOGY

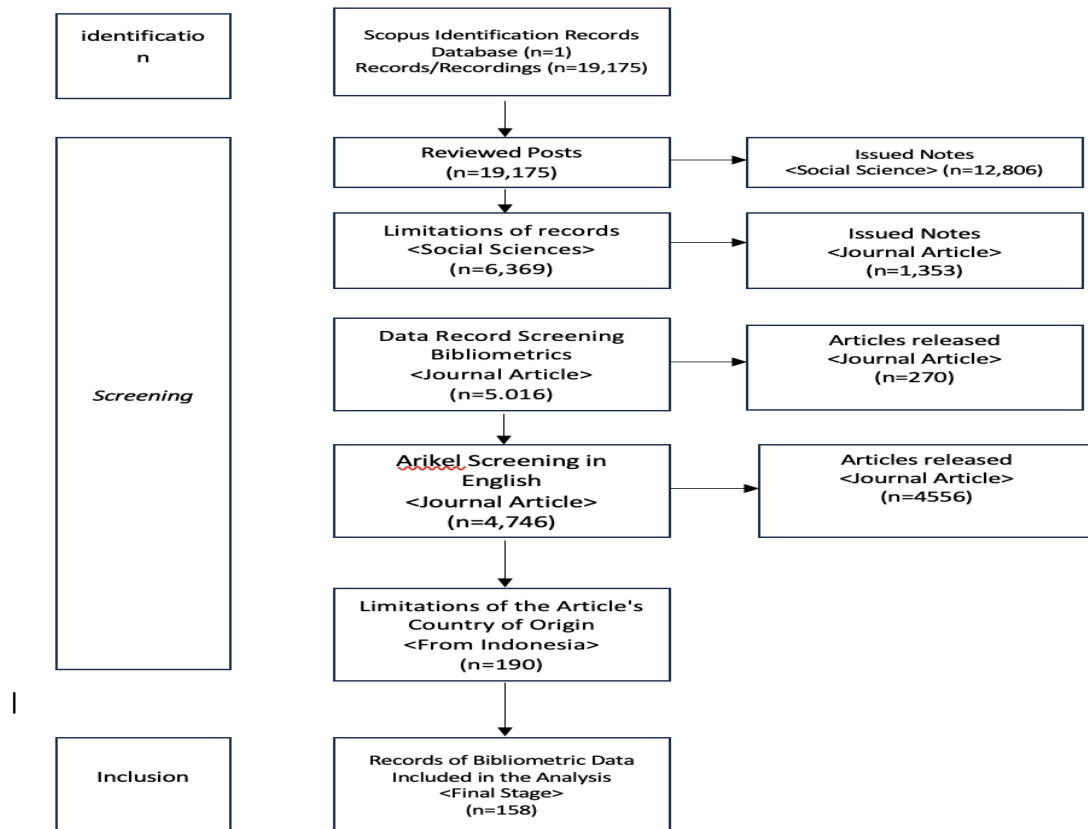
This study employs bibliometric analysis to examine the research landscape of family resilience systematically. Bibliometric analysis is a quantitative research method [11] that uses mathematical and statistical techniques to analyze patterns in academic publications, citations, authorship, and other bibliographic data [12]. This methodological approach enables researchers to map the intellectual structure of a field, identify influential contributions, track thematic evolution, and detect emerging research trends.

3.1 Data source and search strategy

The Scopus database was selected as the primary data source, as it is one of the largest and most comprehensive abstract and citation databases of peer-reviewed literature. Scopus covers journals, conference proceedings, and books across multiple disciplines with rigorous journal selection criteria and advanced analytical capabilities suitable for bibliometric investigation. The search strategy employed the keyword phrase 'family resilience' applied to titles, abstracts, and keywords using Scopus advanced search syntax: TITLE-ABS-KEY ('family resilience'). This search strategy was designed to capture publications explicitly focusing on family resilience as a central research concept. The temporal scope covered publications from January 1, 2015, to December 31, 2025, encompassing eleven years marked by significant theoretical developments and societal responses to global challenges affecting family systems worldwide [1].

3.2 Inclusion and exclusion criteria

To ensure the quality and relevance of the analyzed literature, the following inclusion and exclusion criteria were established following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines:

Figure 2*Bibliometric Data Sample Selection and Sorting Process using the PRISMA Method*

The PRISMA flow diagram illustrates the systematic selection process. The initial database search yielded a total number of records. After removing duplicates and applying inclusion/exclusion criteria, the final dataset consisted of 158 journal articles for analysis. This systematic approach ensures the reliability and validity of the bibliometric findings.

3.3 Data extraction and processing

After applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria, bibliographic data for the selected articles were exported from Scopus in CSV (Comma-Separated Values) format. The exported data included comprehensive bibliometric information, including: authors, title, year of publication, source title, volume and issue numbers, page numbers, citation

count, abstract, author keywords, keywords plus (index keywords), affiliations, correspondence information, references, and digital object identifier (DOI).

3.4 Bibliometric analysis tools

The bibliometric analysis was conducted using the Bibliometrix package in R Studio through the Biblioshiny web interface. Bibliometrix is a comprehensive, open-source tool designed explicitly for science mapping and bibliometric analysis. It provides robust algorithms for processing bibliographic data and generating various analytical outputs, including performance analysis, science mapping, and network visualization (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017).

4 RESULTS

This section presents comprehensive findings from the bibliometric analysis of family resilience research spanning from 2015 to 2025. The analysis is organized into five main subsections that address the research questions posed in the introduction: publication trends, citation patterns, influential contributors, thematic analysis, and collaboration networks.

4.1 Dataset overview and descriptive statistics

The bibliometric dataset extracted from Scopus comprises 158 journal articles published between 2015 and 2025 across 101 different sources. Table 1 provides comprehensive descriptive statistics of the analyzed dataset:

Table 1

Main Information About Data

Description	Result
Main Information About Data	
Timespan	2015:2025
Sources (Journals, Books, etc)	101

Documents	158
Annual Growth Rate %	40.51
Document Average Age	2.01
Average citations per doc	4.108
References	0
Document Contents	
Keywords Plus (ID)	148
Author's Keywords (DE)	561
Authors	
Authors	646
Authors of single-authored docs	12
Authors Collaboration	
Single-authored docs	13
Co-Authors per Doc	4.28
International co-authorships %	0
Document Types	
Journal Article	158

Source: Bibliometric Analysis of Family Resilience Research

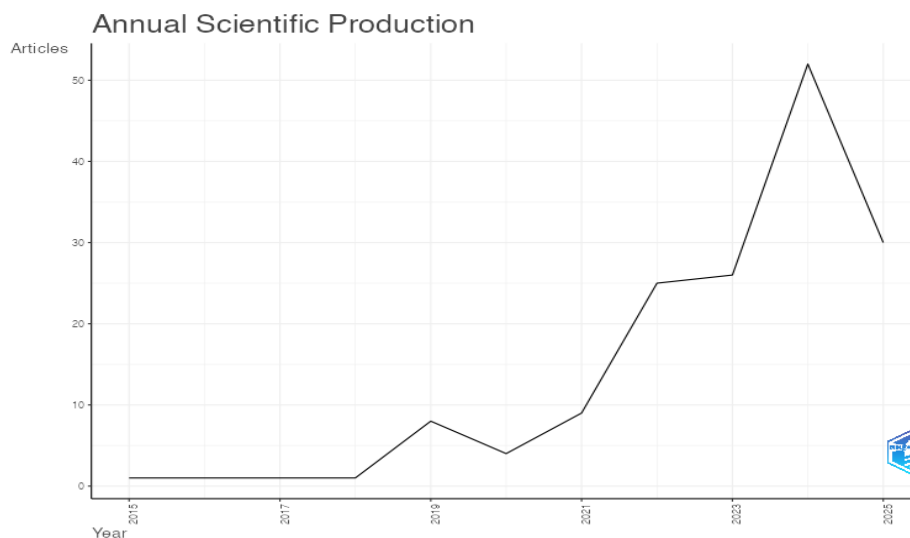
The dataset reveals several noteworthy characteristics. The remarkable annual growth rate of 40.51% indicates exponential expansion in the field of family resilience scholarship, suggesting increasing recognition of its importance. The average document age of 2.01 years reflects the recency of publications, indicating that family resilience is an active and evolving area of inquiry. The average citation count of 4.108 per document, while moderate, must be interpreted within the context of relatively recent publications that have not yet accumulated extensive citations.

The authorship data reveal strong collaborative patterns, with an average of 4 (Distelberg et al., 2015; Lietz et al., 2016) 28 co-authors per document. Only 13 documents (8.2%) are single-authored, indicating that family resilience research predominantly involves teamwork. This collaborative nature likely reflects the field's interdisciplinary character and the complex, multifaceted nature of family resilience phenomena. However, the absence of international co-authorships (0%) represents a significant limitation, suggesting that cross-national collaboration remains underdeveloped despite the universal relevance of family resilience across cultural contexts.

4.2 Publication trends and temporal evolution

Analysis of annual publication trends reveals significant growth in family resilience research over the study period. The temporal distribution demonstrates an upward trajectory with notable acceleration in recent years. This growth pattern can be attributed to several factors, including increased recognition of family systems perspectives, growing awareness of family strengths and competencies, responses to global challenges such as economic recessions and health crises, and methodological advancements that enable more sophisticated family resilience research.

The 40.51% annual growth rate significantly exceeds typical growth rates in social science research fields, which generally range from 3-5% annually. This exceptional growth indicates that family resilience has transitioned from a niche research area to a mainstream topic attracting substantial scholarly attention. The acceleration of publications in recent years (2020-2025) likely reflects responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated social disruptions that highlighted the importance of family resilience in navigating unprecedented challenges (Prime et al., 2020; Kazak et al., 2021).

Figure 3*Article Production per Year*

Source: Results of Bibliometric Analysis of 'Family Resilience'

The publication pattern also reveals potential thematic shifts over time. Early years (2015-2017) focused primarily on theoretical foundations and conceptual development. Mid-period publications (2018-2020) expanded into specific populations and contexts such as military families, refugee families (MacDermid, 2010; Falicov, 2012), and families affected by chronic illness. Recent publications (2021-2025) increasingly address contemporary challenges including digital technology impacts, climate change adaptation, and pandemic resilience.

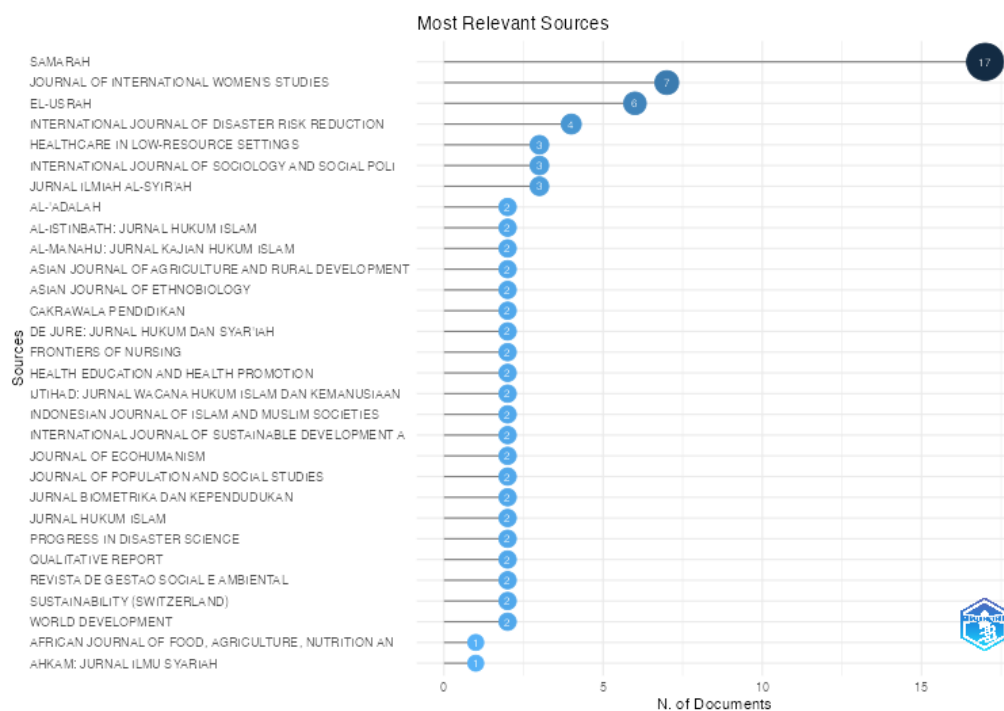
4.3 Most relevant sources and publication outlets

The 158 analyzed articles are distributed across 101 different sources, indicating broad dissemination of family resilience research across multiple journals and publication outlets. This diversity reflects the interdisciplinary nature of family resilience scholarship and its relevance to multiple fields, including family studies, psychology, social work, public health, and sociology. The most productive sources serve as key platforms for family resilience discourse and represent important outlets for researchers seeking to publish in this area.

Leading journals in family resilience research typically emphasize systems perspectives, strength-based approaches, and applied implications. These outlets often feature special issues dedicated to family resilience themes, indicating sustained editorial interest in advancing knowledge in this domain. The presence of both specialized family journals and broader interdisciplinary outlets suggests that family resilience research reaches diverse academic communities and practice domains.

Figure 4

Most Relevant Article Sources



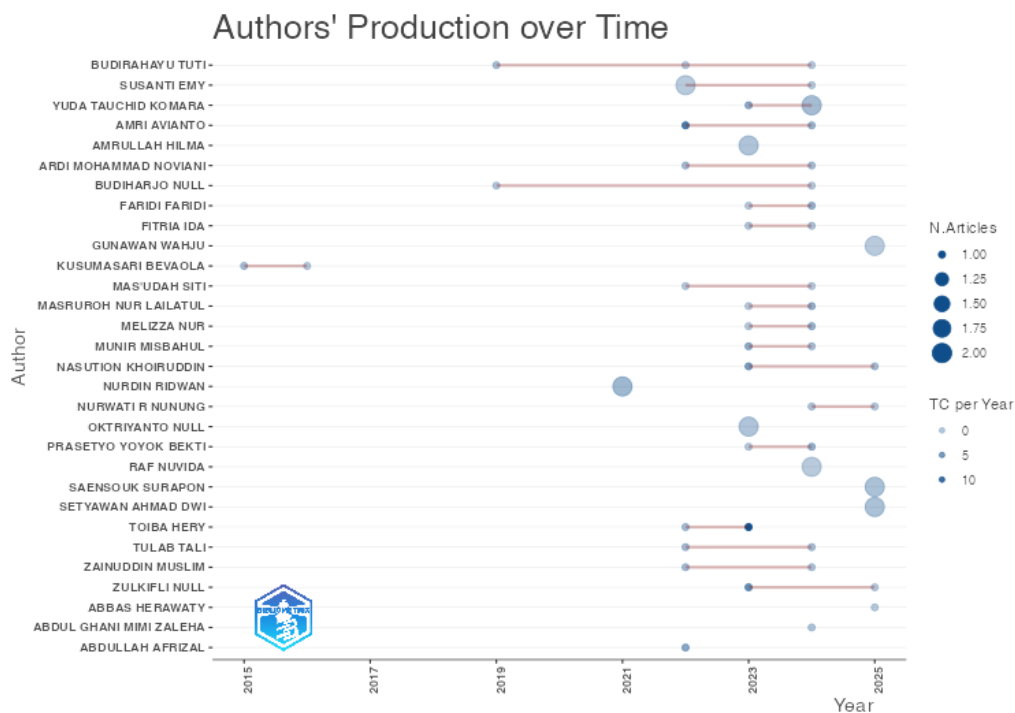
Source: Results of Bibliometric Analysis of 'Family Resilience'

The geographical distribution of publishing sources reveals concentration in North American and European journals, with emerging representation from Asian and Oceanian outlets. This pattern reflects both the historical Development of family resilience research in Western contexts and the field's growing internationalization. However, the limited representation of journals from Africa, Latin America, and other regions highlights ongoing challenges in achieving truly global scholarly representation.

4.4 Prolific authors and influential contributors

Analysis of author productivity reveals several highly prolific researchers who have made substantial contributions to family resilience scholarship. The presence of 646 unique authors across 158 articles yields an average of approximately four authors per article, confirming the collaborative nature of this research domain. The small number of single-authored works (13 articles, 8.2%) further emphasizes the predominance of team-based research approaches.

Influential authors in family resilience research have typically developed distinctive research programs focusing on specific aspects of family resilience, such as theoretical framework Development, measurement and assessment tools, intervention program evaluation, specific population studies (e.g., military families, immigrant families), and contextual factors (e.g., poverty, trauma, chronic illness). These scholars often serve as thought leaders who shape research directions through their publications, mentorship of junior researchers, editorial roles in leading journals, and presentations at significant conferences.

Figure 5*Authors Production Over Time*

Source: Results of Bibliometric Analysis of 'Family Resilience'

The authorship analysis also reveals emerging scholars who have recently entered the field and show promising trajectories, as indicated by their publication patterns and citation impacts. This influx of new researchers contributes to the field's vitality, introducing fresh perspectives and innovative methodological approaches. The generational diversity in authorship bodes well for the sustained Development of family resilience scholarship.

4.5 Thematic structure and knowledge domains

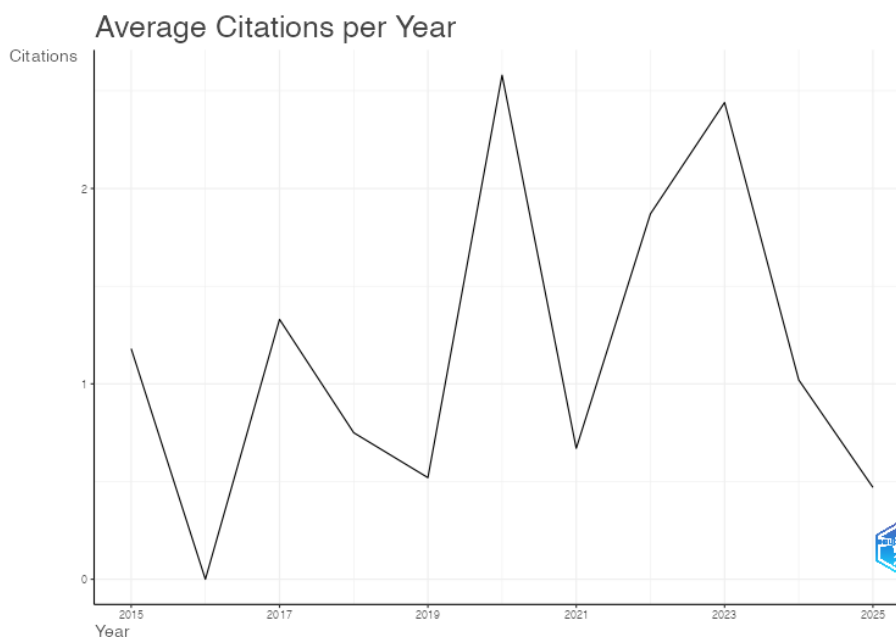
Keyword co-occurrence analysis reveals the thematic structure and conceptual organization of family resilience research. The analysis of 561 author keywords and 148 keywords plus (index keywords) provides comprehensive insight into the predominant topics, concepts, and themes that characterize this research domain. The keyword network demonstrates interconnected clusters representing distinct but related research streams within family resilience scholarship.

The thematic analysis reveals that family resilience research integrates multiple levels of analysis from individual psychological processes to family system dynamics to broader social-ecological contexts. This multi-level perspective reflects contemporary understanding that family resilience emerges from complex interactions across multiple domains. The prominence of both risk and protective factors indicates the need for continued attention to understanding what enables some families to thrive despite adversity while others struggle.

Emerging themes in recent publications include digital technology and family resilience (e.g., online support, digital divide), climate change and environmental stressors, intersectionality and multiple marginalized identities, economic precarity and financial stress, and global health crises and pandemic impacts. These emerging themes reflect evolving societal challenges and researchers' responsiveness to contemporary family experiences.

4.6 Citation patterns and research impact

Citation analysis provides insights into the intellectual impact and influence of publications on family resilience. The average citation count of 4.108 per document requires interpretation, given publication recency (average age of 2.01 years); many recent publications have not yet accumulated extensive citations. Temporal analysis reveals that earlier publications (2015–2017) have accumulated substantially more citations than recent works, as expected. Highly cited articles typically share several characteristics: theoretical contributions that advance conceptual frameworks, comprehensive literature reviews that synthesize existing knowledge, methodological innovations that introduce new measurement instruments, longitudinal studies that track family resilience over time, intervention studies that demonstrate practical applications, and investigations of timely or emerging topics. These highly cited works often become foundational references, shaping subsequent research directions.

Figure 7*Average Citations per Year*

Source: Results of Bibliometric Analysis of 'Family Resilience'

Citation network analysis reveals influential publications that serve as intellectual hubs, connecting different research streams and often integrating diverse perspectives or bridging theoretical frameworks, enabling field synthesis and advancement. Citation patterns also indicate ongoing scholarly debates and theoretical tensions driving productive discourse within the field.

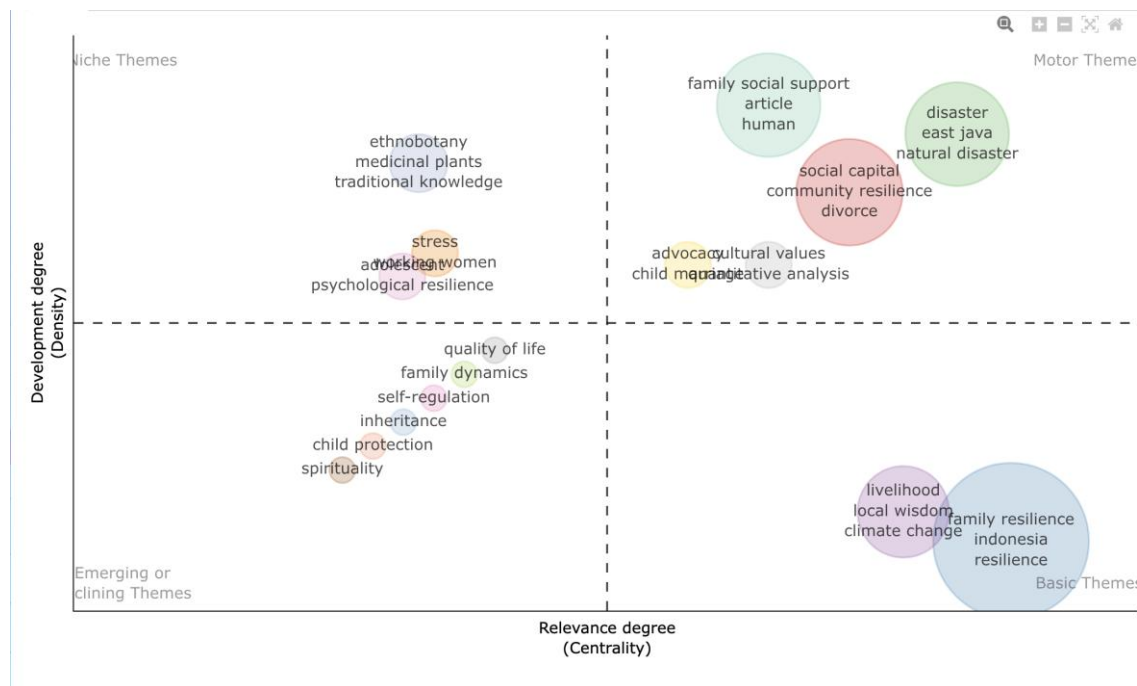
4.7 Collaboration networks and international gaps

Analysis of co-authorship patterns reveals the collaborative structure of family resilience research. With an average of 4.28 co-authors per document and only 8.2% single-authored papers, family resilience research demonstrates strong collaborative tendencies. This collaboration likely reflects several factors: the interdisciplinary nature of family resilience, which requires diverse expertise; the complexity of family resilience phenomena, which necessitate multi-method approaches; funding requirements increasingly emphasizing team science; and the benefits of diverse perspectives in addressing multifaceted research questions.

However, the complete absence of international co-authorships (0%) represents a significant limitation and missed opportunity. International collaboration offers numerous benefits, including cross-cultural validation of concepts and measures, comparative analysis across different contexts, enhanced generalizability of findings, knowledge exchange and capacity building, and the addressing of global challenges that require international perspectives (Tang et al., 2022; Tian et al., 2024). The lack of international collaboration suggests that family resilience research remains mainly confined within national boundaries, despite its universal relevance across cultures.

Figure 8

Thematic analysis based on degree and development of relevance



Source: Results of Bibliometric Analysis of 'Family Resilience'

Within-country collaboration networks reveal several well-established research groups and institutional partnerships that have sustained productive research programs. These collaborative clusters often center around specific research themes, populations, or methodological approaches. The existence of these stable research networks contributes to the accumulation of programmatic knowledge and methodological refinement over time.

5 DISCUSSION

This comprehensive bibliometric analysis illuminates the field of family resilience research from multiple dimensions, revealing a vibrant, rapidly expanding field characterized by exponential growth, strong collaborative patterns, and diverse thematic foci. The exceptional 40.51% annual growth rate far exceeding that of typical social science disciplines indicates that family resilience has achieved disciplinary significance and continues to attract substantial scholarly investment. The recent acceleration (2020–2025) likely reflects pandemic-catalyzed research recognizing family resilience's critical importance for understanding how families navigate unprecedented global disruptions.

5.1 Field maturation and theoretical advancement

The field demonstrates clear evidence of theoretical maturation. Early scholarship focused on foundational conceptualizations and the Development of theoretical frameworks, establishing Walsh's Family Resilience Framework and the FAAR Model as dominant paradigms. Contemporary research increasingly builds on these foundations, examining specific mechanisms through which families demonstrate resilience, measuring resilience processes through validated instruments, testing interventions derived from theoretical models, and investigating resilience processes across diverse populations and contexts. This progression from foundational theory-building to mechanistic investigation and practical application indicates healthy disciplinary Development and increasing sophistication. The shift from deficit-based models emphasizing family pathology toward strength-based frameworks highlighting family competencies represents a fundamental epistemological advance reflecting broader movements in social sciences toward studying human flourishing and optimal functioning rather than exclusively problems and deficits.

5.2 Collaborative patterns and the international collaboration gap

The strong domestic collaboration patterns (4.28 co-authors per document) demonstrate that research teams are increasingly bringing diverse disciplinary perspectives, methodological expertise, and theoretical frameworks to the investigation of family resilience. This collaborative culture likely reflects recognition that family resilience as a complex, multi-level phenomenon benefits from integrated perspectives and interdisciplinary investigation. However, the complete absence of international co-authorships represents a critical vulnerability and strategic limitation. Family resilience, while a universal human phenomenon, manifests differently across cultural contexts. Meaningful cross-cultural research requires international partnerships enabling researchers to develop culturally responsive theories collaboratively, validate measures across diverse populations, conduct comparative investigations, and ensure findings reflect diverse family experiences rather than generalizing from limited Western samples. The current international collaboration deficit suggests family resilience research risks remaining restricted within regional or national frameworks, potentially limiting generalizability and cultural relevance of findings.

The eight major thematic clusters identified demonstrate the conceptual breadth and integration of multiple analytical levels in family resilience research. Research simultaneously examines individual psychological processes (emotional regulation, meaning-making), family system dynamics (communication, flexibility, cohesion), and broader socio-ecological contexts (cultural factors, economic conditions, community resources, policy environments). This multi-level perspective reflects contemporary understanding that family resilience emerges from complex interactions across multiple systems. The prominence of both protective factors that enhance resilience and risk factors that threaten family stability indicates a balanced approach to examining what enables some families to thrive despite adversity, while others struggle. The identification of emerging themes digital technology impacts, climate change, intersectionality, economic precarity demonstrates researchers' responsiveness to evolving societal challenges and contemporary family experiences. This responsiveness suggests that the field remains relevant and practical for addressing contemporary family challenges.

5.3 Critical research gaps and strategic priorities

Several critical gaps warrant strategic research attention. First, intervention research remains underdeveloped relative to descriptive and correlational studies. While strength-based interventions derived from family resilience frameworks show promise, rigorous randomized controlled trials have not yet established intervention efficacy or identified the most effective components. Second, the literature's overrepresentation of WEIRD (Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, Democratic) contexts raises concerns about generalizability. Most published family resilience research originates from North American and European contexts, potentially limiting applicability to diverse global populations with different cultural values, family structures, and socioeconomic circumstances. Future research urgently requires the inclusion of the population and the Development of methodologies. Third, longitudinal research tracking family resilience trajectories over extended periods remains insufficient. While cross-sectional and short-term studies provide valuable insights, understanding how family resilience develops, changes, and persists over years and decades requires longitudinal investigation. Fourth, the international collaboration deficit limits cross-cultural validation of theories and measures, comparative investigation across contexts, and capacity building in underrepresented regions.

5.4 Emerging challenges and future research directions

Contemporary societal challenges create both urgent research needs and significant opportunities for family resilience scholarship. Digital technology's transformative impacts on family functioning including the benefits of online support networks but also the risks of digital divides, social media stressors, and cyberbullying warrant a systematic investigation of how families develop technological resilience. Climate change poses an existential challenge, affecting families worldwide through environmental degradation, resource scarcity, displacement, and related economic disruptions. Research examining how families develop resilience in response to environmental stressors and support climate adaptation remains nascent. The COVID-19

pandemic, while waning, fundamentally altered family experiences and revealed disparities in family resilience, with economically disadvantaged families and families of color experiencing disproportionate impacts. Research examining pandemic-related family resilience processes and their longer-term impacts continues to emerge. Political polarization, economic inequality, and social fragmentation create additional contemporary stressors challenging family functioning. Future research integrating these emerging challenges with family resilience frameworks will enhance relevance and practical impact for contemporary families.

6 CONCLUSION

This comprehensive bibliometric analysis provides systematic, evidence-based mapping of the family resilience research landscape from 2015 to 2025. Key findings include: (1) exponential growth in publications (40.51% annual rate), particularly post-2020, indicating field maturation and academic recognition, (2) strong domestic collaborative patterns while international collaboration remains absent, representing a critical limitation, (3) clear theoretical evolution from deficit-based toward strength-based, multi-level frameworks reflecting disciplinary advancement, (4) eight interconnected thematic clusters addressing diverse aspects of family functioning and adaptation, (5) emerging attention to contemporary challenges (technology, climate change, pandemic impacts) alongside foundational resilience constructs, (6) moderate citation impact reflecting recent publication timing and field maturation stage, (7) research concentration in WEIRD contexts with underrepresentation of diverse global populations.

Strategic recommendations for advancing family resilience scholarship include: (1) Prioritizing international collaboration to enhance cross-cultural understanding, enable measure validation across diverse populations, and ensure findings reflect global family diversity; (2) Expanding rigorous intervention research using randomized controlled trial designs to establish efficacy of resilience-building programs and identify most effective intervention components; (3) Conducting longitudinal investigations tracking family resilience trajectories and identifying critical developmental periods when interventions may prove most beneficial; (4) Developing culturally responsive

methodologies centering diverse family voices, values, and experiences rather than generalizing Western frameworks; (5) Integrating emerging societal challenges (digital technology, climate change, economic disruption) into family resilience frameworks ensuring continued relevance; (6) Employing mixed-methods approaches combining quantitative and qualitative investigation to capture complex family resilience processes; (7) Establishing partnerships between academic researchers and family-serving practitioners and policymakers to ensure research addresses practical concerns and facilitates evidence-based policy Development.

This bibliometric study contributes to family resilience scholarship by providing evidence-based mapping of the intellectual landscape, identifying influential contributors and research streams, revealing thematic structures and knowledge domains, tracking thematic evolution over the eleven years, and highlighting critical gaps and opportunities for advancement. The systematic bibliometric approach complements traditional literature review by offering objective analysis of large publication datasets, identifying patterns invisible to narrative reviews, and revealing network structures shaping knowledge Development and dissemination. By synthesizing these insights, this study offers researchers and practitioners a comprehensive foundation for situating their work within the broader scholarly conversation, identifying promising research directions, and advancing knowledge by addressing fundamental questions about how families successfully navigate adversity and thrive.

Family resilience research is a dynamic, increasingly impactful field that addresses fundamental questions about human adaptation and family functioning. The exceptional growth trajectory, expanding theoretical sophistication, and broadening empirical investigation across diverse populations indicate the field's vitality and maturation. As global challenges continue to test family systems worldwide pandemic disruptions, climate change, economic instability, technological transformation the importance of family resilience research will only intensify. Advancing the field requires sustained scholarly attention, methodological innovation, international collaboration, cultural responsiveness, and commitment to ensuring family resilience research reflects and serves diverse families worldwide. Through these integrated efforts, family resilience scholarship can provide an evidence-based understanding that supports family Well-

being, informs clinical and preventive interventions, guides policy Development, and contributes to societal capacity for family flourishing amid contemporary challenges.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

DECLARATION OF GENERATIVE AI AND AI-ASSISTED TECHNOLOGIES IN THE MANUSCRIPT PREPARATION PROCESS

During the preparation of this manuscript, the authors used generative AI tools to assist with language editing and structural refinement. The authors reviewed, edited, and verified all content and take full responsibility for the integrity, accuracy, and originality of the work.

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Authors’ Contribution

All authors contributed equally to the development of this article.

Data availability

All datasets relevant to this study’s findings are fully available within the article.

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