


**THE ROLE OF SOCIAL CAPITAL IN WELL-BEING: A BIBLIOMETRIC PERSPECTIVE OF THE LITERATURE**

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p><b>Article history:</b></p> <p>Received 07 April 2023</p> <p>Accepted 04 July 2023</p>	<p><b>Purpose of the Study:</b> The objective of the study is to examine the literature trends that link the study of social capital with well-being.</p>
<p><b>Keywords:</b></p> <p>Social Capital; Well-Being; Bibliometric.</p> <div data-bbox="172 920 480 1167" style="text-align: center;">  </div>	<p><b>Theoretical framework:</b> The establishment of relationships within social capital, are characterized by mutual benefit, as well as trust and reciprocity between the actors within a certain community, for which the study of the subject of social capital related to well-being has gained relevance as a topic emerging in recent years.</p> <p><b>Design/methodology/approach:</b> The methodology used is through bibliometric tools on data extracted from the Web of Sciences platform, a total of 1248 indexed publications were reached, which provide a general and schematic overview of trends in research on the subject.</p> <p><b>Findings:</b> The results of annual scientific production, shows a growing trend in the development of publications related to the search terms raised in the research. Therefore, social capital represents an important element for the well-being of society, both individually and collectively, linked to elements such as trust, which is why they are strongly related to happiness, satisfaction with life and, consequently, with the well-being of the communities where social capital is present.</p> <p><b>Research, Practical &amp; Social implications:</b> The study considers the relevance of the topic in the last five years, it can be clearly observed that more research on the subject is needed, so this can be a good start to this knowledge gap to increase interest and publications related to the subject.</p> <p><b>Originality/value:</b> The value of the study is the contribution it makes to the literature on the role of social capital in well-being. Therefore, the research can be of benefit to the scientific community with an interest in the study of the subject, since it will allow them to more efficiently identify the trends and areas of study on the subject.</p> <p>Doi: <a href="https://doi.org/10.26668/businessreview/2023.v8i7.1628">https://doi.org/10.26668/businessreview/2023.v8i7.1628</a></p>

**O PAPEL DO CAPITAL SOCIAL NO BEM-ESTAR: UMA PERSPECTIVA BIBLIOMÉTRICA DA LITERATURA**

**RESUMO**

**Objetivo do estudo:** O objetivo do estudo é examinar as tendências da literatura que vinculam o estudo do capital social ao bem-estar.

**Estrutura teórica:** O estabelecimento de relações dentro do capital social é caracterizado pelo benefício mútuo, bem como pela confiança e reciprocidade entre os atores dentro de uma determinada comunidade, para a qual o estudo do tema capital social relacionado ao bem-estar ganhou relevância como um tópico emergente nos últimos anos.

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**Projeto/metodologia/abordagem:** A metodologia utilizada é por meio de ferramentas bibliométricas sobre dados extraídos da plataforma Web of Sciences, chegando-se a um total de 1.248 publicações indexadas, que fornecem uma visão geral e esquemática das tendências de pesquisa sobre o assunto.

**Conclusões:** Os resultados da produção científica anual mostram uma tendência crescente no desenvolvimento de publicações relacionadas aos termos de busca levantados na pesquisa. Portanto, o capital social representa um elemento importante para o bem-estar da sociedade, tanto individual quanto coletivamente, ligado a elementos como a confiança, razão pela qual estão fortemente relacionados à felicidade, à satisfação com a vida e, conseqüentemente, ao bem-estar das comunidades onde o capital social está presente.

**Implicações sociais, práticas e de pesquisa:** O estudo considera a relevância do tópico nos últimos cinco anos, podendo-se observar claramente que são necessárias mais pesquisas sobre o assunto, de modo que esse pode ser um bom começo para essa lacuna de conhecimento para aumentar o interesse e as publicações relacionadas ao assunto.

**Originalidade/valor:** O valor do estudo é a contribuição que ele faz para a literatura sobre o papel do capital social no bem-estar. Portanto, a pesquisa pode ser benéfica para a comunidade científica interessada no estudo do assunto, pois permitirá identificar com mais eficiência as tendências e as áreas de estudo sobre o assunto.

**Palavras-chave:** Capital Social, Bem-Estar, Bibliometria.

## EL PAPEL DEL CAPITAL SOCIAL EN EL BIENESTAR: UNA PERSPECTIVA BIBLIOMÉTRICA DE LA LITERATURA

### RESUMEN

**Objetivo del estudio:** El objetivo del estudio es examinar las tendencias de la bibliografía que relaciona el estudio del capital social con el bienestar.

**Marco teórico:** El establecimiento de relaciones dentro del capital social se caracteriza por el beneficio mutuo, así como la confianza y la reciprocidad entre los actores de una determinada comunidad, por lo que el estudio del capital social relacionado con el bienestar ha cobrado relevancia como tema emergente en los últimos años.

**Diseño/metodología/enfoque:** La metodología utilizada es a través de herramientas bibliométricas sobre datos extraídos de la plataforma Web of Sciences, alcanzando un total de 1.248 publicaciones indexadas, que proporcionan una visión general y esquemática de las tendencias de investigación sobre el tema.

**Conclusiones:** Los resultados de la producción científica anual muestran una tendencia creciente en el desarrollo de publicaciones relacionadas con los términos de búsqueda planteados en la investigación. Por lo tanto, el capital social representa un elemento importante para el bienestar de la sociedad, tanto individual como colectivo, vinculado a elementos como la confianza, por lo que están fuertemente relacionados con la felicidad, la satisfacción con la vida y, en consecuencia, el bienestar de las comunidades donde el capital social está presente.

**Implicaciones sociales, prácticas y de investigación:** El estudio considera la relevancia del tema en los últimos cinco años, y se puede observar claramente que se necesita más investigación sobre el tema, por lo que este puede ser un buen comienzo a esta brecha de conocimiento para aumentar el interés y las publicaciones relacionadas con el tema.

**Originalidad/valor:** El valor del estudio es la contribución que hace a la literatura sobre el papel del capital social en el bienestar. Por lo tanto, la investigación puede ser beneficiosa para la comunidad científica interesada en el estudio del tema, ya que permitirá identificar de manera más eficiente las tendencias y áreas de estudio sobre el tema.

**Palabras clave:** Capital Social, Bienestar, Bibliometría.

### INTRODUCTION

Social capital refers to the relationships and connections governed by norms of reciprocity and trust between individuals (Sachit & Himyari, 2022). Creating positive externalities for the members of said relationships, achieved through trust, as well as shared values and their consequent effects on expectations and behavior (Kumasey & Hossain, 2020; Bhunia & Shome, 2023).

The origins of the study of social capital are based on different paradigms of science, in which both sociologists, political scientists and economists have studied social capital in search of providing answers within the fields in which they operate. The definitions are born to a greater degree from the works carried out by Bourdieu (1985), Coleman (1988) & Putnam (1995). In which the theory of social capital aims to provide a better understanding of social relations within its different areas of competence, both personally and within organizations or communities.

In this sense, social capital has been pointed out as one of the elements that most influences the well-being of people. Derived from the resources to which they have progress due to being integrated into a social network or community, where social capital can provide trusted social networks, support, and a sense of belonging that positively influence people's well-being (Appau, et al. 2020).

Therefore, social capital represents an important element for well-being within a wide range of social phenomena related to it. So, it is not surprising, the interest in seeking to understand, determine and explain the role of networks and social relations within different disciplines (Ferguson, 2006).

Regarding the studies that analyze well-being and its relationship with social capital, it has been pointed out that the development of their study has been analyzed from different areas of competence. In which interest in the study of how social capital is still manifested and well-being are linked within the different contexts where this phenomenon occurs (Mohnen et al. 2011; Clark & Lisowski, 2018).

Within the search for studies related to the development of scientometrics on the subject of social capital, bibliometric studies related to social capital in the field of sustainability were found (Garrigos-Simon et al. 2018), management and organization (Alan & Koker, 2021), innovation (Gu et al. 2022), in the field of communication (Lee & Sohn, 2016), as well as from the point of view of different theories such as resources and capabilities (Lopez et al. 2019).

However, despite the conceptual development and research interest in social capital over the years, an extensive review of the existing literature on social capital and its link to well-being remains pending. In which, for through a bibliometric study, it is possible to know the scientific production and the development that the subject has had over the years.

Therefore, the following research questions arise: What has been the interest within the scientific community for the study of the subject? What has been the scientific production related to them? Which journals publish the most on the subject? Which are the most relevant

publications? Which institutions lead the study of the subject? What has been the contribution by country regarding the study of the subject? And finally, what are the terms most used by researchers and how are they interrelated? The answer to these questions will allow us to know the development of the state of the art related to social capital and well-being, from the different fields and perspectives on which the study of the subject has been addressed.

Therefore, the objective of the research is to analyze the literature trends that link the study of social capital with well-being through a bibliometric study on data extracted from the *Web of Sciences* platform, which allows to know the development of the study of the topic of interest over the years, and the trend that the topic follows within the scientific community.

The originality of the study is the contribution it makes to the literature on the role of social capital in well-being. Therefore, the research can be of benefit to the scientific community with an interest in the study of the subject since it will allow them to identify the trends and areas of study more efficiently on the subject.

## **MATERIAL AND METHODS**

In this section, the bases are established regarding the materials and methods used to achieve the stated objective of the investigation. In the first instance, the database used for the development of the study is defined, as well as the respective search terms, inclusion, and exclusion criteria of the documents. Subsequently, the tool used for mapping the scientific activity of the field of study is presented.

The selected unit of analysis was the *Web of Science* database, since it has been pointed out that this platform is one of the most popular and widely recognized by the international academic community, especially because they have a reference indicator, considered as influential within the frame of reference such as the *Journal Citation Report*, considered a high impact factor within the field of scientific research (Goyanes & Demeter, 2020), so the export of the metadata of said platform allows to carry out the bibliometric analysis of a certain field of study (Kipper, et al. 2019).

The literature review is one of the most relevant approaches within the area of scientific research, which allows the mapping of theoretical issues, as well as the identification of knowledge gaps within the literature (Snyder, 2019). In this sense, the essence of the research is based on the search for primary literature sources, specifically, focused on articles related to social capital and well-being, indexed in high-impact databases.

Regarding the search terms to achieve the research objectives, the following terms were used: "*Social Capital*" AND "*Well-being*", considering all areas of knowledge within the analyzed database. obtaining a total of 1243 publications that comprise a period of time between the year 2000 and 2022, whose Metadata were exported in *.txt* format for further processing by means of the statistical software "*R*", and with the support of the *bibliometrix* package, which is one of the tools used within bibliometrics to achieve desired objectives regarding the generation of knowledge of certain bibliometric indicators and obtain them more efficiently (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017).

Regarding the indicators, some of the most popular within this type of analysis were used, such as the number of annual publications, resources, institutions, as well as the most relevant terms used related to the subject of study. In addition to the previous indicators, use is made of network mapping through the *VOSviewer* software that has been widely recommended within the field of bibliometric research, it uses bibliometric maps to show the structure and networks of authors, journals, universities or countries (Van Eck & Waltman, 2010).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The main information about the publications covers a period between the period of years that covers 2000-2022, with a total of 1248 documents, which are divided into 1170 articles, 59 review articles, 35 *early access*, 4 book chapters, as well as editorial documents, which, together, host a total of 3,030 keywords, a total of 3,619 authors, where 227 appear as sole author and 3,392 as co-authors in the documents.

The languages in which it has been published on the subject, there is the English language with 1210 publications, followed by Spanish with 17, Russian with 12, 4 in French, 3 in German, complemented by Hungarian, Lithuanian, Malay and Slovak. Regarding the categories of the research areas in which the publications related to the subject are grouped, there are the field of health, sociology, interdisciplinary social sciences, economic area, multidisciplinary psychology, environmental sciences, social work, which They are the areas of knowledge where the publications on the subject are most grouped.

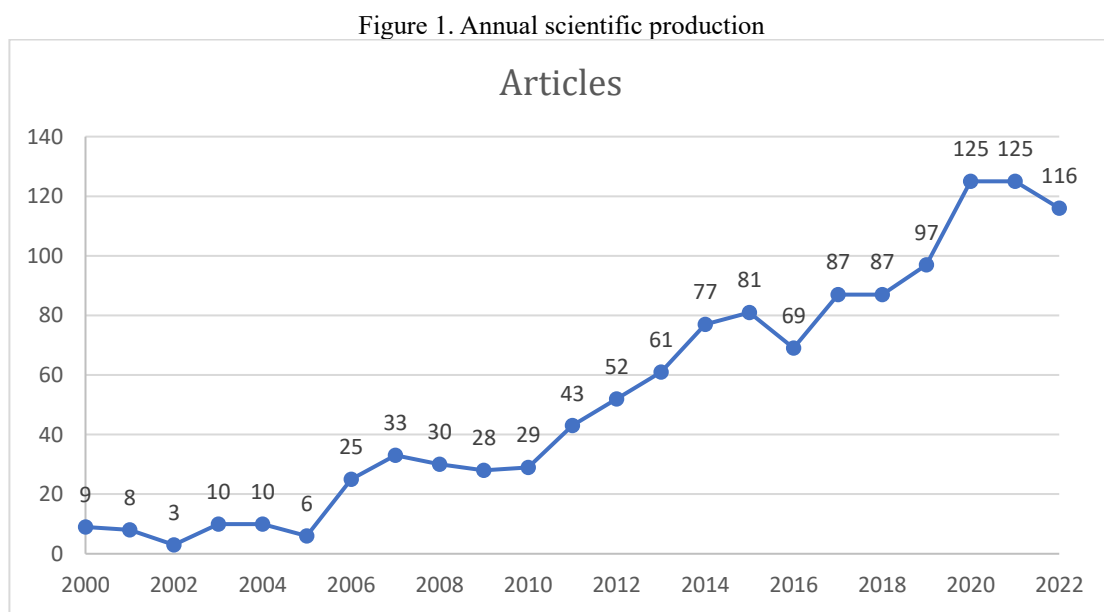
And, as for the publishers that publish on the subject of study, to a greater degree is *Springer Nature*, followed by *Elsevier*, *Taylor & Francis*, *Wiley*, *SAGE*, *Emerald Group Publishing*, *Oxford Univ. Press*, *MDPI*, *Frontiers media* and the *Cambridge Univ. Press*.

Subsequently, the analysis of the bibliometric indicators continues with the purpose of achieving the objectives set out in the research, beginning with a brief review of the scientific

production per year related to the subject of study, the journals with the most publications, as well as the most relevant, the universities, the countries with the most publications as well as their collaboration network and finally the analysis of the most used key terms within the field of scientific research.

### Annual Production

Regarding the scientific publications within the *Web of Sciences* database, Figure 1 shows the scientific production on the subject of study, covering a period of time from 2000 to 2022. A constant increase is shown from the publication of this type of work from the year 2006, showing a trend towards an increase in the number of studies, taking a greater rise when going from 69 in 2016 to 125 publications in the year 2021, marking a trend of constant growth until said period.



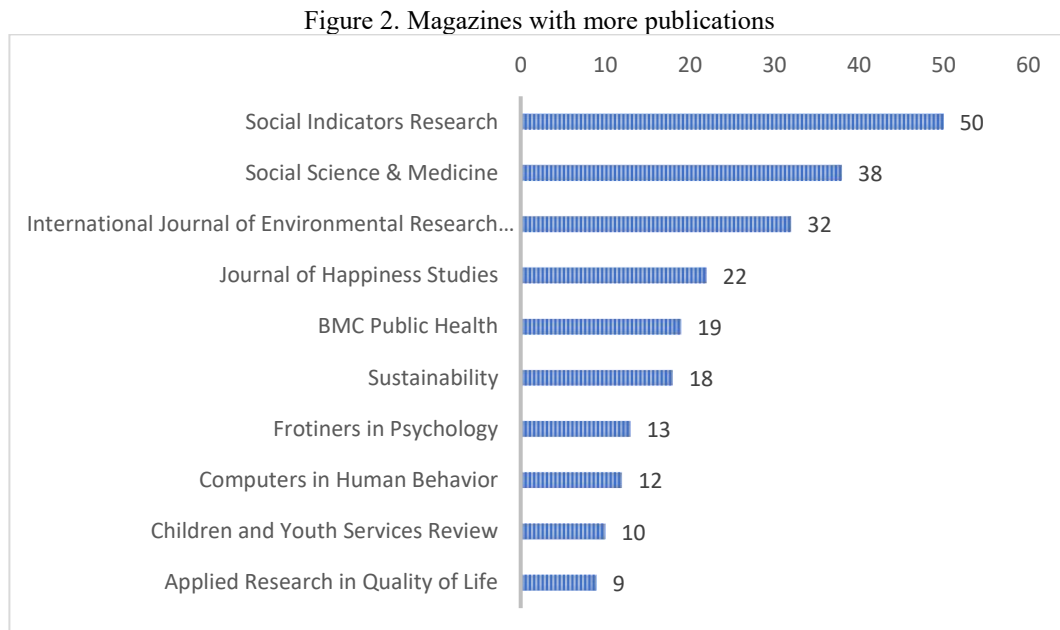
Source: Own elaboration (2023).

### Journals with More Publications

Regarding the indicator of the journals with the most publications regarding the analysis of the theme of social capital with well-being, the four journals that concentrate the largest number of publications are observed, such as the journal *Social Indicators Research* with 50, *Social Science & Medicine* with 38, the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* with 32 and the *Journal of Happiness Studies* with 22 respectively.

These results show the interest within the scientific community in carrying out publications that relate social capital to well-being, therefore, they represent an interesting base

of coverage around the investigations that have been approached from this perspective within the scientific databases.



Source: Own elaboration (2023).

Table 1. Most relevant publications

Nº	Article	Magazine	Author	Year
1	The social context of well-being	<i>Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London</i>	Helliwell J. F., Y. Putman R. D.	(2004)
2	Does social capital enhance health and well-being? Evidence from rural China	<i>Social Science &amp; Medicine</i>	Yip W. <i>et al.</i>	(2007)
3	How's life? Combining individual and national variables to explain subjective well-being	<i>Economic Modelling</i>	Helliwell J. F.	(2003)
4	The benefits of Facebook "Friends:" Social Capital and College Students' Use of Online Social Network Sites	<i>Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication</i>	Ellison N., Steinfield Ch., Lampe C.	(2007)
5	Well-being, social capital and public policy: What's new?	<i>The Economic Journal</i>	Helliwell J. F.	(2006)
6	Social ties and mental health	<i>Journal of Urban Health</i>	Kawachi I., Berkman L. F.	(2001)
7	Social capital: An individual or collective resource for health	<i>Social Science &amp; Medicine</i>	Portinga W.	(2006)
8	Social capital, self-esteem, and use of online social network sites: A longitudinal analysis	<i>Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology</i>	Steinfeld Ch., Ellison N., Lampe C.	(2008)
9	Unemployment, social capital, and subjective Well-being	<i>Journal of Happiness Studies</i>	Winkelmann R.	(2008)
10	The impact of Social Capital on subjective well-being: A regional perspective	<i>Journal of Happiness Studies</i>	Puntscher S., Hauser C., Walde J., Tappeiner G.	(2014)

Source: Own elaboration (2023).

According to the information in Table 1, the article called “*The social context of well-being*”, by Helliwell and Putman (2004), is one of the most relevant within the platform. Regarding the topic that it addresses, the authors analyze data from a series of surveys with the purpose of exploring the social context of the subjective evaluations that are carried out on well-being, happiness, as well as health. One of the central elements found in the study is the importance of social capital, which is measured by the strength of family, neighborhood, religious, as well as community ties, which support both physical health and subjective well-being.

They highlight the importance of social capital due to its strong link with well-being within the different areas through interdependent channels such as marriage, family, friends, neighbors, labor ties, as well as civic commitment (individual as collective), honesty and the trust. Arguing that everyone is independently and solidly related to happiness, satisfaction with life that directly influence the well-being of the community.

### Most Relevant Affiliations

Regarding the universities that produce the most on the subject of interest in the research, Table 2 shows the 10 institutions with the most publications on the subject of study. *Harvard University* leads the list with 32 publications, followed by the University of Tokyo with a total of 18, the *Chinese University of Hong Kong*, *Nihon Fukushi University* and the *University of British Columbia* with 17 as well as *Ghent University* and *Queensland University* with 16 contributions on the subject respectively on the subject.

It is interesting to analyze the countries of origin of the institutions that have made the most contributions on the subject of study; countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan, Canada, Belgium, and Australia clearly have institutions with an interest in the study of issue of social capital and well-being.

Table 2. Institutions with more publications on the subject

University	Country	Publications
University of London	United Kingdom	45
Harvard University	United States of America	32
University of Tokyo	Japan	18
Chinese University of Hong Kong	Hong Kong	17
Nihon Fukushi University	Japan	17
The University of British Columbia	Canada	17
Ghent University	Belgium	16
University of Queensland	Australia	16
Griffith University	Australia	14
MgGilUniversity	Canada	14

Source: Own elaboration (2023).



### Production by Countries

In Table 3, the academic production of the 10 countries that are referents on the study of social capital with well-being is observed. The list is led by the United States of America with 678 contributions, followed by the United Kingdom with 284, Australia with 229, China with 218, Japan with 174, Canada with 158, Spain with 110, Germany with 92, Italy with 86 and Sweden with 68. respectively.

It is interesting to inquire about the information shown and what is related to the description provided in Table 2, a discrepancy with China is shown regarding the place they have in this analysis and what is shown in Table 3. Which allows us to investigate that the research carried out on the subject is not specifically centralized in some of the universities of said region, but rather the study within their institutions is divergent.

Table 3. Production by countries

Country	Freq.
USA	678
UK	284
Australia	229
China	218
Japan	174
Canada	158
Spain	110
Germany	92
Italy	86
Sweden	68

Source: Own elaboration (2023).

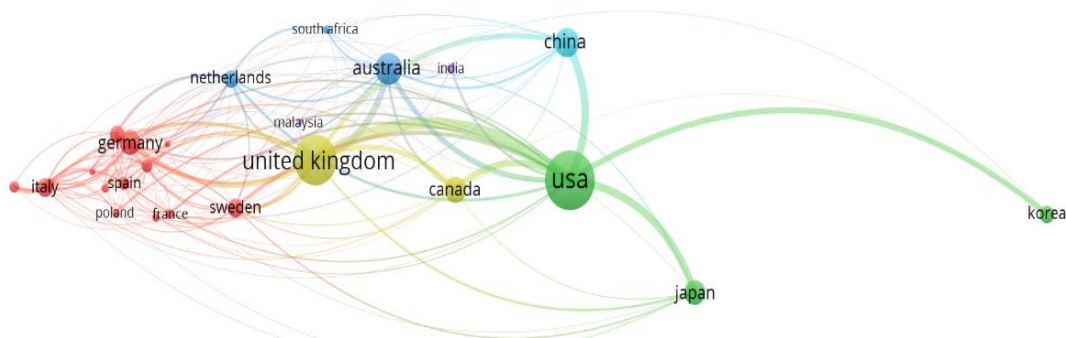
### Collaboration Network by Countries

Continuing with the analysis of the subject and its relationship with the countries that investigate the subject, Figure 2 shows the collaboration network that exists for the study of the subject. A high degree of centrality is observed in the United States of America, it can be seen that their strongest collaboration networks are related to the United Kingdom, Australia, China, Canada and Japan, which in turn are linked to the rest of the regions embodied in the network.

These relationships provide a clear picture of the interest in the majority of developed countries regarding the study of both topics, related to different problems on it, through their institutions, universities as well as organizations or research centers, which can encourage the development of studies of this type through financing that encourages the development of projects related to it and thus strategies and proposals related to the study phenomenon can be developed.

To mention some of the agencies included in the database are the Department of Health and Human Services of the United States of America, the European Commission, the UK Research and Innovation as well as the Economic and Social Research Council, which are agencies that They have financing bags for the development of studies focused on the social aspect, and in which it is observed that they had interference in the development of some studies related to the subject.

Figure 3. Collaboration network by country

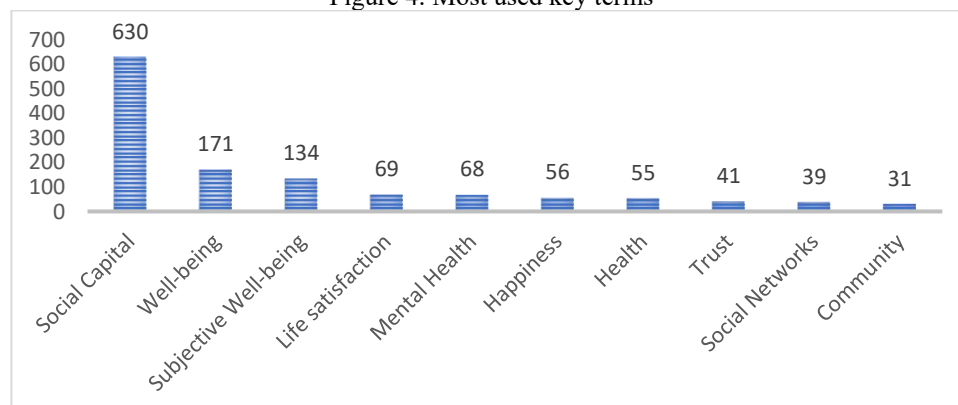


Source: Own elaboration (2023).

### Most relevant keywords

The authors usually use keywords with the purpose of being able to limit the content of the research to specific terms that facilitate the search for publications related to a specific topic. According to the information presented in Figure 4, it can be seen that social capital leads the ranking with a total of 630, followed by well-being with 171, subjective well-being with 134, life satisfaction with 69, mental health with 68, the term of happiness with 56 terms used in the research, said list is complemented by the term of health, trust, social networks, as well as the term of community.

Figure 4. Most used key terms

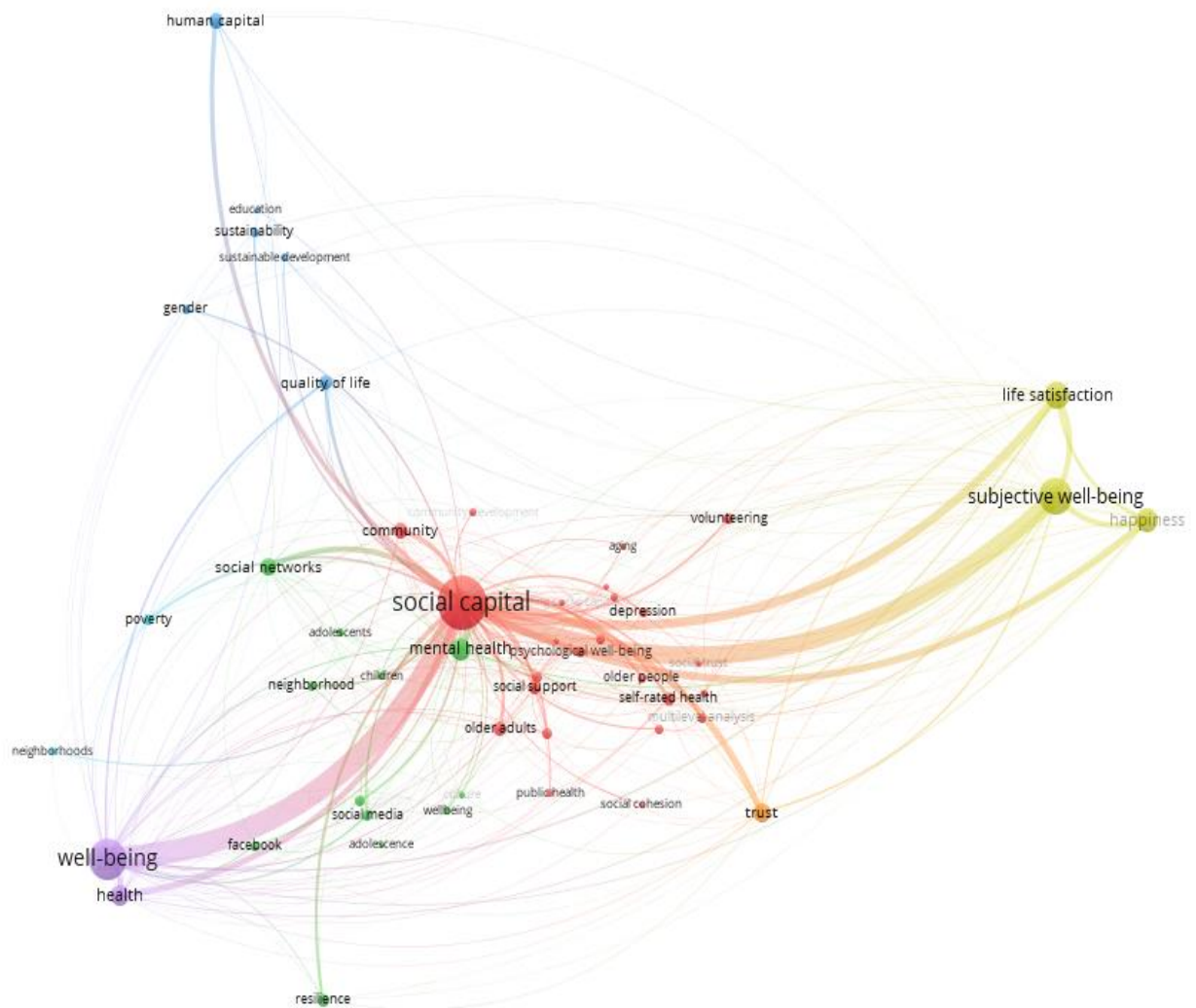


Source: Own elaboration (2023).

## Keyword Network

Once the information of the terminology that the authors put as key terms was extracted, the relationship mapping of all the key terms was carried out with the support of the VOSviewer Software (Van Eck & Waltman, 2010) to carry out the grouping and achieve the visualization of the results. The distance between the key terms, as well as the thickness of the link that unites them, reflects the strength of their link, as well as the relationship they have, so that the shorter the distance between the elements, the stronger a certain relationship is.

Figure 5. Network of key terms



Source: Own elaboration (2023).

Figure 5 shows the results of the analysis of the network of key terms most used by researchers. A series of groupings are observed that are divided by different themes. In a greater degree of centrality, there is the social capital related to inherent aspects such as the issue of

social cohesion, social participation, support, and social trust, as well as the issue of social ties and community development.

Another of the keywords that stand out related to social capital and well-being are mental health, health promotion, the term of resilience, culture, and the promotion of social networks, which revolve around sectors of the society such as children and adolescents.

Likewise, another grouping that is observed in the peripheries of the network is the term human capital, which is related to terms such as education, gender issues, highlighting aspects such as quality of life, sustainability and sustainable development which are observed as emerging topics of study,

Another of the clusters of interesting key terms is the term subjective well-being, which has a significant degree of closeness to terms such as happiness and life satisfaction, which in turn are related to terms such as trust.

## CONCLUSION

The development of the research provided an overview regarding the study of social capital and its relationship with well-being in a period ranging from 1980 to 2020. A series of scientometric analyzes on academic production was carried out within from one of the most important scientific databases such as the *Web of Sciences*.

The annual scientific production shows a growing trend in the development of publications related to the search terms raised in the research. Meanwhile, the indicator of the journals with the largest number of publications, also fosters a series of interesting aspects, especially due to the different perspectives on which the subject is addressed, which encourages journals of a different thematic nature to address these types of issues, among which were highlighted, include social studies, health aspects, as well as issues of happiness and quality of life.

One of the important indicators that emphasizes the most relevant publications within the platform derived from the number of citations and references to it, addresses aspects related to the importance of social capital, as well as the link with family, neighborhood, and religious ties. and community and the benefit they represent for the subjective well-being of society. Therefore, social capital represents an important element for the well-being of society, both individually and collectively, linked to elements such as trust, which is why they are strongly related to happiness, satisfaction with life and, consequently, with the well-being of the communities where social capital is present.

One of the interesting considerations that were analyzed were the countries where most of the research work is carried out, this production is given based on countries that have institutions and organizations that finance this type of study, so this can be a cause of interest in research on the phenomenon by universities and researchers.

Finally, the link between the terminology used by the researchers shows the importance and centrality of the issue of social capital and social welfare for development of the communities, through elements such as social cohesion, social participation, support, and social trust, as well as the theme of social ties, highlighting aspects such as quality of life, sustainability and sustainable development, which are observed as emerging themes of study.

These results show the interest within the scientific community in carrying out publications that relate social capital to well-being, therefore, they represent an interesting base of coverage around the investigations that have been approached from this perspective within the scientific databases.

The present study has a series of limitations. One of them is the platform used to obtain information in which only journals indexed in the *Journal Citations Reports of Web of Sciences* were considered. Despite having a high degree of editorial rigor, publications from different scientific platforms that house studies related to the topic of interest in this research work are not included. Future lines of research could address and/or consider different platforms such as *Scopus*, *Jstor*, *EbscoHost*, to mention a few, the integration of indicators other than those considered here.

It is important to consider that the relevance of the topic in the last five years, it can be clearly observed that more research on the subject is needed, so this can be a good start to this knowledge gap to increase interest and publications related to the subject.

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