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Human Trafficking in the Global South: A Bibliometric Analysis of Publications Using Scopus Database 2013-2024

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Abstract. Human trafficking is a wide-ranging crime with numerous victims and various patterns. The population living mainly in low and middle-income countries of the Global South is more vulnerable to being trafficked. Selected countries from the Middle East, Central Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, Africa, and Latin America are samples used to examine human trafficking of scholarly works between 2013 and 2023. This article investigates research trends on human trafficking in the Global South from Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America between 2012 and 2024. A bibliometric method was adopted. Articles published in the Scopus-indexed journals were retrieved. The research period was designated from 2013 to 2023. The articles that were retrieved closely related to the topic were three hundred thirty-five. The overall number of authors is seven hundred and twenty-one people. The average number of authors per document is 2.2. International co-authors are 29%. Then, there are typically 101 single authors, and each writer publishes roughly three articles. Migration is an issue that articles discuss the most (n=335;81 works), followed by sex trafficking (n=335;75 publications), slavery (n=335;70 articles), forced labor (n=335;34 articles), smuggling (n=335;34 publications), child trafficking (n=335;17), human experiment (n=335;6) and terrorism (n=335;1 works). Africa has more articles than other regions in the Global South. The top three active institutions are the University of Georgia (USA) (12 articles), the University of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa (10 publications), and the University of Nigeria (9 publications). The Journal of Human Trafficking is a journal with the highest citation. The issue mainly cited in the Marine Policy journal is forced labor. Migration, sex trafficking, and slavery are the dominant issues several journals address in dealing with human trafficking in the Global South. The literature on the terrorism of human trafficking in the Global South was notably lacking. The human experiment also has little attention.

Keywords. Human trafficking, Global South, Bibliometrics, Migration

1. Introduction

The worldwide crime of various human trafficking patterns has severely affected children, youth, and women the most. It exploits children in a variety of forms, such as the commercial sexual exploitation of children. [1], [2], [3], child labor [4], [5], [6], child marriage [7], child soldiers [8], [9], [10], and child removal organs [11].

Youth who are underprivileged have experienced being trafficked for several reasons. Youth migrants entering the US without their guardians are at risk for maltreatment and human trafficking. [12]. Nevertheless, Child traffickers in China are guardians or parents who resell

their children for financial gain [13]. In the US, runaway and homeless youth who have insufficient support from community services become potential victims of trafficking in person [14], [15]. As a result, youth with trafficking experience, primarily commercial sexual exploitation (CSE), suffer complex mental health [16]. Therefore, services needed by survivors of CSE are vocational assistance and career planning, which lead to reintegration into society [17].

Despite having encountered various types of trafficking in persons, sex and labor trafficking are two patterns in which women are more frequently targeted. In the body of literature, the global sex industry connects salient variables comprising gender, migration, and tourism [18]. On the other hand, Nguyen and Le [19] argue that trafficked males for sex tourism in Vietnam are immense. In addition, children are the ones that are most vulnerable to exploitation by Jamaican sex tourism [20]. Similarly, an unprecedented spread of global diseases like COVID-19 leads to an increase in child sex tourism [21].

Another human trafficking pattern associated with women is modern slavery, servitude, or labor trafficking. In dealing with domestic workers in the Middle East, Singapore, and Thailand, the brokers and the state are actors who create unfree labor in their home countries, and employers produce the labor in destination one [22]. Factors that maintain the global supply chain of modern slavery are economic, political-legal, social, and environmental [23]. Maciotti, Aroney, Bennachie, Fehrenbacher, Giametta, Hoefinger, Mai, and Musto [24] insist that the brokers of labor trafficking are not necessarily males but females who play roles in hosting, collecting debt, and organizing work.

As a global concern in the prevention of human trafficking, the Palermo Protocol is a specific regime that nearly all states refer to. Then, some European member countries signing the Protocol against trafficking in persons have amended their criminal codes accordingly, as Russia did [25]. The advantage of the existing Protocol is that it provides the opportunity for multiple actors, such as inter-governmental agencies, governmental agencies, international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), and domestic non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to combat human trafficking [26]. Moreover, in Article 9 of the Protocol, the Member State should set up policies, programs, and other all-encompassing measures [27].

In the Global South, with several low- and middle-income countries, the complexity of human trafficking occurrence is dense. Gender and economic inequality are significant aspects of how victims are trapped in human trafficking. Due to poverty, children whom paramilitary groups in Columbia recruit have forcefully worked as soldiers in the wartime social order [10]. Similar to this, gender inequality leads Afghan women to become forced marriage victims in Pakistan [28]. Despite the dominance of those inequalities, issues related to human trafficking in the Global South vary, and scholarly works mapping themes by bibliometric approach are few.

Sweileh [29] argues that bibliometric analysis is a research approach used to expose research activities, provide an understanding of domestic and global literary contributions, and promote knowledge and science. In addition, Alsharif, Salleh, and Baharun [30] point out that bibliometric analysis is a sort of research methodology that uses the outputs of academic publications—whether from the WoS or Scopus databases—to analyze worldwide research trends in a given topic. This paper aims to investigate the Scopus-indexed publications from 2013 to 2023 using bibliometric analysis addressing human trafficking in selected countries of the Global South from the Middle East, Central Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

2. Method

2.1. Source of Information

The database referred to in this article is mainly from Scopus. It is a bibliographic collection developed by Elsevier in 2004. Prior to establishing Scopus, the citation analysis relied on the Web of Science (WoS). WoS includes the Science Citation Index (SCI), previously based in 1963, the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI), and the Arts and Humanities Index (A&HI) [31]. Scopus and WoS are still the primary sources of citation information [32]. Furthermore, one of these databases' main advantages for comparing and studying many scientific topics is their multidisciplinary coverage. The primary distinction of Scopus from WoS is that a single subscription provides access to all Scopus content with no potential for modification. As a result, even though Scopus also contains information from numerous specialized databases, including Embase, Compendex, Fluidex, Geobase, Biobase, and Medline, their content is equally accessible and integrated [33].

2.2. Design of study

The study period was designated between 2013 and 2024. Within more than a decade of that period, it is assumed that the literature on human trafficking in the Global South has been proportionally distributed among the Global South member states on a varied continent ranging from America and Africa to Asia. Furthermore, the preferred study period illustrates the dynamics of human trafficking events in several Global South regions.

2.3. Strategy of search

Choosing keywords or key phrases in bibliometric analysis is crucial because it directly affects the findings and results. In this article, the basis of the search strategy is the title or title/abstract search with specific restrictions. The keyword or key phrase for this article is "human trafficking." After that, this article includes journals as a primary resource. The next step is to include several member countries in the Global South and restrict the language to English (Table 1). The search on the internet was completed on May 26, 2024.

Table 1 Keywords and research techniques for locating materials related to human trafficking in the Global South

Search Method	Keywords	Inclusion
Title Search	TITLE-ABS-KEY ("human trafficking") AND PUBYEAR > 2012 AND PUBYEAR < 2025 AND	Year 2012-2025
Title Search	(LIMIT-TO (SRCTYPE, "j")) AND	Source type: journal
Title Search	(LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Kyrgyzstan") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Cambodia") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Gambia") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Mongolia") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "India")	Affiliation countries



Search Method	Keywords	Inclusion
	OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "South Africa") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Nigeria") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Indonesia") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Brazil") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Thailand") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Mexico") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "China") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Malaysia") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Viet Nam") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Argentina") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Colombia") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "United Arab Emirates") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Kazakhstan") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Ethiopia") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Bangladesh") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Turkey") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Chile") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Philippines") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Ecuador") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Ghana") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Uganda") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Kenya") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Iraq") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Zimbabwe") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Pakistan") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Saudi Arabia") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Lebanon") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Sri Lanka"	

Search Method	Keywords	Inclusion
) OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Peru") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Nepal") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Jordan") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Iran") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Uzbekistan") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Trinidad and Tobago") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Jamaica") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Egypt") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Bahrain") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Sudan") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Zambia") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Sierra Leone") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Rwanda") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Panama") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY , "Benin")) AND	
Title Search	(LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "ARTS") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "SOCI")) AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE, "ar")) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE, "English"))	Subject area, document type, and language

Source: Author's analysis, 2024

2.4. Bibliometric indicators and mapping

This study determines the bibliometric indicators to be explored, which are the top ten active countries, institutions, journals, authors, most-cited documents, and themes found in the selected countries of the Global South. A prior published bibliometric study employed an arbitrary threshold of ten to present the results [29], [34].

2.5. International collaboration

The assessment of international research collaboration was based on author affiliation. Documents whose authors are affiliated with various countries indicate collaboration in worldwide research. On the other hand, documents whose authors are affiliated with the same country show intra-country collaboration. In the Scopus database, it is possible to sort academic works according to author affiliation. As a result, the percentage of all documents published by a country that includes authors from other countries is calculated for each country. Meanwhile,

scholarly works with international authors can be classified as Multiple Country Publications (MCP).

2.6. Bibliometric visualisation maps

This article utilizes VOSviewer (Leiden University, Leiden, Netherlands), Biblioshiny (MIT, the USA), and JASP (University of Amsterdam, Netherlands). The use of VOSviewer and Biblioshiny is interchangeable to investigate co-occurrence, co-authorship, citations, keywords, and international collaboration. JASP is a statistical software that is beneficial for predicting the growth of article production trends.

3. Result

3.1. Growth and output of publications

The total number of retrieved documents was 335. This study eliminates other types of papers and concentrates on articles as a subject for evaluation. The topics that come up frequently throughout the document include social science (323;63.2%); art and humanities (67;13.1%); economics, econometrics, and finance (30;5.9%); medicine (21;4.1%); psychology (18;3.5%), business, management, and accounting (15;2.9%); environmental science (15;2.9%); engineering (8;1.6%); agricultural and biological science (4;0.8%); and earth and planetary science (4;0.8%).

Throughout the investigation, a considerable increase in the quantity of retrieved documents has occurred. The following tables illustrate the prediction of growing publications on human trafficking.

Table 2 Model Summary Articles

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	RMSE
H ₀	0.000	0.000	0.000	15.662
H ₁	0.938	0.879	0.866	5.743

Source: Author's analysis by JASP, 2024

The table above presents that Model H1 exhibits a significant positive correlation ($R = 0.938$) compared to Model H0 ($R = 0.000$). One could conclude that 87.9% of the variance in the dependent variable can be predicted from the independent variable based on the high R2 value of 0.879 for Model H1.

Table 3 Anova

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
H ₁	Regression	2156.082	1	2156.082	65.374	< .001
	Residual	296.827	9	32.981		
	Total	2452.909	10			

Note. Since it is unable to display any useful information, the intercept model is excluded.

Source: Author's analysis by JASP, 2024

There is statistical significance in the regression model, as indicated by the F-statistic of 65.374 and a p-value of less than .001. The study sheds light on how the predictor variable or variables and the result variable, as represented by the regression model, are related.

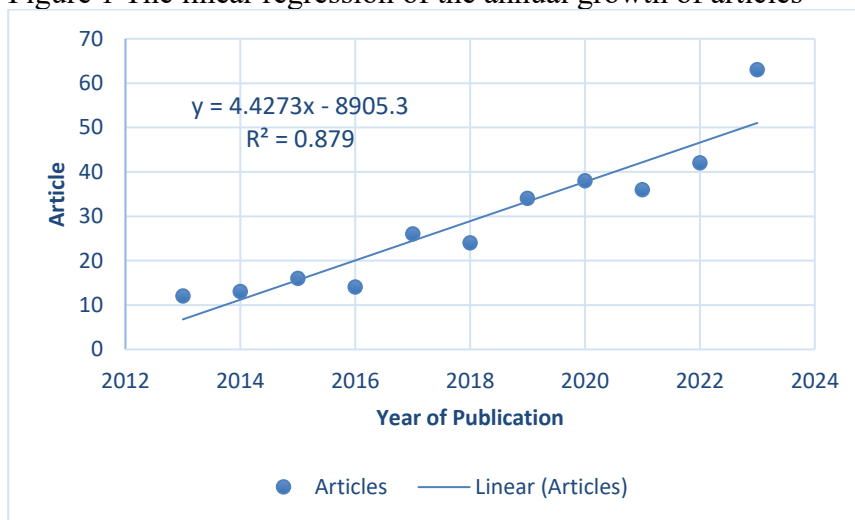
Table 4 Coefficient

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Model	Unstandardised	Standard Error	Standardized	t	p	
H ₀	(Intercept)	28.909	4.722		6.122	< .001
H ₁	(Intercept)	-8905.327	1104.984		-8.059	< .001
	Year	4.427	0.548	0.938	8.085	< .001

Source: Author's analysis by JASP, 2024

Table 4 shows that when the independent variable (year) is changed by one unit, the dependent variable (articles) changes as well, as indicated by this coefficient. A coefficient of 4.427 means that each extra year will likely result in an increase of 4.427 units in the number of articles (Figure 1).

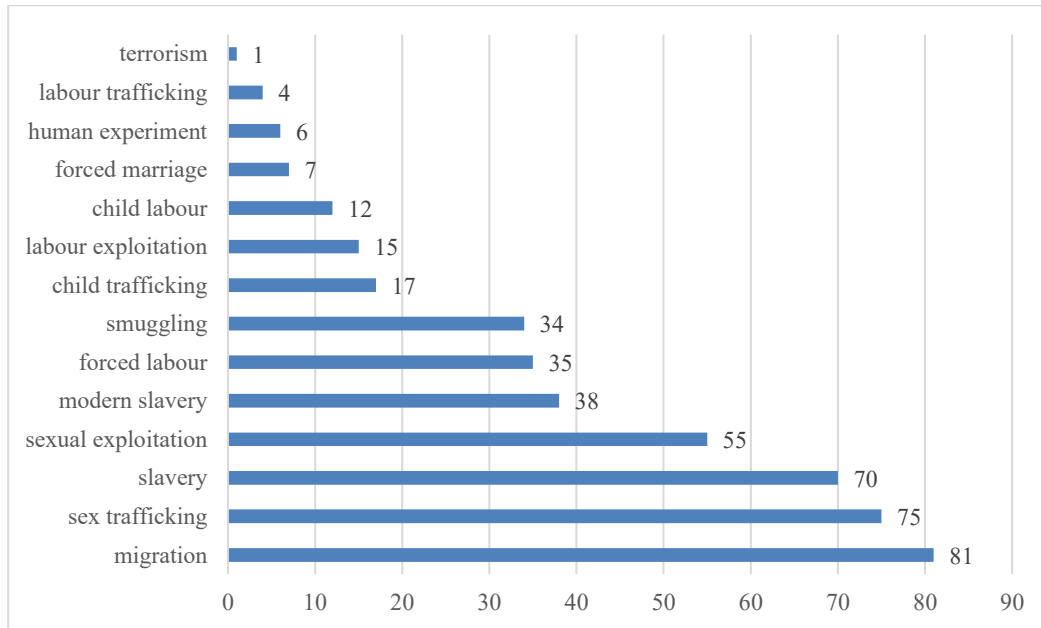
Figure 1 The linear regression of the annual growth of articles



Source: Author's analysis, 2024

3.2. Mapping trafficking-related keywords

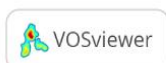
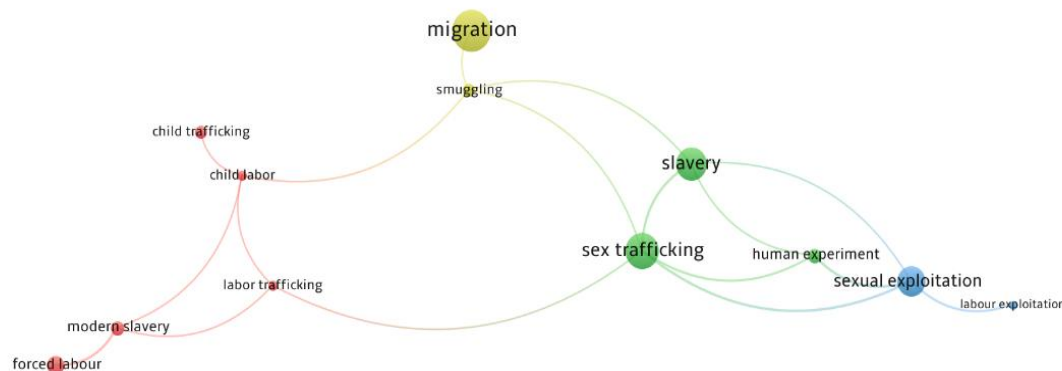
Figure 2 Most trafficking-related keywords



Source: Author’s analysis, 2024

The most frequent keywords used in the retrieved body of literature are twelve terms, as described in Figure 2. The terms comprise migration 81 (24%), sex trafficking 75 (22.3%), slavery 70 (20%), sexual exploitation 55 (16.4%), modern slavery 38 (11%), forced labor 35 (10.4%), smuggling 34 (10%), child trafficking 17 (5%), labor exploitation 15 (4.5%), child labor 12 (3.6%), human experiment 6 (1.8%), and labor trafficking 4 (1.2%). Other terms are forced marriage 7 (2%) and terrorism 1 (0.2%).

Figure 3 The number of terms associated with trafficking



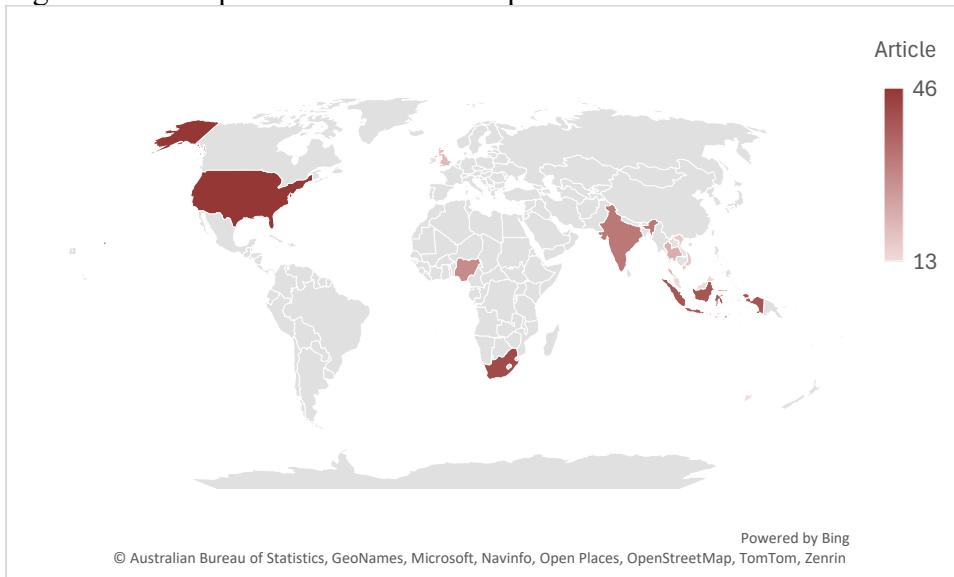
Source: Author’s analysis by VOSviewer, 2024

3.3. Top 10 countries’ production

In the Global South, regional-based article production comes from various regions: Africa and Asia (Southeast and Central Asia). Despite being a minority representative from Western

countries, the US remains the highest rank in production. On the other hand, the UK's position in production is seventh on the list, which is lower than the Global South member countries. The total number of publications from the top 10 countries is 278 (82.9%). As the first rank, the US produced 46 (13.7%), followed by South Africa 42 (12.5%), Indonesia 40 (11.9%), India 33 (9.8%), Nigeria 29 (8.6%), Thailand 22 (6.5%), the UK 20 (5.9%), Vietnam 17 (5.07%), Australia 13 (3.8%), and Malaysia 14 (4.1%).

Figure 4 The map of the ten countries' production



Source: Author's analysis, 2024

3.4. International Collaboration

In dealing with research collaboration, the United Kingdom has the highest percentage of Multiple Country Production (MCP) at 87.5%, compared to the United States (84.6%), Australia (50%), and the Global South countries. Meanwhile, the most significant proportion of MCP in Southeast Asia is Thailand at 50%, followed by Indonesia (29.1%) and Malaysia (25%). Vietnam and India share a similar percentage of MCP at 0%. Furthermore, more research collaborations conducted in Nigeria are shown in its MCP of 35.2% than that of South Africa at 15.3%. Additionally, Vietnam and India have the highest percentage of SCP, both at 100% (Table 5).

Table 5 Top 10 productive countries and joint research

Rank	Country	Number of Collaborating Countries	Frequency (%) N=335	SCP	MCP
1st	United States	26	7,76119403	4 (15.3%)	22 (84.6%)
2nd	South Africa	26	7,76119403	22 (84.6%)	4 (15.3%)
3rd	Indonesia	24	7,164179104	17 (70.8%)	7 (29.1%)
4th	India	19	5,671641791	19 (100%)	0 (0%)
5th	Nigeria	17	5,074626866	11 (64.7%)	6 (35.2%)
6th	Thailand	10	2,985074627	5 (50%)	5 (50%)
7th	United Kingdom	8	2,388059701	1 (12.5%)	7 (87.5%)
8th	Vietnam	1	0,298507463	1 (100%)	0 (0%)
9th	Australia	10	2,985074627	5 (50%)	5 (50%)
10th	Malaysia	8	2,388059701	6 (75%)	2 (25%)

SCP: single country collaboration or intra-country collaboration, MCP: multiple country collaboration. Source: Author's analysis with Biblioshiny software, 2024

3.5. Targeted journals for publishing on human trafficking

The authors of the retrieved papers are 721 people who submitted their work to 224 journals. The Journal of Human Trafficking produced the most documents by 18. The second group of journals that delivered six documents is the Cogent Social Sciences and the International Journal of Criminology and Sociology. The third one, represented by the African Mobility Review, the Anti-Trafficking Review, the Cardenos Pagu, the Journal of Legal, Ethical, and Regulatory Issues, and the Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences, created four documents each. The fourth group generated three papers, which comprised the Affilia-Feminist Inquiry in Social Work and the African Renaissance. The rest created three documents or less (Table 6).

Table 6 Top 10 journals producing articles on human trafficking in the Global South

No	Journal	Article
1	Journal of Human Trafficking	18
2	Cogent Social Sciences	6
3	International Journal of Criminology and Sociology	6
4	African Human Mobility Review	4
5	Anti-Trafficking Review	4
6	Cadernos Pagu	4
7	Journal of Legal, Ethical, and Regulatory Issues	4
8	Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences	4
9	Affilia - Feminist Inquiry in Social Work	3
10	African Renaissance	3

Sources: Author's analysis with Biblioshiny software, 2024

Most journals are from the United States and the United Kingdom. Three journals from the United States are the Journal of Human Trafficking, the Journal of Legal, Ethical, and Regulatory Issues, and the Affilia - Feminist Inquiry in Social Work. In the table above, the

United Kingdom released two journals: the Cogent Social Science and the African Renaissance. Meanwhile, five different countries produced the rest of the publications: Canada (the International Journal of Criminology and Sociology), South Africa (the African Human Mobility Review), Thailand (the Anti-Trafficking Review), Brazil (the Cadernos Pagu), and Italy (the Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences).

The list of top 10 journals mentioned above covers a wide range of topics. Categories and frequencies of social sciences included in those journals are Anthropology, Demography, Law (5), Sociology (5), Political Science (6); Cultural Studies, Transportation, Development (2); International Relations (2), Gender Studies (2); Business and International Management, Strategy, and Management; Economics (2) and Econometrics (2); and Finance, Arts and Humanities; Social Work, Public Administration, and Miscellaneous (4) (Table 7).

Table 7 Subjects of the top 10 journals with articles on human trafficking in the Global South

No	Subjects	Frequency
1	Anthropology	1
2	Demography	1
3	Law	5
4	Sociology	5
5	Political Science	6
6	International Relations	2
7	Development	2
8	Gender Studies	2
9	Business and International Management and Strategy	1
10	Management	1
11	Economics	2
12	Econometrics	2
13	Finance	1
14	Arts and Humanities	1
15	Social Work	1
16	Public Administration	1

Source: Author's analysis with Scimagojr.com

3.6. Analysing citations

The citations of retrieved documents are 1,495, with an average of 4.46 citations per document. The h-index of the papers was 32. With 60 citations, Marine Policy's 2016 publication of the retrieved paper had the most citations overall. Topics explored in the top ten cited papers are sex trafficking, evaluation of anti-human trafficking intervention, corporate supply chain of human trafficking, sexual economies, sex slavery, sex work, health and social consequences, and health of female sex workers (Table 8).

Table 8 The top 10 papers that have been cited in human trafficking

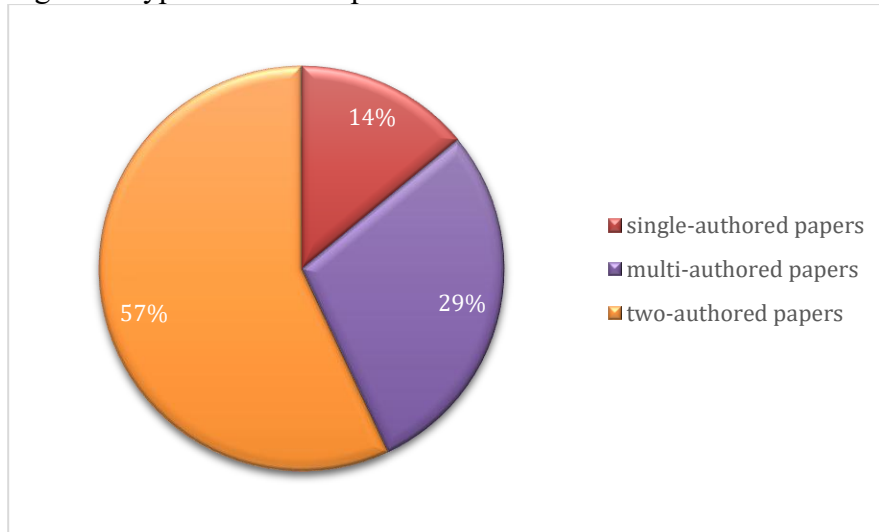
Rank	Title	Source	Number of citations
1st	Under the shadow: Forced labor among sea fishers in Thailand	Marine Policy	60
2nd	Aftercare Services for Child Victims of Sex Trafficking: A Systematic Review of Policy and Practice	Trauma, Violence, and Abuse	50
3rd	Anti-Human Trafficking Interventions: How Do We Know if They Are Working?	American Journal of Evaluation	49
4th	Business and Human Trafficking: A Social Connection and Political Responsibility Model	Business & Society	33
5th	Economias sexuais, amor e tráfico de pessoas – novas questões conceituais	SciELO Brazil	32
6th	Exploring the Context of Trafficking and Adolescent Sex Industry Involvement in Tijuana, Mexico: Consequences for HIV Risk and Prevention	Violence Against Women	28
7th	Understanding the Support Needs of Human-Trafficking Victims: A Review of Three Human-Trafficking Program Evaluations	Journal of Human Trafficking	28
8th	Sex Slavery and Sex Trafficking of Women in the United States: Historical and Contemporary Parallels, Policies, and Perspectives in Social Work	Affilia	28
9th	Circumstances, experiences, and processes surrounding women's entry into sex work in India	Culture, Health, and Sexuality	27
10th	Conflicting rights: How the prohibition of human trafficking and sexual exploitation infringes the right to health of female sex workers in Phnom Penh, Cambodia	Health and Human Rights	26

Source: Author's analysis with Biblioshiny, 2024

3.7. Authorship investigation

The retrieved documents had 721 writers in total, averaging 2.2 authors per document. The number of single authors of the document was 102. The percentage of single-authored papers is approximately 14% (n = 47 documents), 57% (n=191 papers) were two-authored publications, and the remaining 29% (n=97 papers) were multi-authored documents. The top three active authors are Laura Cardisco Tsai (USA), with eight articles; Vanthearny Lim (Cambodia) and Chanthha Nanh (Cambodia), with seven papers each; and Paul Oluwatosin (South Africa) and David O. Okech (USA), with five papers each.

Figure 5 Type of authorship in the document



Source: Author's analysis, 2024

Table 9 Top 10 authors working on the topic of human trafficking in the Global South

Rank	Author	Frequency (%) N=335	Affiliation
1st	Cardisco Tsai, L.	8 (2.3)	John F. Kennedy School of Government, USA
2nd	Lim, V.	7 (2.1)	Chab Dai, Phnom Penh, Cambodia
3rd	Nhanh, C.	7 (2.1)	Chab Dai, Phnom Penh, Cambodia
4th	Bello, P.O.	5 (1.5)	Tshwane University of Technology, Pretoria, South Africa
5th	Okech, D.	5 (1.5)	University of Georgia, Athens, USA
6th	Davy, D.	4 (1.2)	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Bangkok, Thailand
7th	Tsai, L.C.	4 (1.2)	John F. Kennedy School of Government, USA
8th	Buribayev, Y.	3 (1)	Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University, Almaty, Kazakhstan
9th	Dank, M.	3 (1)	New York University, USA
10th	Joarder, M.A.M	3 (1)	Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, Sylhet, Bangladesh

Source: Author's analysis with Biblioshiny, 2024

4. Discussion

4.1. The regional-based growth of publications on human trafficking

In articles discussing human trafficking, the Global South region has exhibited a variety of developments. Concerning Southeast Asia, the retrieved documents covered six countries: Cambodia (n=335; 8 documents), Indonesia (n=335; 28 works), Thailand (n=335; 15 papers), Malaysia (n=335; 11 articles), Vietnam (n=335; 18 documents), and the Philippines (n=335; 5 papers). The top three documents of human trafficking in Southeast Asia are from Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand, and Malaysia.

Despite more countries in number, the document discussing human trafficking in the Middle East region is less extensive than in Southeast Asia. These include the United Arab Emirates (n=335; 2 papers), Türkiye (n=335; 10 articles), Iraq (n=335; 5 documents), Saudi

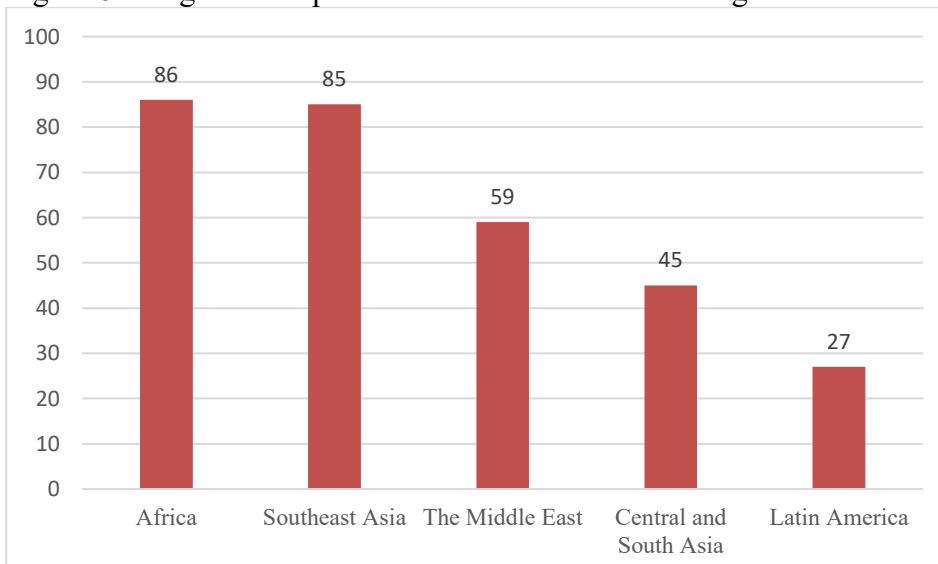
Arabia (n=335;11 papers), Lebanon (n=335; 8 articles), Jordan (n=335;3 papers), Iran (n=335; 4 papers), Egypt (n=335; 4 documents), Bahrain (n=335; 2 works), including Pakistan (n=335; 7 documents) and Sudan (n=335; 3 works). The top three for this region are Saudi Arabia, Türkiye, and Lebanon.

In the African region, countries where the retrieved documents investigated human trafficking are ten, which is more significant than in Southeast Asia and the Middle East. These consist of South Africa (n=335; 30 papers), Nigeria (n=335; 25 documents), Ethiopia (n=335; 11 articles), Ghana (n=335; 8 papers), Uganda (n=335; 4 papers), Kenya (n=335; 2 articles), Zimbabwe (n=335; 2 papers), Sierra Leone (n=335; 2 articles), Rwanda (n=335; 1 paper), and Benin (n=335; 1 paper), excluding Sudan. South Africa, Nigeria, and Ethiopia are the top three countries in this region, and the document is higher than that of the Middle East.

Then, there are eight countries in the Latin America region, as shown in the document. These comprise Brazil (n=335; 9 works), Mexico (n=335; 9 papers), Argentina (n=335; 3 articles), Chile (n=335; 2 papers), Ecuador (n=335; 1 document), Peru (n=335; 1 document), Jamaica (n=335; 1 paper), and Panama (n=335; 1 article). Of the nations in the region, Brazil and Mexico each have the most documents. The rest is central and southern Asia. The last region comprises India (n=335; 21 papers), China (n=335; 10 works), Bangladesh (n=335; 11 papers), Sri Lanka (n=335; 1 document), and Nepal (n=335; 2 papers). Three nations in the last region where the topic of human trafficking was most frequently mentioned are Bangladesh, China, and India.

As evidenced by Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, and India, the publication has expanded quickly throughout Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and both Central and South Asia. On the other hand, in Latin America, where Mexico and Brazil each have nine documents, it needs to be developed.

Figure 6 The growth of publications on human trafficking in the Global South



Source: Author's analysis, 2024

4.2. Themes of human trafficking from migrant-sending and receiving countries

In Southeast Asia, wealthier countries, such as Singapore and Malaysia, are the recipients of foreign migrant workers coming from neighboring countries. Meanwhile, some are migrant-

exporting countries such as Indonesia and the Philippines. Furthermore, a few middle-income nations in the region are either transit or destination countries. South and Central Asia, as well as Latin America, share circumstances like those in Southeast Asia. On the other hand, more affluent countries in the Middle East are the recipients of foreign migrant workers. As such, each region has a unique and distinctive concept that sets it apart from the others.

Indonesia, as one of the sending-migrant countries in Southeast Asia, has discussed human trafficking related to legal protection [35], [36], [37], [38], [39], [40], [41], [42]. It also includes policy and security [43], [44], [45], [46], [47], [48], international partnership [49], victims or vulnerable groups [50], [51], [52], [53], [54], [55], and migrant [56], [57].

Then, the issues of human trafficking linked to Malaysia as a receiving foreign migrant workers are prostitution [54], state policy [58], [59], illegal migrants [60], human rights of trafficked persons [61], and refugees [62], [63], [64]. The body of literature also covers law enforcement [65] and terrorism [66].

Despite not having as high of an economic income as other recipient countries in ASEAN, Thailand is positioned in some literature as a destination location for migrant workers. Thailand is a popular destination for migrant workers from Myanmar, who are primarily undocumented [67]. More specific cases found in Thailand, according to the literature, are child migrant workers [68], child prostitution [69], fishing workers [70], [71], [72], bride trafficking [73], online child trafficking [74], and sex workers [75].

The issues surrounding human trafficking in Southeast Asia and Africa are identical. The trafficking-related themes in Africa, as discussed in the literature, are corruption [76], combating human trafficking [77], [78], [79], female victims of trafficking [80], [81], street children trafficking [82], survivors of trafficking in person [83], legal response [84], [85], [86], [87], [88], child trafficking [89], men trafficking [90], illicit financial flow [91], sex trafficking [92], counter-narrative of human trafficking [93], social services to victims of trafficking [94], [95], sex work [96], migration policy [97], international collaboration [98], challenges of human trafficking in Africa [99], [100], a catalyst group of human trafficking or brokerage [101], [102], transgender trafficking [103], modern slavery [104], factors of human trafficking [105], patriarchal structure [106], community empowerment for women victims of forced migration [107], child migration [108], and remittance [109].

Nigeria, where human trafficking is pervasive, has distinct challenges for which the body of research concentrates in contrast to other African nations most affected by the activity, including South Africa. Numerous discussions in academic works on that particular include the ethical challenge in researching human trafficking in Nigeria [110], the legal and policy response of the Nigerian government on human trafficking [111], the effects of remittances and migration on anti-social behavior among youth in Nigeria [109], failure strategy of combating human trafficking in Nigeria [112], and the role of the family in encouraging sex trafficking in Nigeria [113].

More issues of human trafficking in Nigeria, as mentioned in the literature, are social work intervention [114], baby factories or baby harvesting in Nigeria [115], [116], [117], demographic and cultural factors of human trafficking in Nigeria [118], [119], and street children [82]. Then other cases found in Nigeria are financial crimes leading to human trafficking [87], corporate social responsibility to combat human trafficking in Nigeria [120], Nigerian diaspora for human trafficking [121], and criminogenic patterns of Boko Haram [122].

Since several Middle Eastern countries export oil, the region is better recognized for being a recipient of migrants. Topics investigated by the literature in that region are legal response [123], human smuggling [124], domestic worker [125], [126], labor exploitation

[127], asylum seekers [128], sex trafficking [129], child migration [108], civil conflicts hindering anti-trafficking [130], the role of medical staff in preventing human trafficking [131], and modern slavery [22].

As an advanced economic country with a large population, cases of human trafficking in China are rampant. The body of literature identifies the cases into several topics: bride-trafficking case [73], [132], child trafficking [133], illegal adoption [134], social support against trafficking women with disabilities [135], multilateral cooperation against human trafficking through the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA) [136], protecting fisherman [46], and the boycott of foreign tourists to China due to human trafficking [137].

With a vast population, India has several problems with human trafficking. The issues of human trafficking, as discussed in the scholarly works, are child sex trafficking [138], sex exploitation [139], combating human trafficking by NGO [140], [141], inserting the subject of human trafficking into education in India [142], state policy [143], environmental crisis leading to women trafficking [144], criminalizing sex work [145], modus operandi [146], human trafficking survivors [147], reducing child trafficking [148], rehabilitation of victims of commercial sexual exploitation [149], sex labor [150] or sex trafficking [151], [152], pre-migration training for preventing human trafficking [153], child marriage [154], anti-human trafficking interventions [155], [156], [157], bride trafficking [158], and Brahmanical patriarchy leading to trafficking in persons [159].

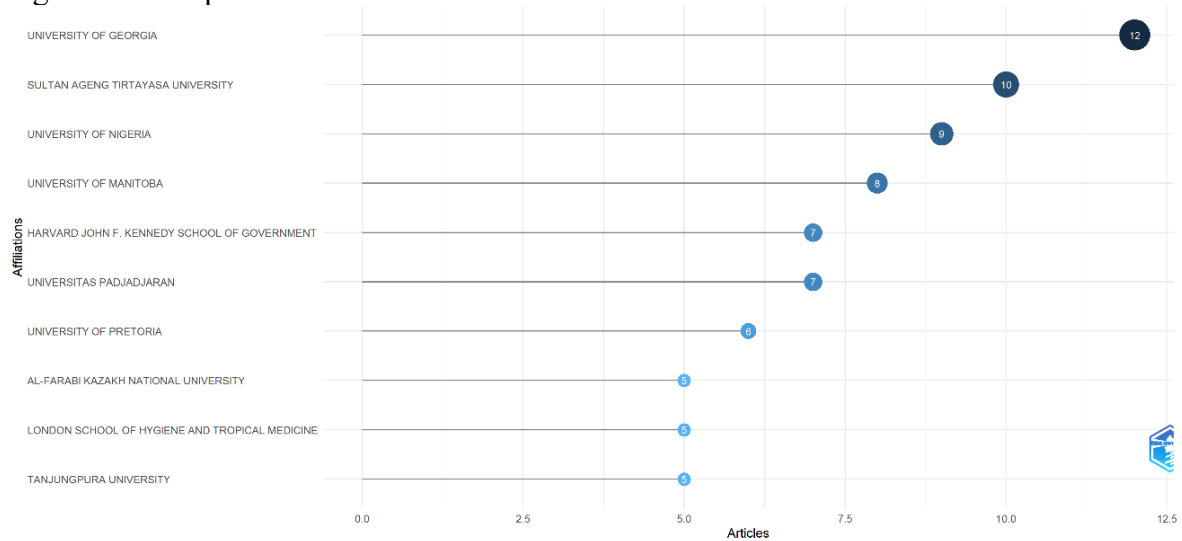
Other topics related to human trafficking in India are organ removal [160], the engagement of armed forces to combat cross-border crimes, including human trafficking [161], child labor [162], and child sex trafficking [138], and combining demographic and spatial factors to contextualize the evolving levels and patterns of human trafficking [163]. The literature also depicts that agrarian crisis is the main factor why some rural agrarian castes become victims of traffickers' exploitation [164]. Discussion on the eradication of human trafficking in the literature has explored collaborative action between social workers and police officers in India [165]. In addition, another strategy to fight human trafficking, according to the literature, is transit monitoring by identifying and intercepting potential victims of human trafficking [166]. Then, the study of human trafficking in India has investigated a narrative in comics [167].

4.3. Affiliation and citation analysis for the Global South

Despite examining the Global South, the country that was cited the most in the retrieved document is the US, with 127 citations. The Global South members included in the top ten most-cited countries are Thailand (123 citations), South Africa (111 citations), Nigeria (110 citations), Indonesia (54 citations), Brazil (40 citations), and Mexico (41 citations). Similarly, the US university has the highest affiliation with twelve articles. Additionally, other universities in the West that have some publications linked to them are the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (five articles), Harvard John F Kennedy School of Government of the US (seven articles), and the University of Manitoba (eight papers).

Then, the highest affiliation of the retrieved articles in the Global South is the University of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa of Indonesia (ten papers). The second position of the Global South group is the University of Nigeria (nine articles), followed by the University of Padjadjaran of Indonesia (seven publications), the University of Pretoria, South Africa (six articles), Al-Farabi Kazakh National University of Kazakhstan (five papers), and the University of Tanjungpura of Indonesia (five papers).

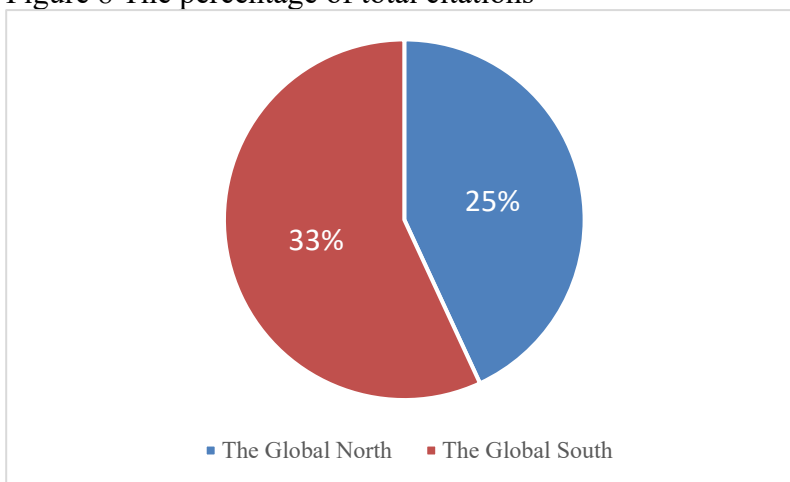
Figure 7 The top ten relevant affiliations



Source: Author's analysis by Biblioshiny, 2024

Overall, the total number of articles affiliated with institutions in the Global North is 32 articles. More articles that affiliate with the Global South universities are published in 42 papers. As for percentages, universities in the Global North accept 10% of documents, while those in the Global South accept 13%. Of the total citations, 487 (n=1,495; 33%) come from the Global South, and 368 (n=1,495; 25%) from the Global North (Figure 8).

Figure 8 The percentage of total citations



Source: Author's analysis, 2024

5. Limitation of Study

This article relies on the Scopus database but has drawbacks in examining human trafficking in the Global South. The Global South's countries will be ranked according to how frequently studies are kept on file in the Scopus database. In the meanwhile, other nations without research published in journals with a Scopus index will not have cases of human trafficking. The retrieved documents on human trafficking in the Global South were more specifically from English-language publications. As a result, articles published in languages other than English were not included. With the bibliometric approach, this paper excludes ambiguous sources or grey literature.

6. Conclusion

The current study focuses on trafficking activities found in journals that Scopus indexes in the Global South. In research on trafficking in the Global South, migration is the most frequently used keyword. This is followed by forced labor, sex trafficking, contemporary slavery, sexual exploitation, and child trafficking. Meanwhile, terrorism is a crucial term that has not received as much attention in the literature. In the Global South, some countries get the attention of researchers characterized by the number of publications, namely, Indonesia (Southeast Asia), Saudi Arabia (the Middle East), South Africa (Africa), India (South Asia), and Brazil and Mexico (Latin America). Gender inequality, sociological caste, culture, and economics in Africa and India contribute to the prevalence of human trafficking in the Global South.

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