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Bibliometric Analysis of Global Media Representations of Marginalized Groups

Caiwei Li¹, Mohd. Nor Shahizan Ali^{2*}, Ammar Redza Bin Ahmad Rizal³ and Jingwen Xu⁴

^{1,2,3,4}Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, National University of Malaysia (UKM), Selangor, Malaysia

*Corresponding author: Shahizan@ukm.edu.my

Abstract: Over the years, the media have consistently influenced society and culture through the process of mediatization. Therefore, many public stereotypes regarding marginalized or vulnerable groups often originate from media discourse strategies. This study investigates the terms "marginalized groups," "media," and "representation" to perform a bibliometric analysis of 660 published articles from 2014 to 2023, concentrating on how the media portrays marginalized communities. The analysis covers essential metrics, including yearly publication rates, source journals, authorship, countries involved, and citation counts. Techniques such as keyword co-occurrence analysis, clustering analysis, and temporal evolution analysis are applied to summarize and assess the current landscape and future directions of this domain. The research utilizes the software tools POP (Publish or Perish) and VOSviewer to evaluate the present situation, identify research hotspots, and track the development within the field. Over the last ten years, the authors note a generally increasing trend in this study area, with notable contributions stemming from Western nations. The analysis is directed towards three main avenues: 1. Investigating the media's portrayal of marginalized groups; 2. Examining cultural diversity of minority groups and their media representation; and 3. Investigating media reporting on the health of minority groups. The research can be categorized into three distinct stages, including the Preparatory Development Period (2014-2016), the Growth Challenge Period (2017-2019), and the Hotspot Research Period (2020-2023), which emphasize media studies related to ethnic minorities, impoverished women, minority women, refugees, vulnerable children, and sexual minorities.

Keywords: bibliometric analysis, marginalized groups, media, representation, communication

Introduction

As purveyors of information and creators of cultural significance, the media hold a vital position in educating the public, functioning as a communicative link between political and social entities, shaping perceptions of important matters, and portraying themes and people in particular contexts. This impact can affect individuals' political opinions and their level of engagement (Bleich, Bloemraad, et al., 2015). Media exert a powerful impact on society and culture through a process of mediatization, whereby media evolve into an independent institution with their own logic (Hjarvard, 2008). Research, both theoretical and empirical, suggests that the information disseminated by mass media gives rise to stereotypes, which are then reinforced through interactions with that information (Mastro & Tukachinsky, 2012). Concurrently, the media hold the potential for empowerment and advocacy. In many parts of the world, media personnel often perpetuate everyday prejudices against marginalized community members, whether through derogatory, offensive, and abusive language or through other strategies that serve to marginalize and silence discourse. News media frequently portray minority group members through a negative lens and typically represent them as a homogeneous group rather than as individuals (Jamil & Retis, 2023).

When Robert. E. Park (Park, 1928) first introduced the concept of the marginal man; he believed that a marginal man is one fated to live in two societies and two cultures, which are not only different but also

contradictory. However, throughout history, understanding "marginality" has been a dynamic, dialectical process evolving with the times. Over the past century, numerous studies have addressed the definition of marginalized groups (Barron, 1999; Carilli, 2021); this paper aims to encompass the research on marginalized groups from a literature perspective, including minority groups, vulnerable people, underrepresented groups, and disadvantaged groups within the scope of marginalized groups. In conclusion, these groups are defined by their marginalized status across various social, economic, political, and cultural contexts. Discrimination is encountered, which leads to restricted opportunities and challenges in accessing resources stemming from various elements, including race, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and health issues.

In recent years, extensive literature has explored marginalized groups from anthropological and sociological dimensions, focusing on cultural practices, identity formation, and social interactions. These studies reveal the unique positions of marginalized groups within social structures and the multiple challenges they encounter (Marino & Faas, 2020; Asif et al., 2021). Despite a growing awareness of issues faced by minorities, individuals from immigrant backgrounds, ethnocultural communities, diverse racial identities, or those who identify as lesbian, bisexual, gay, or transgender, as well as those from low-income households, continue to experience unequal access to media compared to the majority within society (Jamil & Retis, 2023). In the past decade, with the further proliferation of digitalization and the internet, the speed and scope of media dissemination have reached unprecedented levels. Consequently, academic papers on media representations of marginalized groups across various fields have significantly increased. However, existing research often has a limited scope, focusing on specific countries, types of media, or groups, and lacks a comprehensive view of the issue. Additionally, there is a need for systematic analysis of the trends, patterns, and impacts of these representations to inform future research and policy development.

A bibliometric analysis involves the examination and categorization of bibliographic sources by creating concise representations of existing literature (Donthu et al., 2020). This approach serves as a valuable technique for assessing the development of research subjects, encompassing themes and published works within diverse areas of social, cognitive, and theoretical perspectives (Filho et al., 2022). This paper aims to perform a bibliometric analysis of the literature concerning the media portrayals of marginalized groups globally, intending to serve as a reference for future research and development in this area. In light of this, the subsequent research questions have been formulated:

RQ1: What is the existing state of publications regarding media portrayals of marginalized groups?

RQ2: What citation trends can be identified in the publications focusing on media representations of marginalized groups?

RQ3: Which themes related to media representations of marginalized groups are favored by researchers?

RQ4: What are the evolutionary trends of research on media representations of marginalized groups?

Methodology

This research initially defined the topic of investigation and subsequently performed data collection via the Scopus database platform on July 26, 2024. To minimize possible bias due to daily updates in the database, a reproducibility test was conducted on the same day. Scopus, recognized as one of the most extensive abstract and citation databases worldwide, encompasses nearly 36,377 books from around 11,678 publishers and 34,346 peer-reviewed journals. The selection of Scopus was due to its reputation as "the largest single abstract and indexing database ever created" (Burnham, 2006) and its status as the most extensive searchable citation and abstract database (Ahmi et al., 2019).

According to the research protocol illustrated in Figure 1, the authors collected documents for this study from the Scopus database as of July 26, 2024. Given the specific focus of this research on the themes of "marginalized groups," "media," and "representation," synonyms for each term were included in the search. Subsequently, a set of processes was performed to cleanse the data and remove any duplicate documents.

Afterward, data analysis and visualization took place using tools such as Microsoft Excel, Harzing's Publish or Perish, and VOSviewer software. This analytical process covered essential elements of how marginalized groups are represented in media from diverse viewpoints, such as yearly publication counts, journal sources, contributing authors, countries of origin, and citation metrics, aiming to enhance understanding. Utilizing methods like keyword co-occurrence analysis, clustering analysis, and temporal evolution analysis, the research investigated the present landscape, thematic research areas, and developmental trends concerning media portrayals of marginalized groups across various dimensions.

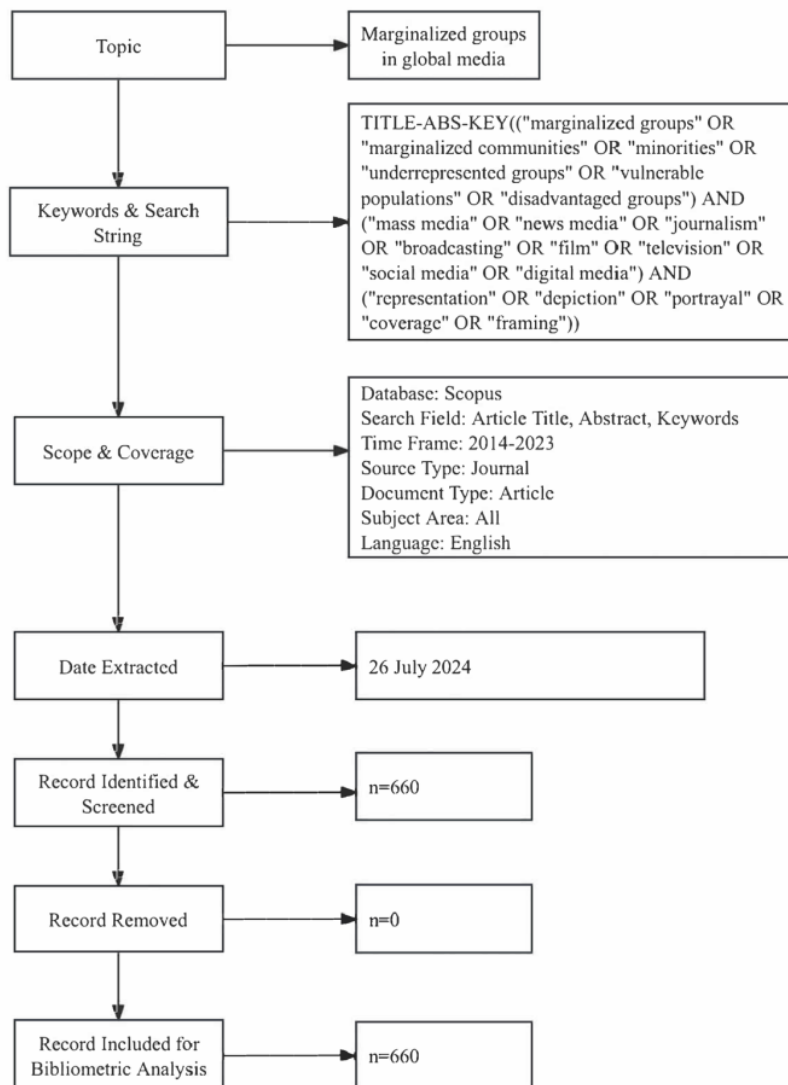


Figure 1. Flowchart for study selection

The Findings

1. Annual Publication Volume Analysis

The yearly count of publications within a specific knowledge area serves as a crucial measure of scientific research advancement. It somewhat demonstrates the growth of knowledge within that domain and the

progress made by scholars in their studies (Wang et al., 2023). Illustrated in Figure 3 are the figures concerning publications on media portrayals of marginalized communities since 2014. Starting with 34 articles in 2014, the number surged to 117 by 2023, pointing to a clear upward trajectory. This trend indicates an escalation in scholarly outputs related to the representation of marginalized groups in media, drawing increased interest from researchers and emphasizing the rising significance of this subject.

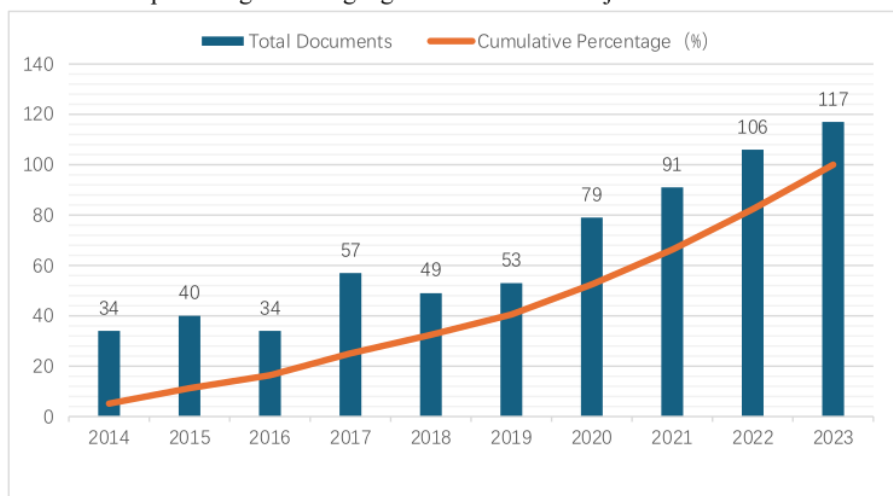


Figure 2. Bar graph illustrating yearly publication volume

2. Analysis of Source Journals

Figure 3 displays the ten journals that have published the most articles. Leading the list is Journalism Practice, which published 14 articles related to media representations of marginalized groups. The Journal of Homosexuality published 12 articles, while Journalism, Media Culture & Society, and PLoS One each published nine articles. These journals cover various disciplines, including journalism, communication studies, sociology, and psychology, and span research areas such as media culture, communication theory, gender studies, and journalism production. This indicates that the research topic of media representations of marginalized groups has successfully garnered attention from multiple disciplines. Such academic research is increasingly breaking disciplinary boundaries, employing multi-faceted and multi-layered analyses to explore the complex issues faced by marginalized groups.

Table 1. Leading 10 journals ranked by article publication count

No	Source Title	Frequency
1	Journalism Practice	14
2	Journal Of Homosexuality	12
3	Journalism	9
3	Media Culture and Society	9
3	Plos One	9
6	Howard Journal Of Communications	8
6	Journal Of Lesbian Studies	8
8	Feminist Media Studies	7
8	Journalism Studies	7
9	BMC Public Health	6
9	Newspaper Research Journal	6

3. Author Analysis

Analyzing the statistics of literature authors can reveal the level of focus that various scholars place on related research subjects and assist in pinpointing the prominent core research teams currently engaged in the field. The 660 papers in this study were authored by 1,892 individuals. As shown in Table 7, 255 of these papers were written by a single author, while the remaining papers were co-authored. Specifically, 139 papers were authored by two individuals, 96 papers by three authors, and 42 papers by four authors, with the highest number of authors on a single paper being 20. Moreover, Table 8 presents the leading 10 authors ranked by the number of publications. The analysis reveals that Jacob L. is the most prolific author in this research area, having authored a total of 5 papers.

Table 2. Count of authors contributing to the research

Authors per Paper	Total Documents	Number of Contributing Authors
1	255	255
2	139	278
3	96	288
4	42	168
5	46	230
6	26	156
7	23	161
8	9	72
9	7	63
10	8	80
11	1	11
14	2	28
15	3	45
18	1	18
19	1	19
20	1	20
Total	660	1892

Table 3. Most relevant authors

Authors	Articles	Percentage (%)
Jacobs, L.	5	0.76
Cover, R.	4	0.61
Dhaenens, F.	4	0.61
Katz, N.	4	0.61
Li, J.	4	0.61
Park, S.Y.	4	0.61
Xu, Q.	4	0.61
Breazu, P.	3	0.45
Dhoest, A.	3	0.45
Godinez, H.	3	0.45

4. Country Scientific Production

The findings displayed in Figure 5 showcase the outcomes of a worldwide examination of scientific contributions categorized by nation. This analysis highlights the leading 10 countries regarding their scientific

productivity related to the subject of media portrayals of marginalized populations (see Table 4). The study found that 66 countries contributed to the Scopus database on this topic, with the United States (USA) publishing approximately 255 articles, making it the leading country in terms of publication volume. Figure 5 also indicates that the research contributions primarily come from Western countries, while research from Africa, South America, and some Central Asian countries remains sparse.

Additionally, VOSviewer software was used to visualize the network of international collaboration. As illustrated in Figure 4, the quantity of connections among nodes indicates collaborative relationships; an increase in the number of links associated with a node signifies a larger number of countries involved in collaboration. The size of the nodes serves as an indicator of the volume of published papers, where larger nodes denote a greater number of publications. However, the overall collaboration network shows that cooperation between countries is still limited and not very closely-knit. Within the network of 26 countries in the dataset, there are 8 clusters, each represented by a different color, indicating active collaboration within these groups.

Table 4. Leading 10 nations ranked by article publication count

No	Country	Frequency
1	United States	255
2	United Kingdom	84
3	Australia	42
4	Canada	35
5	China	24
6	Netherlands	21
7	Spain	19
8	Belgium	18
8	Germany	18
8	India	18

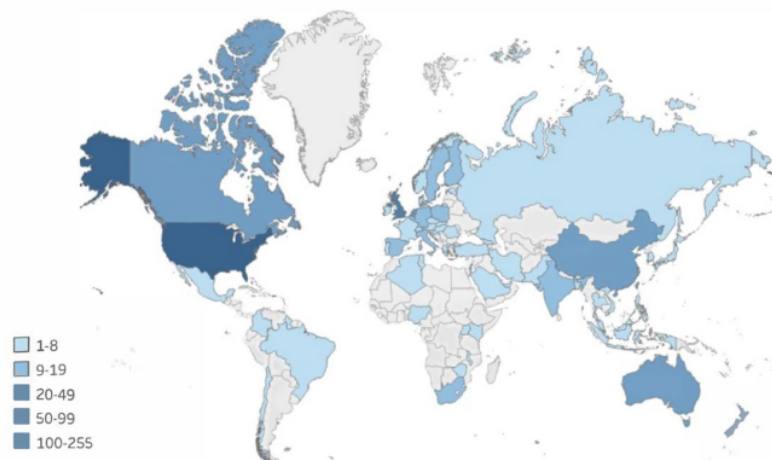


Figure 3. Country scientific production

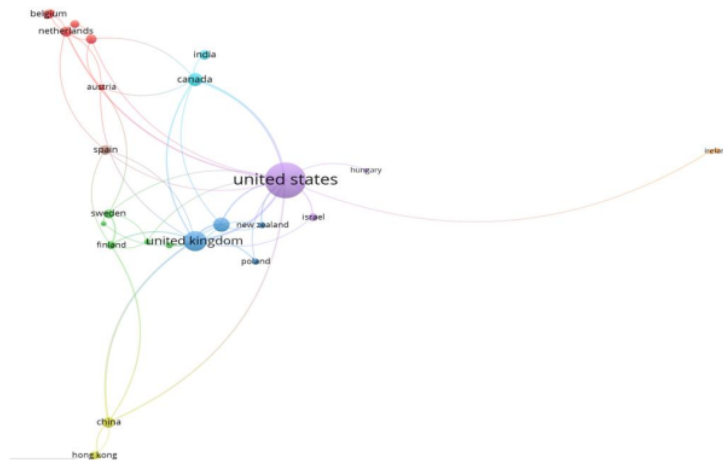


Figure 4. Co-authorship network visualization by countries

5. Citations Patter on media representation of marginalized communities

The purpose of this section is to pinpoint the key articles that significantly impact the understanding of media portrayals of marginalized populations, as well as to depict the citation trends of these works through data obtained from the Scopus database. In addressing RQ2, we provided an overview of citation metrics, examined the citation network associated with the articles, and utilized Publish or Perish alongside VOSviewer software for our data analysis.

Citations are formal references to any sources used when writing an article. This information is crucial for bibliometric research as it helps calculate the number of citations for specific documents. The citation statistics for the literature gathered up to July 26, 2024, can be found in Table 6. Out of the 660 articles collected, there were 6,387 citations in total, resulting in an average of 638.7 citations per year and 9.68 citations for each paper. Table 7 presents the five articles with the highest citation counts in the area of media representations of marginalized groups. It is evident that these articles have high citation rates, with all exceeding 140 citations. The topics covered include public health and crises, social attitudes and behaviors, and the role of media. For example, some highly cited articles focus on the media representations of various groups, including homosexuality, students of migrants and minorities, Muslims, Latinos, Asian Americans, and Native Americans (Ayoub & Garretson, 2017; Bleich, Bloemraad, et al., 2015; Tukachinsky et al., 2015).

Table 6. Citation metrics

Metrics	Data
Timespan	2014-2023
Citation years	10
Papers	660
Citations	6387
Cites/year	638.7
Cites/paper	9.68
Cites/author	3031.34
Papers/author	387.43
Authors/paper	2.79

h-index	36
g-index	53

Table 7. Most cited 5 articles

Rank	Article Title	Cites	Author	Source Journal	Year
1	The War on Drugs That Wasn't: Wasted Whiteness, "Dirty Doctors," and Race in Media Coverage of Prescription Opioid Misuse	261	J. Netherland, H.B. Hansen	Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry	2016
2	Documenting Portrayals of Race/Ethnicity on Primetime Television over a 20-Year Span and Their Association with National-Level Racial/Ethnic Attitudes	166	R. Tukachinsky, D. Mastro, M. Yarchi	Journal of Social Issues	2015
3	Social media as a recruitment platform for a nationwide online survey of COVID-19 knowledge, beliefs, and practices in the United States: Methodology and feasibility analysis	147	S.H. Ali, J. Foreman, A. Capasso, A.M. Jones, Y. Tozan, R.J. Diclemente	BMC Medical Research Methodology	2020
4	Migrants, Minorities and the Media: Information, Representations and Participation in the Public Sphere	118	E. Bleich, I. Bloemraad, E. de Graauw	Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies	2015
5	Crisis information distribution on Twitter: a content analysis of tweets during Hurricane Sandy	116	B. Wang, J. Zhuang	Natural Hazards	2017

Simultaneously, Table 8 presents a comprehensive summary of the yearly publication and citation statistics for articles focusing on marginalized groups during the previous ten years. It is noteworthy that the years 2020 and 2021 experienced the most citations, tallying 994 and 753 citations, respectively. In addition, the 2015 and 2016 editions had the highest average citation rate, indicating that the overall quality and impact of publications in these years were particularly significant. In addition, the H and G indices peaked in 2021 and 2015 at 17 and 29, respectively. This indicates that quite a few high-quality papers have been published over the years, some of which have a very high number of citations

Table 8. Metrics for annual publication and citation

Year	Total papers	%	Number of Cited Papers	Total Citations	Citations per Paper	Citations per Cited paper	h-index	g-index
2023	117	17.73%	71	237	2.03	3.34	8	10
2022	106	16.06%	86	502	4.74	5.84	11	16
2021	91	13.79%	84	994	10.92	11.83	17	26
2020	79	11.97%	74	753	9.53	10.18	15	24
2019	53	8.03%	49	488	9.21	9.96	14	19
2018	49	7.42%	42	652	13.31	15.52	16	24
2017	57	8.64%	54	783	13.74	14.50	15	25

2016	34	5.15%	34	730	21.47	21.47	12	26
2015	40	6.06%	38	903	22.58	23.76	14	29
2014	34	5.15%	32	345	10.14	10.78	11	17

Additionally, the Citations feature reveals either the citation count for individual documents or the aggregate citations attributed to an author, organization, source, or country (Wen & Huang, 2012). Based on the criteria of at least five documents with a minimum of five citations per author, 26 countries met these standards. Figure 5 highlights only the largest connected group of items, totaling 16, excluding any unconnected items. Notably, the United States and the United Kingdom emerge as countries with a substantial number of citations in studies focused on media portrayals of marginalized communities.

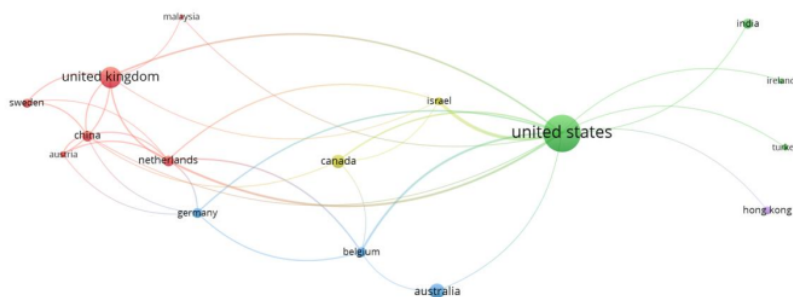


Figure 5. Citation network visualization map categorized by countries

Furthermore, it is possible to analyze the citations among the titles of the sources. Citations denote how many times source title A refers to source title B and the reverse. Based on the requirements of having at least three documents and a minimum of three citations for each source title, a total of 48 source titles satisfied these criteria. Figure 6 shows only the largest set of connected items, consisting of 26 items, with unconnected items not appearing in the figure. It can be observed that citations between source titles are not very tightly interconnected.

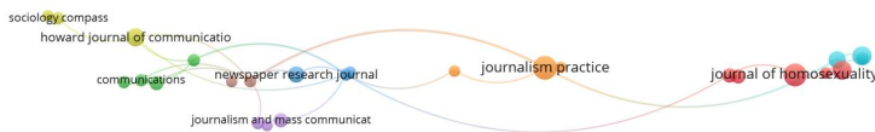


Figure 6. Citation network visualization map categorized by source

6. Themes in media representation of marginalized groups

To address RQ3 (Which themes related to media representations of marginalized groups are favored by researchers), we examined the simultaneous appearance of keywords and phrases found in the titles and abstracts of data retrieved from Scopus. The simultaneous occurrence of keywords occurs when two keywords are present in the same article, highlighting a relationship between these concepts (Kent Baker et al., 2020).

Keywords are essential components of literature research, providing a concise summary of the document's themes and research hotspots. Researchers aiming to identify trends in their field find them to be essential. Furthermore, assessing the keywords used by authors is vital for evaluating the evolution of research themes. By removing duplicates caused by spelling differences, the analysis (refer to Table 9) highlighted the top 10 frequently used author keywords from 2014 to 2023.

The subsequent analysis was carried out using VOSviewer software to map all keywords provided in each document, including author keywords and indexed keywords (see Figure 5). In this section, we considered the co-occurrence of keywords that appeared at least five times. After removing synonyms, 241 keywords were identified based on this threshold. Figure 7 illustrates the network visualization of keywords from VOSviewer, with variations in color, the size of circles, font dimensions, and the thickness of connecting lines representing the strength of the relationships among the keywords. Keywords shown in the same color are generally related and frequently listed together.

This visualization map identified five groups. For example, group 1 (red) comprises 67 items related to mass media research, with keywords such as mass media, television, gender, ethnicity, and content analysis being closely related and frequently co-occurring. The second group (green) contains 32 elements related to anthropological subjects. The third group (blue) comprises 30 elements, emphasizing themes of public health and pandemics. The fourth group (yellow) includes 29 elements focused on gender studies. The final cluster (purple) comprises 26 items, focusing on research on the health of sexual minority groups.

Table 9. Top 10 frequently used author keywords with co-occurrence metrics

Rank	Author Keywords	Frequency	Total link strength
1	Social media	61	72
2	media	42	60
3	representation	40	66
4	gender	31	54
5	race	28	50
5	Content analysis	28	40
7	television	26	36
8	Covid-19	25	41
8	journalism	25	37
10	diversity	18	44

and news, with a particular emphasis on ethnic minorities. Some articles also explored the representation of women in the media, including impoverished women, minority women, and female creators in the film industry who were in marginal positions. Growth Challenge Period (2017-2019): Building on the previous phase, research during this period continued to focus on mass media but expanded to include refugees and vulnerable children. Additionally, studies on sexual minority groups emerged and gained significant traction. Hotspot Research Period (2020-2023): In this phase, the number of papers increased rapidly. There was a notable rise in articles exploring marginalized groups on social media. Furthermore, many studies addressed COVID-19 and public health-related themes.

Conclusion

The aim of this research is to perform a bibliometric examination of studies regarding media portrayals of marginalized communities, with the objective of assessing the current landscape of scholarship in this area, including metrics such as annual publication figures, source journals, authorship, geographical representation, and citation counts. Furthermore, it investigates key research trends and the development trajectory of publications within this sector. For this bibliometric analysis, a total of 660 articles from various journals published between 2014 and 2023 were sourced from Scopus and PubMed. This paper highlights the principal themes present in the literature over the last ten years, monitors the progression of research focuses over time, recognizes new areas of interest, and pinpoints shifts in emphasis within the discipline, laying the groundwork for future inquiries.

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