

The Evolution of Early Childhood Teacher Wellbeing Research (2020-2024): A Bibliometric Analysis of Global Trends

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Abstract: This study conducts a bibliometric analysis to examine global research developments on teacher wellbeing in early childhood education (ECE) from 2020 to 2025. The growing recognition that teachers' psychological, emotional, and professional wellbeing affects children's learning outcomes underscores the need to systematically map this field. Drawing on data from Scopus, SciVal, and VOSviewer, a total of 151 documents were analyzed to evaluate research productivity, citation impact, collaboration patterns, and thematic evolution. The findings indicate a significant growth in publication output, accompanied by strong international collaboration and a Field-Weighted Citation Impact (FWCI) of 1.23, reflecting above-average global influence. Science mapping identified five major thematic clusters: (1) psychological dimensions of wellbeing, including burnout and mental health; (2) job demands-resources and institutional policy; (3) resilience and intervention studies in the post-COVID-19 context; (4) positive psychology and self-efficacy enhancement; and (5) links between teacher wellbeing and child development outcomes. Overall, the results highlight a paradigm shift from stress- and burnout-centered research toward strength-based, growth-oriented wellbeing models. Despite the dominance of high-income countries such as the United States, China, and Hong Kong, substantial research gaps persist in developing contexts. These findings underscore the need for context-sensitive, self-care-based, and digital wellbeing interventions to support sustainable ECE teacher wellbeing globally.

Keywords: Bibliometric Analysis, Early Childhood Teacher Wellbeing, Job Demands-Resources Model, Psychological Wellbeing, Teacher Burnout

A. Introduction

The well-being of early childhood education (ECE) teachers has become a central focus in educational research over the past five years. This increasing attention is driven by growing evidence that teachers' emotional, psychological, and professional health directly influences the quality of children's learning and development (Lu & Jian, 2024; Narea et al., 2022). In ECE settings, teachers face intense emotional demands as they must maintain warm relationships with children, manage classroom stress, and

balance administrative workloads all of which significantly impact their mental health and professional performance (Kunduracı et al., 2025; Peele & Wolf, 2020). Consequently, the concept of teacher wellbeing has evolved into a multidimensional construct encompassing job satisfaction, emotional regulation, professional engagement, and resilience (Corthorn et al., 2024; Meidelina et al., 2023).

The COVID-19 pandemic marked a turning point that amplified attention to the wellbeing of ECE teachers by exposing systemic vulnerabilities within the education sector. This period exacerbated emotional exhaustion and heightened teachers' workloads (Martínez-Saura et al., 2023; Sun & Saleh, 2024). During and after the pandemic, studies increasingly highlighted protective factors against burnout, such as mindfulness (Corthorn et al., 2024; Ma et al., 2022), emotional intelligence (Xie et al., 2024), and organizational support (Portelada et al., 2024). Several studies also demonstrated that teachers with higher levels of wellbeing exhibit stronger professional commitment, more effective classroom management, and warmer teacher-child relationships (Grant et al., 2019; Narea et al., 2022; Walter et al., 2023). These findings reinforce the close relationship between teacher wellbeing and the quality of early learning environments.

Theoretically, most recent studies draw upon the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, which explains that the balance between job demands (e.g., workload, emotional strain) and job resources (e.g., social support, autonomy, leadership) determines teachers' levels of burnout and engagement (Tebben, 2021; Z. Yan et al., 2022). In addition, the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory and the Positive Psychology framework have been widely applied to explain how social support, personal resource enhancement, and character strengths contribute to teachers' resilience and well-being (Lu & Jian, 2024; Meidelina et al., 2023). Empirical research consistently shows that emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, and recovery abilities play crucial roles in mitigating the negative effects of stress and improving professional satisfaction (Gu et al., 2020; Raymond & Gabriel, 2023; Xie et al., 2024).

Cross-cultural comparisons also highlight contextual variations in teacher wellbeing. In East Asian contexts, well-being is strongly influenced by emotional labor and cultural norms emphasizing social harmony (Xie et al., 2022; Z. Yan et al., 2022). In contrast, Western and Nordic studies emphasize institutional climate, policy reforms, and professional autonomy as key determinants (Deschamps et al., 2022; Muhonen et al., 2025). In developing countries such as Ghana and Turkey, limited resources, job insecurity, and professional identity pressures are major sources of teacher stress (Kunduracı et al., 2025; Peele & Wolf, 2020). These variations affirm that teacher wellbeing is not merely an individual condition but also a product of the social, cultural, and organizational systems within which teachers work.

Methodologically, research on ECE teacher wellbeing between 2020 and 2025 shows significant advancement. Earlier studies relied primarily on quantitative cross-sectional surveys to measure stress and job satisfaction (Grant et al., 2019; Tian et al., 2020). However, more recent research employs mixed methods, network analysis, and structural equation modeling (Raymond & Gabriel, 2023; Xie et al., 2024), as well as experimental intervention studies (Lee, Fung, & Chung, 2024; Lu & Jian, 2024). This shift marks an effort to achieve a more comprehensive and contextual understanding of teacher wellbeing.

Furthermore, gender plays a significant role in the dynamics of ECE teacher wellbeing. The majority of early childhood educators worldwide including in Indonesia is women. Therefore, teacher wellbeing is inherently linked to dual role balance, social expectations, and gendered disparities in institutional support. Cross-national studies (e.g., Byun & Jeon, 2023; Lee, Fung, Chan, et al., 2024) reveal that female teachers are more vulnerable to emotional labor and burnout, yet often demonstrate stronger relational warmth and empathy toward children. This perspective expands the meaning of teacher wellbeing beyond psychological resilience to encompass affective capacities rooted in the caregiving nature of early education. This study also aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 3 (Good Health and Well-being) and Goal 4 (Quality Education), as teacher wellbeing directly relates to educators' mental health and the quality of early childhood education services (United Nations, 2022). International policy reports increasingly position teacher wellbeing as a global priority. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) emphasizes the need for systemic attention to teacher wellbeing and for policy measures to reduce workload, while empirical evidence shows increased symptoms of depression and anxiety among ECE teachers, affecting productivity and attendance after the pandemic (OECD, 2021). As key actors in early childhood education, teachers play a strategic role in ensuring children's optimal cognitive and socio-emotional development. However, international data confirm that the ECE teaching profession remains among those with the highest stress and emotional burden, particularly in the post-pandemic period highlighting the urgent need to address wellbeing both individually and systemically.

Moreover, several research gaps remain. First, most studies still focus on individual factors (e.g., mindfulness, emotional intelligence) and have paid limited attention to systemic or policy-related dimensions such as leadership culture, institutional climate, or social protection (Portelada et al., 2024; Z. Yan et al., 2022). Second, intersectional issues such as gender, socioeconomic background, and regional disparities are rarely examined, despite their relevance in developing countries (Peele & Wolf, 2020). Third, there is still no unified conceptual definition of "teacher wellbeing" that integrates affective, cognitive, and relational dimensions across cultural contexts (Meidolina et al., 2023). These gaps underscore the need for scientific mapping that not only captures

academic trends but also assesses how far existing studies have addressed practical and policy challenges in promoting teacher wellbeing across contexts.

Building on these developments, this study aims to provide a comprehensive bibliometric mapping of global research on teacher wellbeing in early childhood education from 2020 to 2025. Specifically, it seeks to answer the research question: "How have the development and thematic directions of global research on early childhood teacher wellbeing evolved between 2020 and 2025?" This study is expected to contribute to a deeper understanding of the evolution of the teacher well-being discourse in the post-pandemic era and to provide a foundation for the development of more contextual and sustainable policy and intervention frameworks.

B. Methods

This study employed a bibliometric design to map the evolution, structure, and thematic focus of research on early childhood education (ECE) teacher wellbeing. Following the methodological guidelines of Donthu et al. (2021) and the conceptual framework proposed by Passas (2024), the research began with a literature search and data collection.

Search Strategy and Data Collection

The primary source of bibliographic data was the Scopus database, selected for its extensive coverage of international journals and its ability to export publication metadata systematically for bibliometric analysis (Donthu et al., 2021). The literature search was conducted in October 2025 and the analysis covered publications from 2020 to 2024, the most recent full five-year period available at the time of data extraction. Using a complete year range avoids the bias associated with partial-year data, which would have occurred had 2025 been included.

Scopus was selected as the primary database because of (a) its comprehensive coverage of peer-reviewed journals in the social sciences, psychology, and education; (b) its standardized metadata that is compatible with bibliometric tools such as VOSviewer and SciVal; and (c) its strong citation indexing capabilities, which enhance accuracy in performance analysis.

The search query applied in the Title-Abstract-Keywords fields was as follows: ("teacher wellbeing" OR "teacher well-being" OR "teacher wellness" OR "teacher mental health" OR "teacher happiness" OR "teacher burnout" OR "occupational wellbeing") AND ("early childhood" OR "kindergarten" OR "preschool" OR "nursery" OR "early years" OR "ECE" OR "childcare") AND ("teacher" OR "educator" OR "practitioner") AND (LIMIT-TO(SUBJAREA, "SOC") OR LIMIT-TO(SUBJAREA, "PSYC") OR LIMIT-TO(SUBJAREA, "MULT")) AND (LIMIT-

TO(DOCTYPE, "ar") OR LIMIT-TO(DOCTYPE, "re") OR LIMIT-TO(DOCTYPE, "cp") AND (LIMIT-TO(LANGUAGE, "English")).

The search initially yielded 153 records. Only articles, reviews, and conference papers were included because these document types represent primary research outputs and provide consistent citation behavior required for bibliometric analysis. Editorials, commentaries, book chapters, and notes were excluded because they do not follow comparable peer-review or citation patterns. All metadata (authors, affiliations, publication year, keywords, abstract, citations, and DOI) were exported in CSV format for analysis and RIS format for reference management in Mendeley.

Data Screening and Cleaning

A systematic screening procedure was applied to remove duplicates, verify metadata completeness, and normalize variations in key terms (e.g., "well-being" vs. "wellbeing"). After cleaning, 151 documents remained eligible for analysis. Data cleaning was performed manually using Microsoft Excel.

Bibliometric Techniques and Analytical Tools

Two complementary bibliometric approaches were employed: performance analysis and science mapping (Donthu et al., 2021). 1) Performance analysis was conducted using SciVal to examine productivity trends, citation impact, international collaboration patterns, and keyphrase growth; and 2) Science mapping was conducted using VOSviewer, selected for its strong capabilities in constructing and visualizing co-authorship networks, co-citation patterns, and keyword co-occurrence maps.

For the keyword co-occurrence analysis, a minimum occurrence threshold of 10 was used. This parameter was chosen to focus on the most salient and conceptually significant terms within the dataset while ensuring the stability of cluster generation. VOSviewer's full-counting method was applied to capture the relative prominence of each term across the corpus. This analytical design enabled a comprehensive mapping of the structure, evolution, and thematic directions of global research on early childhood teacher wellbeing from 2020 to 2024.

C. Results and Discussion

Performance Analysis

The performance analysis aimed to evaluate the research productivity, scientific impact, and collaboration patterns within the field of teacher wellbeing in early childhood education (ECE) during the 2020–2025 period. This bibliometric performance analysis utilized publication data retrieved from the Scopus database

covering 151 documents, which were analyzed through SciVal. The results indicate a consistent increase in publication output since 2020, demonstrating that the topic of teacher wellbeing in ECE has developed rapidly as a prominent field of global research. The Field-Weighted Citation Impact (FWCI) value of 1.23 suggests that the citation rate of publications in this area is higher than the world average across related disciplines.

In total, the number of citations (TC) reached 1,571, with an average citation per publication (AC) of 10.4, reflecting not only quantitative growth but also the increasing academic influence of research in this field. This trend highlights the strong relevance and recognition of ECE teacher wellbeing studies in the international scholarly community. A summary of these findings is presented in Figure 1, illustrating the upward trend of publication performance and the overall scientific impact during the observation period.

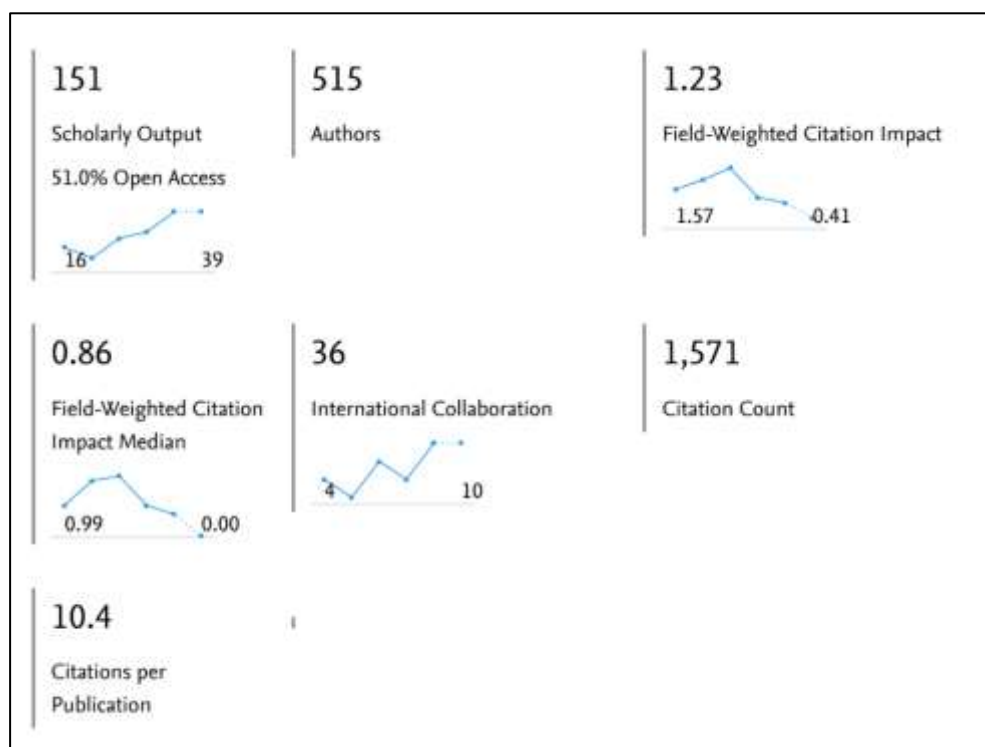


Figure 1. Summary of Metrics

This dataset involved 515 authors from various institutions and 36 international collaborations, indicating that the issue of early childhood education (ECE) teacher wellbeing has become a cross-national scholarly discourse. Approximately 50.3% of the publications are open access, broadening the reach and impact of scientific knowledge. Most of the papers were co-authored, suggesting that research on teacher

wellbeing is multidisciplinary, engaging the fields of psychology, education, and health.

The performance analysis reveals that, overall, research on teacher wellbeing in early childhood education has experienced positive growth throughout 2020–2025. A total of 151 documents with 515 contributing authors demonstrates a high level of international collaboration. The international collaboration rate of 36% reflects the increasing global partnerships in addressing teacher wellbeing, particularly in the post-pandemic context. The Field-Weighted Citation Impact (FWCI) of 1.23 indicates that publications in this area achieved 23% higher citation impact than the world average, suggesting that teacher wellbeing is an emerging and highly relevant research domain. The performance analysis also highlights the geographical distribution and collaboration patterns in ECE teacher wellbeing research. Figure 2 presents the top ten countries contributing to publications between 2020 and 2025. The United States dominates with 67 publications and an FWCI of 1.56, followed by China (31 publications; FWCI 0.96) and Hong Kong (17 publications; FWCI 1.15). Other English-speaking countries such as the United Kingdom and Australia also show strong productivity and citation impact, with FWCI values of 1.25 and 1.80, respectively. These findings confirm that studies on teacher wellbeing in early childhood education remain concentrated in countries with established educational research traditions.

Countries & territories	Scholarly Output ▼	Views Count	Field-Weighted Citation Impact	Citation Count (excl. self-citations)
United States	67	2,488	1.56	1,062
China	31	887	0.96	254
Hong Kong	17	702	1.15	154
United Kingdom	7	253	1.25	49
Australia	5	162	1.80	59
Portugal	5	173	0.66	27
Spain	5	730	0.57	15
Canada	4	101	0.75	14
Chile	4	387	1.20	28
Ghana	4	160	1.73	38

Figure 2. Top Countries with Publications

Figure 2 above reinforces the publication pattern showing that the countries with the highest contributions are the United States, China, and Hong Kong. This trend aligns with global literature that identifies these nations as pioneers in early childhood teacher wellbeing research, particularly in areas such as educational policy, positive psychology-based interventions, and the implementation of teacher wellbeing models within formal education systems. Although collaboration between developed and developing countries has started to increase, it remains uneven. This is evident from the limited research contributions originating from middle-income countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, and Ghana, which are often the sites of research but not the primary contributors to publications.

Figure 3 below illustrates the author collaboration patterns based on SciVal categories. The results indicate that publications with national collaboration dominate (46.4%), followed by international collaboration (23.8%) and institutional collaboration (23.8%). Publications with national and international collaboration show a higher Field-Weighted Citation Impact (FWCI) (1.38 and 0.94, respectively) compared to single-author publications (0.51). This finding underscores the importance of inter-institutional and cross-country collaboration networks in enhancing citation impact and research visibility on the topic of early childhood teacher wellbeing at the global level.

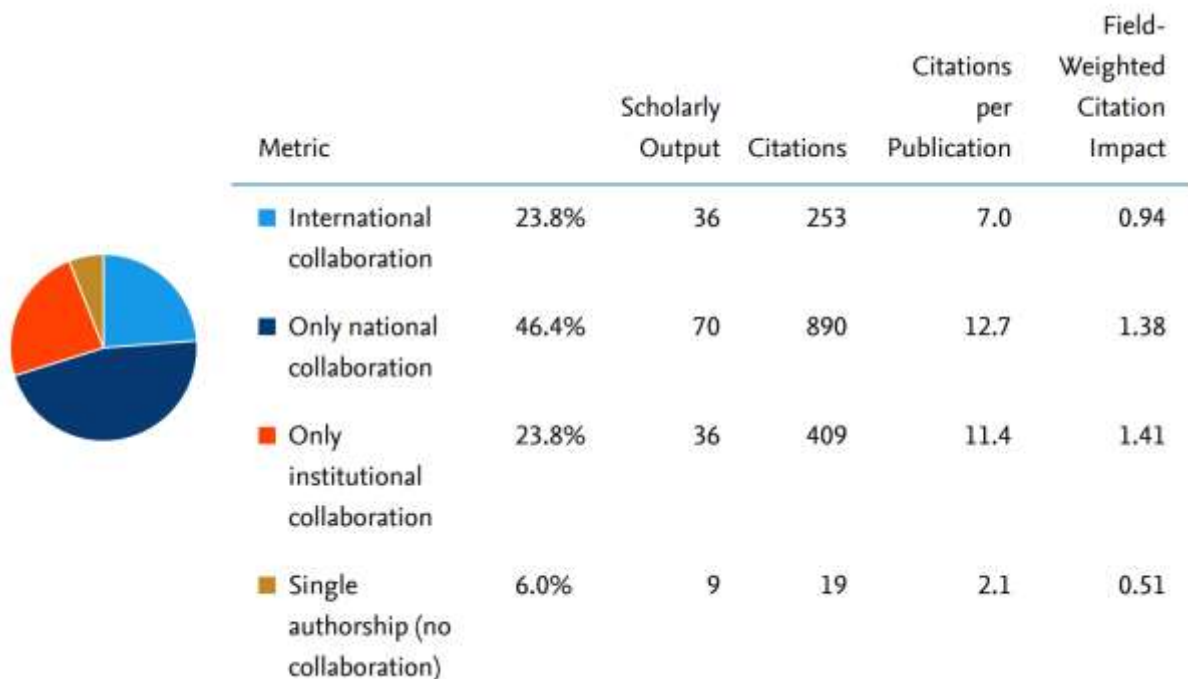


Figure 3. Global Collaboration Patterns

The keyphrase analysis results from SciVal (2020–2024) reveal clear thematic dynamics in research on early childhood teacher wellbeing. The green-colored keywords such as “Burnout,” “Kindergarten,” “Preschool Teachers,” “Mindfulness,” and “Psychological Well-Being” indicate increasing relevance and have emerged as dominant themes in recent years. These topics represent a shift in research orientation toward strength-based and preventive approaches to address burnout and enhance teachers’ psychological resources. Meanwhile, keywords such as “Mental Health,” “Perceived Stress,” and “Emotional Intelligence” appear in gray, signifying that although these remain conceptual foundations, they have not shown significant growth in recent publications. In contrast, terms like “Stressors,” “Emotion Regulation,” and “Ghana” are marked in blue, suggesting a declining trend in publication activity related to these areas. This pattern reflects a transition in global research focus – from exploring risk factors toward intervention efforts and the enhancement of teachers’ psychological capacities across early childhood education contexts.



Figure 4. Keyphrase Analysis from SciVal (2020–2024)

Overall, the performance analysis indicates that research on teacher wellbeing in the context of early childhood education has experienced significant growth, characterized by high productivity, strong global collaboration, and substantial scientific impact. These findings suggest that teacher wellbeing has evolved beyond an individual concern into a multidisciplinary field of research with cross-national influence.

professional environments. These studies primarily explore internal coping mechanisms and emotional regulation strategies that help teachers maintain psychological balance and prevent burnout.

The second cluster, visualized in red, highlights the equilibrium between job demands and organizational resources. Keywords such as job demand, policy, resource, and classroom quality illustrate how structural and institutional factors influence teachers' wellbeing. This cluster provides the empirical and theoretical grounding for the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, which is widely applied in contemporary research to explain how the balance between workload and available resources determines teachers' levels of stress, engagement, and professional satisfaction.

The third cluster, colored green, focuses on preschool teacher, resilience, intervention, positivity, pandemic, and job stress. This thematic group reflects a post-pandemic research shift toward resilience and positive psychology as key protective factors for sustaining teacher wellbeing during times of crisis. Studies within this cluster often examine intervention-based approaches, including resilience training and mindfulness-based programs, as strategies to enhance teachers' psychological endurance and adaptability in the face of unprecedented challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

The purple cluster represents the pedagogical dimension of the research, linking teacher wellbeing with children's developmental outcomes. Keywords such as child, classroom, parent, and intervention suggest a growing body of classroom-based studies investigating how teachers' emotional and mental health influence teacher-child relationships, social-emotional learning environments, and classroom climate. This perspective reinforces the idea that teacher wellbeing extends beyond personal health it shapes the quality of educational experiences for young learners.

Lastly, the pale yellow cluster marks an emerging research frontier, emphasizing self-efficacy, resilience, social support, and positive psychology. This theme underscores a strength-based approach that focuses on enhancing teachers' self-awareness, confidence, and psychological endurance. The findings align with SciVal data showing significant growth in publications related to psychological wellbeing (+200%) and self-efficacy (+200%) over the past five years, reflecting a transition from problem-oriented research toward empowerment and capacity-building interventions. Overall, this science mapping analysis identifies five principal thematic clusters. The first captures the psychological dimension of teacher wellbeing, focusing on emotional strain and mindfulness. The second emphasizes the JD-R framework, highlighting the balance between job demands, institutional policies, and available resources. The third indicates a post-pandemic transition toward resilience and intervention-based research. The fourth revolves around positive psychology, prioritizing self-efficacy, resilience, and wellbeing practices. Meanwhile, the fifth links

teacher wellbeing to child development outcomes, emphasizing the interconnectedness between teachers' emotional states and the learning environment. These findings confirm that global research on teacher wellbeing in early childhood education has evolved beyond stress and burnout, increasingly focusing on intervention models and the development of supportive school ecosystems. The predominance of green and yellow hues in the overlay visualization suggests that recent studies (2022–2023) have moved toward intervention-oriented inquiries emphasizing resilience, self-efficacy, and leadership practices that promote teacher wellbeing. This trend is further corroborated by the overlay visualization analysis (Figure 6), which shows an average publication period between 2022.6 and 2023.4. The yellow nodes including burnout, job demand, resilience, resource, social support, emotional labor, classroom quality, and emotion regulation represent the most recent and high-interest topics. The green nodes, such as preschool teacher, intervention, positivity, self-efficacy, leadership, and professional commitment, reflect themes that emerged slightly earlier but remain highly relevant. Meanwhile, the purple-colored terms including mental health, research findings, and policy indicate the initial phase of research, focusing on conceptual frameworks and policy-oriented evidence building. This color pattern illustrates an epistemological transition in the field from descriptive and diagnostic studies toward intervention-driven research and the strengthening of both individual and institutional capacities. The progression demonstrates a growing integration between positive psychology and educational policy perspectives, jointly shaping a new research trajectory for the global discourse on early childhood teacher wellbeing.

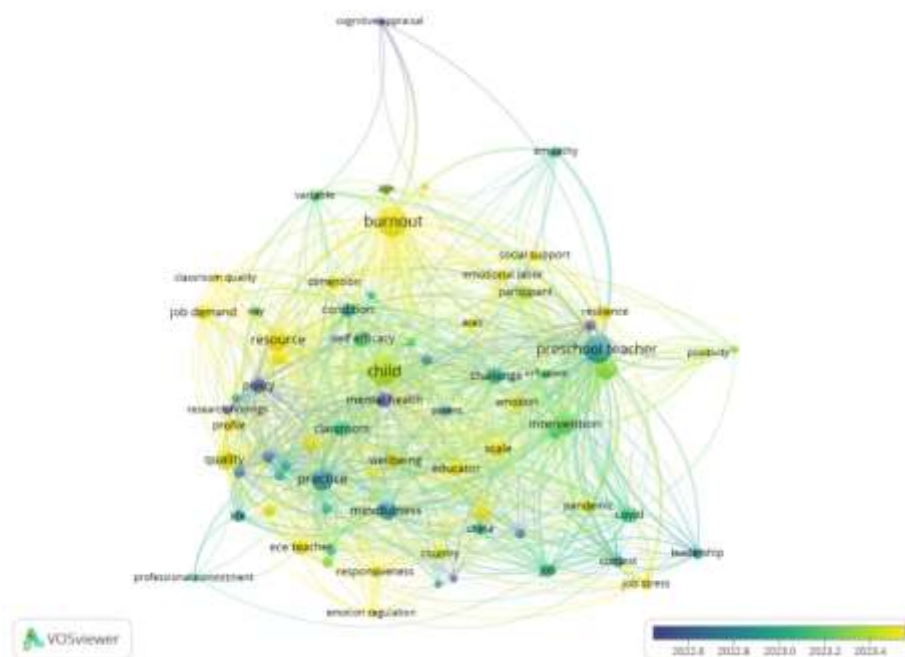


Figure 6. Research Topics Over Time Based on Co-word Analysis

Discussion

The integration of performance analysis and science mapping reveals that research on teacher wellbeing in the context of early childhood education (ECE) has undergone a significant transformation between 2020 and 2025. Findings indicate a clear paradigm shift from a focus on stress and burnout toward a strength-based approach, emphasizing the development of teachers' psychological, social, and professional capacities. This evolution reflects a broader global transition from problem-centered to growth-centered research, wherein teacher wellbeing is no longer defined merely as the absence of stress but rather as a holistic condition that enables teachers to thrive and contribute optimally to children's learning and development.

Thematically, the co-word analysis confirms that burnout remains a foundational construct in teacher wellbeing research, yet it is now complemented by an increasing emphasis on resilience, self-efficacy, and mindfulness. These findings align with the theoretical framework of the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2024), which posits that the balance between job demands and available resources determines teachers' wellbeing. Clusters highlighting job demand, policy, and classroom quality within the network visualization reinforce that teacher wellbeing is not solely an individual issue but also a systemic concern, shaped by institutional support and organizational policy.

Consistent with SciVal's keyphrase growth data, terms such as teacher burnout (+300%), psychological well-being (+200%), and self-efficacy (+200%) show the highest publication growth rates. This demonstrates an increasing global attention to psychological and motivational factors that sustain teacher wellbeing. Furthermore, the emergence of keywords like leadership, policy, and intervention reflects a growing focus on evidence-based policy and practice, particularly in the post-pandemic context, where teachers' emotional burdens intensified worldwide. Recently published studies within the dataset also indicate a methodological evolution, marked by the rise of intervention-based, longitudinal, and mixed-method research designs. Themes such as positive psychology and mindfulness-based interventions have gained prominence, as these approaches have been shown to enhance teachers' emotional resilience and sense of purpose at work (Lee, Fung, Chan, et al., 2024; Su et al., 2025). Consequently, the direction of research has expanded beyond measuring wellbeing to developing strategic and sustainable approaches for its improvement.

From a geographical perspective, publication patterns indicate a strong dominance by high-income countries such as the United States, China, Finland, and Hong Kong. This highlights a persistent underrepresentation of developing countries in global teacher wellbeing literature. The imbalance suggests a research gap that could be filled by contextual studies conducted in regions with distinct socio-economic and cultural characteristics, such as Indonesia's coastal and mining areas. In such contexts, factors

including limited resources, infrastructural inequality, and socio-cultural stressors may play unique roles in shaping teacher wellbeing and deserve deeper scholarly attention.

These findings reinforce the understanding that teacher wellbeing is a fundamental determinant of quality and sustainable early childhood education. In high-income contexts, studies from China, Finland, and the United States emphasize the central role of institutional policies and organizational support. For instance, the pedagogical leadership model in Finland has been shown to enhance job satisfaction and reduce emotional exhaustion (Muhonen et al., 2025), while in China, mindfulness-based interventions and professional collaboration initiatives have proven effective in strengthening teachers' self-efficacy and resilience (Chen & Fan, 2025; L. Yan et al., 2025).

In contrast, research in developing countries remains dominated by themes of workload stress, psychological strain, and resource scarcity (Peele & Wolf, 2021). Findings from Ghana and Malaysia indicate that economic pressure, limited professional training, and administrative overload significantly reduce teacher motivation and happiness. This cross-context comparison underscores that while individual-level factors such as self-efficacy and resilience are crucial, the social environment and public policy frameworks are equally vital for sustaining teacher wellbeing over time.

Within the Indonesian context, these findings open avenues for both research innovation and policy development. Many ECE teachers in Indonesia work under constrained conditions limited facilities, uncertain income, and compounded social pressures due to gendered and familial roles. Therefore, the development of self-care-based and digital wellbeing literacy interventions becomes highly relevant. The theoretical outcomes of this study may serve as the foundation for designing an e-Module on Self-Care for ECE Teacher Wellbeing, which could bridge the gap between theory and practice by providing an evidence-based guide for teachers to independently and sustainably enhance their wellbeing.

In conclusion, this study not only maps global academic trends but also contributes strategically to educational policy and practice development, particularly within Indonesia. The bibliometric findings affirm that the global trajectory of teacher wellbeing research is moving toward a balanced integration of individual interventions and institutional reforms, paving the way for interdisciplinary approaches that integrate psychology, educational policy, and digital innovation to promote early childhood teachers' wellbeing worldwide.

D. Conclusion

This bibliometric analysis provides a comprehensive overview of global research trends on teacher wellbeing in early childhood education (ECE) during the period 2020–2025 by integrating data from Scopus, SciVal, and VOSviewer. The findings reveal a clear shift in the global research landscape from an early emphasis on stress, burnout, and emotional exhaustion to a more holistic and promotive perspective that prioritizes psychological wellbeing, resilience, and self-efficacy. The thematic evolution identified through co-word and keyphrase analyses indicates two dominant research directions: preventive studies, which address the sources and predictors of teacher stress, and promotive studies, which focus on empowerment through positive psychology and mindfulness-based interventions. These findings affirm that teacher wellbeing is no longer understood merely as the absence of distress but as a multidimensional construct encompassing emotional, cognitive, and social vitality factors that sustain professional performance and enhance the quality of children’s learning environments. The dominance of publications from high-income countries such as the United States, China, and Finland also highlights a research imbalance, signaling the need for greater representation from developing regions. This gap underscores the importance of context-sensitive research, particularly in countries like Indonesia, where teachers’ wellbeing is shaped by unique socio-economic, cultural, and gender-related factors, as well as by institutional constraints and community pressures. Future studies should therefore emphasize the development of locally grounded models of teacher wellbeing that account for ecological, cultural, and community-based determinants. Integrating dimensions of psychological self-care, social support, and digital literacy could provide a foundation for contextually relevant intervention programs—such as the proposed e-Module for Self-Care to Promote ECE Teachers’ Wellbeing. Overall, strengthening teacher wellbeing research through cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural collaboration is essential for building sustainable, high-quality early childhood education systems worldwide.

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