

Research Paper



Tracing the evolution of women empowerment in sustainable development: a bibliometric analysis

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ABSTRACT

This review article, on Women's Empowerment in the Framework of Sustainable Development: A Bibliometric Analysis," explores the historical enhancement of women's emancipation. In this qualitative systematic review, bibliometric analysis is applied to assess the literature trends from 2000 to the year 2023, comparing the paradigm shift of women's employment post-implementation of the UN SDGs. In the present paper, the author highlighted changes in research topics by conducting a bibliometric analysis of 813 articles in the domain. This study's findings aim to inform policy-makers, researchers, and practitioners to promote an inclusive and egalitarian society on the global level. Recommendations for future research are given; particular emphasis is made on the necessity of the focus on the regional data and the investigation of the effects of the recent global occurrences on the theme of women's emancipation. The article has therefore significantly advanced the knowledge base and would be a useful addition to the progression of gender equality and sustainable development.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Women's empowerment is a dynamic process that is subject to change over time depending on a variety of factors, including age, marital status, duration, and the accumulation of experiences, resources, and accomplishments [1]. The importance of women's equality is well intertwined with the concept of sustenance as stressed in various studies. Education, autonomy in decision-making, financial control, and

enrolment in economic activities for women are some of the key markers of socio-economic development that are necessary for the realization of the United Nations' SDGs [2]. Gender equality and women's rights form a central feature of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda; this is in light of eradicating gender disparities for the progress of society [3].

Educated women have been seen to be proactive in facilitating socioeconomic and political developments to enhance economic growth for the betterment of society [4]. Women are excellent managers as they manage their entire home and also, use effective decision-making [5]. Measures such as advocating for equality of the genders in employment and remuneration can encourage women's leadership in sustainable development [6].

Hence, the emancipation of women and the establishment of gender parity are critical starting points for the creation of a coherent and perpetual process of society's evolution [7]. Empowerment has more than one dimension, aspect, and level. Women's rights are defined as the rights by which women have control over resources, knowledge, human and material resources, financial access, and decision-making in their homes, society, country, and globally. This was first highlighted at the United Nations International Conference (Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women: Abstract International Conference: International Conference of Population and Development Beijing People's Republic of China 4-15 September 1995.

Pre- Conference Toronto, Canada, 3-8 September 1995. Symposium & Poster Session, Berkeley, California, 10-12 October 1995, 1996, in which the messaging of the need to decrease gender disparities and advocate for women's rights was conveyed [8].

Following the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals' adoption at the UN Sustainable Development Summit in New York in September 2015, and their publishing on October 21 of that same year in a document titled "Transforming our world: Sustainable Development Goals" have 169 sub-targets and 17 goals, they are Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, Sustainable Cities and Communities, Responsible Consumption and Production, Climate Action, Affordable and Clean Energy, Clean Water and Sanitation, Quality Education, Gender Equality, No Poverty, Decent Work and Economic Growth, Reducing Inequalities, Peace and Justice, Strong Institutions and Partnerships for the Goals [9].

2. RELATED WORK

Women's empowerment is a crucial aspect of sustainable development, as various documents highlight [8]. The efforts of NGOs and RDOs in Nilgiris District, Tamil Nadu, in providing services to promote women's empowerment among tribal communities [10]. Socially and politically marginalized women's groups have long endured subjugation in Southeast Asia due to both internal external and monetary forces [11]. Women in Bangladesh are not as privileged as men in terms of society and the economy.

In Western countries women are equal to men in every aspect of their lives Nevertheless, gender-based bias and discrimination are still prevalent in India. Because the situations were contradictory, she was worried as a goddess at times and only like an insignificant slave [12]. Because of societal and economic restrictions, women experience poverty at a disproportionate rate worldwide [13]. There are disparities between men and women in almost every area of society [14].

These efforts include addressing issues such as gender discrimination, poverty eradication, and promoting income generation activities through self-help groups. The United Nations also emphasizes the importance of women's economic empowerment in advancing gender equality and driving sustainable development (UN Women). Furthermore, the UN Women entity works towards positioning gender equality as fundamental to the Sustainable Development Goals, highlighting the need for women's full and equal participation in various aspects of society (UN Women) [15].

Goal 5 of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, recognizing the importance of women's empowerment in sustainable development efforts [16]. Advancing the economic empowerment and autonomy of women is also crucial in the Caribbean region, as outlined in efforts to align with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development [17]. Additionally, the Women's Empowerment Principles emphasize the importance of gender equality and

women's empowerment in achieving sustainable development goals (Women's Empowerment Principles). Overall, women's empowerment is a key component of sustainable development, as it addresses issues of gender equality, economic empowerment, and social change. Efforts to promote women's empowerment are essential in achieving a more inclusive and sustainable world, as highlighted in various documents and initiatives [18].

3. METHODOLOGY

In this study, bibliometric analysis was utilized to assess the trends in academic production on women's empowerment following the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Bibliometrics plays a crucial role in providing an overview of the history and current status of a particular field of study, considering written communication as the primary formal conduit between scientists [19]. The chosen literature will be examined in this analysis by applying statistical and mathematical techniques [20].

Bibliometric analysis gained popularity in recent years and its rise in popularity can be linked to the development, accessibility, and availability of scientific databases like Scopus, Web of Science, and Dimension.ai, as well as bibliometric tools like VOS Viewer, Leximancer, and Gephi [21].

The systematic review of the study involves main four steps- Data collection, data cleaning, Analysis, and Visualization of Data. Network visualization, overlay visualization, and density visualization are the three types of visualization that VOS viewer offers. All three visualizations were utilized in the present article.

Data is extracted from dimension.ai as it provides a highly qualitative and large open-access database. [22] Dimensions are becoming more and more well-known as a database that many academics are finding interesting, with over 1.8 billion citations registered [23]. The search query used to obtain the primary dataset is given below.

Topic Search = (("Women Empowerment") or ("Sustainable Development"))

To create the results from the Dimension that served as the foundation for the study's findings, the aforementioned keywords were employed. The was carried out on 29 June 2024, where a total of 821 studies were obtained, after cleaning, removing duplicates and formatting 813 articles were retained. There are two phases involved in the screening of articles:

eligibility verification and screening. Articles that don't fit the inclusion criteria are removed [24]. Data analysis was carried out using VOS Viewer, a popular statistical program for bibliometric analysis [25]. Version 1.6.20 of the VOS Viewer program is a useful tool for mapping the knowledge structure in a scientific topic by displaying co-occurring networks [26].

Using inclusion and exclusion criteria, titles and abstracts were vetted to ensure they were pertinent to the review's parameters. Four primary parameters were used to determine the exclusion criteria: the kind of document (journal articles), the publishing timeframe (from 2000 to 2023), the language (English), and Open Access (All AO).

The Objectives of the Study

1. To identify and analyse current trends in women's empowerment.
2. To evaluate annual changes in subject trends, co-occurrence analysis, and scientific publications.
After analyzing the descriptive analysis of scientific papers, the research seeks to answer the following questions:
 1. What are the current trends in the field of women's empowerment?
 2. How have subject trends, co-occurrence analysis, and scientific publications changed annually between 2000 and 2023?
 3. In what areas are researchers interested in women's empowerment in the modern era?

Figure 1 Shows the Steps that were done in the Research Study's Procedure.

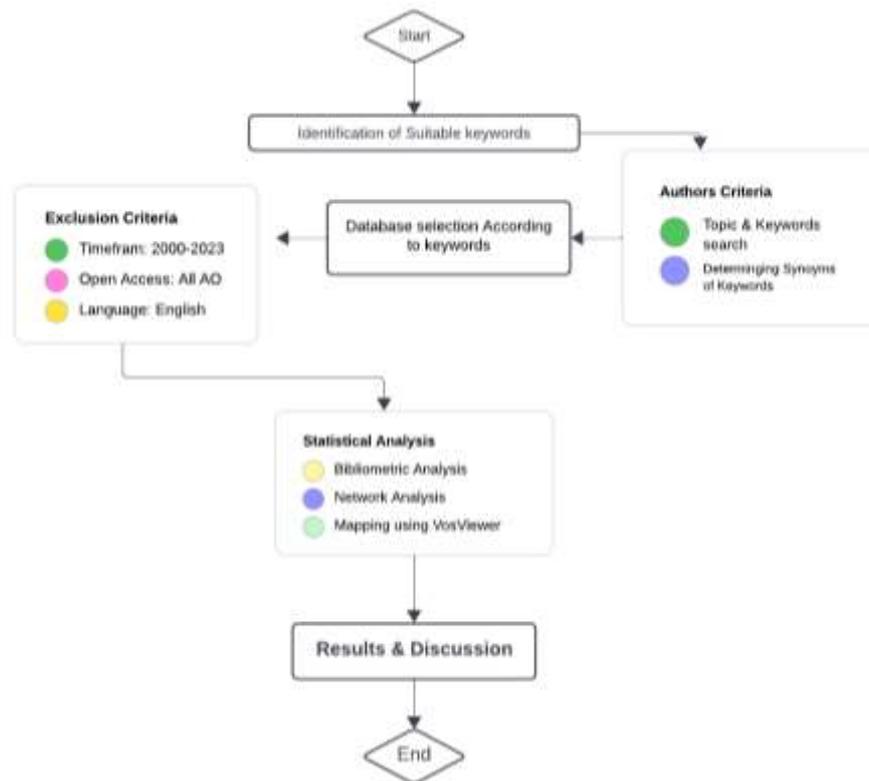


Figure 1. Flowchart of Research

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Analysis

Table 1 below summarizes and provides insights into the characteristics of the data used in this research. The research interest is in producing scientific research related to women's empowerment after the year 2000, when the world began setting Sustainable Development Goals. After applying rigorous criteria to the required dataset, a total of 813 documents were selected. The 6.598 total citations and 8.04 average citations show that most of the selected documents were highly cited and of high quality.

Table 1. Database Information

Description	Results
Main Information	
Timeframe	2000-2023
Documents	813
Sources	66
Average Citation per Document	8.04
Authors	
Author Appearances	2015
Single-authored Documents	193
Authors per Documents	2.48

The above Table 1 portrays the bibliometric analysis of the existing scholarly works on women's empowerment in sustainable development for the period of 2000 to 2023. In this period, 813 documents were published in 66 sources, or 8 per source on average. 04 citations per document, hence this reaction rate can be considered as moderate academic interest and some engagement with the topic. The

information highlights that there were 2015 authors' visits, evidencing a vast engagement of the academic society and their input. The team attained an average of 2. Appendix III shows that on average, a document reviewed contains 48 authors and only 193 single-authored documents, thus depicting that most research in this field is a teamwork. It is such a trend that further solidifies the context and involvement of different disciplinary domains about women's empowerment and sustainable development, it underlines the group collaboration of researchers in tackling such issues. 2000-2023 reveals elevating concern and endeavors toward the promotion of gender equality and development goals, more specifically, after the adoption of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in 2015.

Yearly Scientific Production

This paper explains the development and progress of research through scientific outputs, particularly concerning women's empowerment as a sustainable development. From 2000 to 2014 very few publications (n=9), and there has been prominent growth to be observed from 2015 to 2023 (n=804). In the year 2000, MDG was established, which focuses on gender equality and empowering women [27]. This study revealed that the publications with the implementation of MDG 2000 did not improve much improved as women's empowerment with sustainability is more important. The implementation of SDG 2015 prioritizes women's empowerment by promoting gender equality [28]. Figure 2 depicts the annual scientific production on women empowerment in sustainable development from 2000 to 2023. This chart shows a stable initial phase (2000 to 2013), as scientific production remains consistently low, which indicates limited research focusing on women's empowerment in sustainable development during this period. The gradual increase (2014-2018), has been observed which indicates growing interest and recognition of the topic's importance. A rapid growth (2019 to 2023), indicates significant search in publications and highlights a peak in scholarly attention in the area of women empowerment in sustainable development. The growing trend of scientific publications is shown in Figure 2 below.

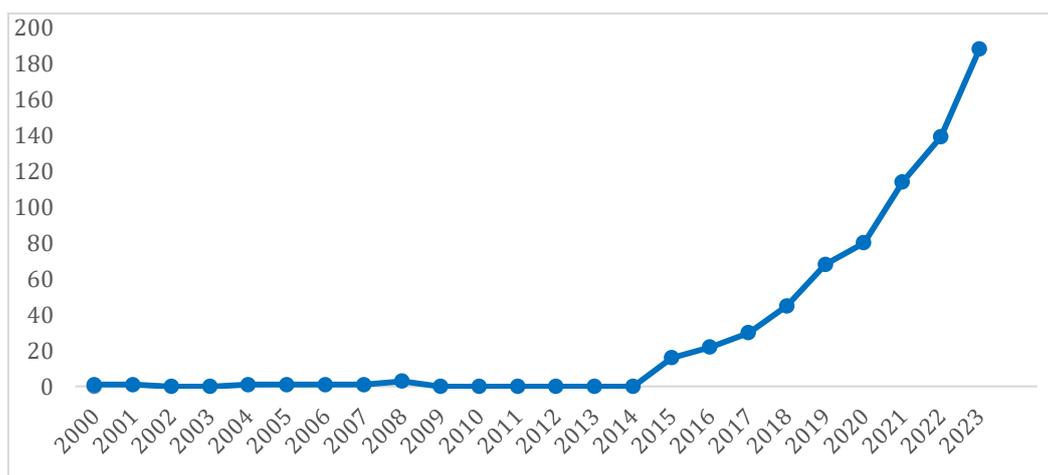


Figure 2. Evaluation of Scientific Production Related to Women Empowerment in Sustainable Development in the Year 2000-2023

This trend indicates a heightened global academic focus on these topics in recent years and reflects the growing acknowledgment of the role that women's empowerment plays in sustainable development. Notably, the pattern suggests that for the past ten years, there was a range of years of rapid growth of the offered metric throughout the range of years, and within the last part of the ten years it steadily decreased. This could be a sign of an influx in interest or funds for the topic based on funding modifications and policy changes, large-scale finishes of notable projects, and other exterior factors that could affect the field of study. According to the authors, this huge change in the research trend from 2014 is the implementation of SDG. Moreover, the motivation in trending topics of research is preferred by the researchers.

Trend Analysis: Keywords

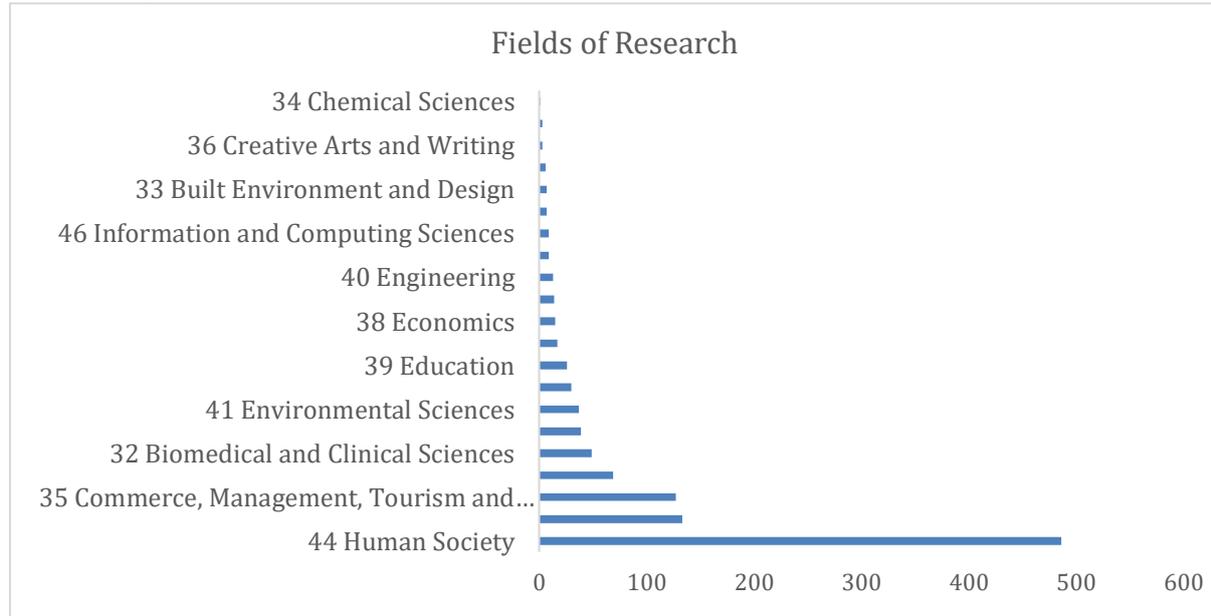


Figure 3. Trend Topics Based on the Author's Keywords

The field “44 Human Society” has the most entities, and their count is 492. This implies a considerable level of concern or participation in research that pertains to human society. Less popular subdomains are “35 Commerce, Management, Tourism and Services” and “32 Biomedical and Clinical Sciences”, while ranking next in the number of corresponding entities, although significantly lower as compared with “Human Society”. They are rather active, which suggests vigorous undergraduate and graduate research and development activities. Even less represented fields like ‘41 Environmental Science’, ‘39 Education’, ‘38 Economics’, and ‘40 Engineering’, while having relatively fewer results, possess a good number of entities, making it mid-range of the researched fields. The least popular fields, as shown in the above chart, are: “46 Information and Computing Science”, “33 Built Environment and Design” “36 Creative Arts and Writing”, and “34 Chemical Sciences” These fields contain the least number of entities and have low activity in the research studies. Looking at the current distribution of research entities, it is quite visible that specialized fields are not well balanced. While some of the fields, like “Human Society,” contain a large number of entities, the majority of the fields do not show significant activity on the web. Thus, the research can identify that some focuses are studied rather comprehensively, while others are investigated considerably more marginally, which can be explained either by funding fluctuations, shifts in public concern, or long-term goals of major research organizations.

Co-Authors Analysis (Authors: Network Visualization)

The co-authorship network map for women empowerment and sustainable development (2000-2023), with a minimum of 2 authors, shows several key insights. The network map reveals multiple clusters, each representing a group of authors who frequently collaborate. The clusters are color-coded, indicating different thematic areas or research groups. Prominent authors such as "Sultana (2023)," "Wong (2017)," and "Collaboration (2018)" are central in the network, indicating their significant role in the research field. These authors have larger nodes, representing their high publication count and central position in the collaboration network. "Sultana (2023)" appears to be an isolated yet significant node, indicating a focused yet potentially influential research effort. Figure 3 below shows the co-authorship network map of women's empowerment in sustainable development research in the period 2000-2023.

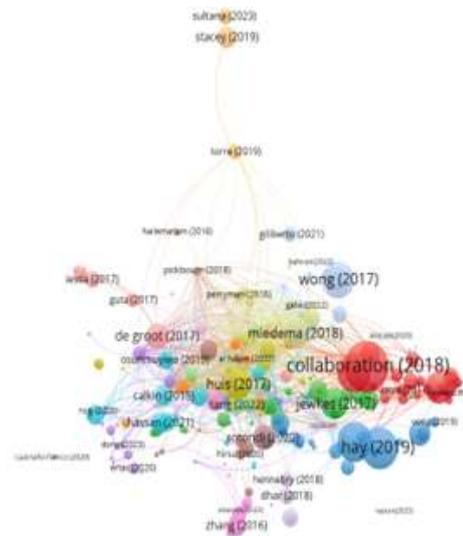


Figure 4. Network Visualization of Authors

Figure 4 it measures linking density and what is obtained is that in a network, the number of connections between nodes is very high and this means that there is an excessive level of interaction between researchers. Thicker lines indicate a higher level of co-authorship which indicates that the authors represented by the two nodes tend to work closely in producing their papers. 2023 and 2022 years have new nodes and connections, which depict new cooperation lines in the recent future and directions of the field. Authors like Dong 2023 are well-established in the field of study, recent authors in the field or newcomers to the field like Nazuri 2023 bring new ideas to the field.

Organizations: Density Visualizations

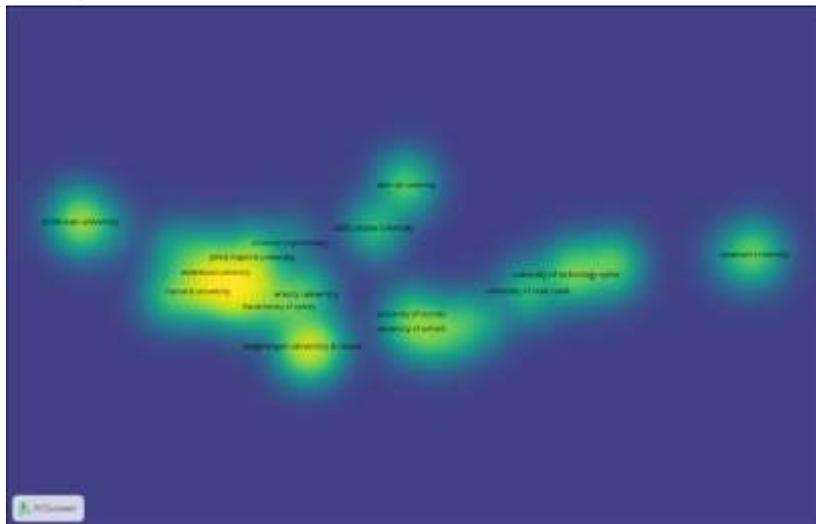


Figure 5. Density Visualizations of Co-Authors' Organizations

This VOS viewer density graph shows Figure 5 the collaborations of the different universities in the research based on a set of documents that is not less than 2 per organization, and the documents should have not least 2 citations. The colors in the heatmap also range from blue to yellow to give information on the weight of the collaborations. Several organizations exhibit fairly higher centrality or denser graphs, and these are Harvard University, Johns Hopkins University, and Emory University. Some of the other significant clusters are the representatives of such universities as Oxford, Toronto, and Cape Coast, which also have dense collaboration links. Tribhuvan University and Covenant University are alone among all the higher learning institutions are less connected to connectivity. In this context, the role of the nodes is to show the cores of academic collaborations and the relations among the organizations.

Countries: Overlay Visualizations

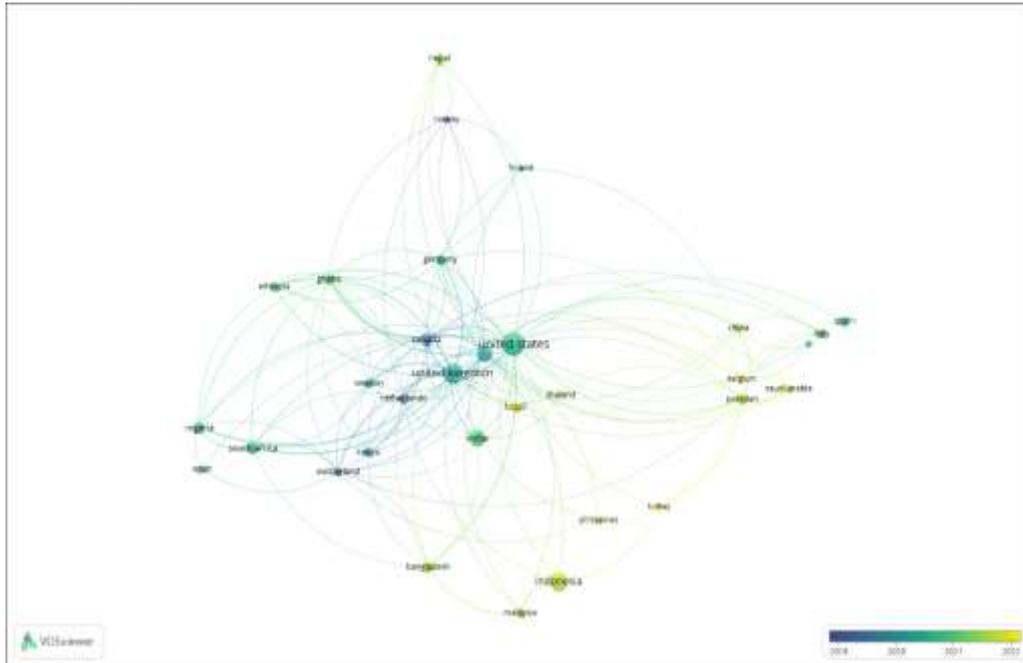


Figure 6. Overlay Visualizations of Co-Authors' Countries

This VOS viewer overlay view shows Figure 6 countries' international research collaboration by co-authorship from the year 2019 to 2022. In the context of this study, nodes portray countries, and the size of nodes implies the output of a specific country in research as well as an elaborate collaboration platform. Collaboration relationships between the nodes are represented by lines wherein the thickness represents the level of collaboration. The shades of color vary from blue showing the year 2019 to yellow showing the year 2022, showing the timeline of the publications and collaborations done. Concerning the centrality and closeness of the countries, it is noteworthy that the United States and the United Kingdom rank highly, which may indicate that they play a significant role in global research. India has a highly active collaboration with other nations: Indonesia and China also stand out as having massive regional connections; on the other hand, Ethiopia, Ghana, Nigeria, and Mozambique have strong collaboration ties with other countries as well. The presented visualization is also aimed at the emerging pattern of international collaboration in research activity.

These clusters imply the complexity of women's empowerment and enhance the rationale of sentiment-based issue analysis of empowering women. It's important in the attainment of development goals that are sustainability-oriented. Moreover, the network visualization still reveals that while there exists a rather robust, primary research scholarship, newcomers and young Scholars are still limited in their ability to make significant contributions. Subsequent studies do extend this established base of knowledge, where research emerging today tries to respond to the contemporary responsibilities and possibilities of women's advancement. The conclusion stipulates further calls for investment in cooperative studies and the communication of information to different fields and organizations. Future research should aim at directing more attention to the deficiencies stated in this research, for instance, the lack of local research of specific cultural contexts, and discussing the effects of the latest global occurrences on women's empowerment and sustainable development.

Maybe each cluster can be connected with certain aspects and subtopics of the general field of women's empowerment and sustainable development. For instance, clusters can be on Economic enfranchisement, Policy implications, learning programs, or health elements. It might thus become possible to calculate and analyze the distribution of nodes in each cluster to describe the density of a collaboration between co-workers. A large number of isolated nodes touching each other's high density suggests the interconnectivity of the collaboration networks within those themes. Through the map of co-authorship, the collaboration structure in women's empowerment and sustainable development research area from

2000 to 2023 can be depicted in an unmatched way. To each writer, it identifies the collaboration network, from which we determine important key writers, cooperative clusters noticed, and the future trends in the systematic segment of the field. Therefore, it can assist future work by examining topics of possible interest and authors, discovering promising cooperators and emerging subjects, and orienting leading researchers.

Discussion

This information can be viewed as the result of the co-author's analysis brought by VOS viewer, where one can get acquainted with the overall picture shared by the university research ground. This discussion presents the analysis of the results with a focus on the significant trends and the prospects for the academic society.

Centrality and Connectivity

The centrality map shows that some universities, namely Harvard University, Johns Hopkins University, and Emory University, are well-connected in the global research network. This means that they are seen as important nodes of high degree, implying that they are central to collective collaboration in research. It can be assumed that these institutions have vast resources, research grants, and sufficient recognition from international partners. Modern and central scholarly societies increase their ability to direct the nature and scope of research in a field and to share knowledge effectively.

Clusters and Regional Networks

Specific zones associated with the University of Oxford, the University of Toronto, and Stellenbosch University demonstrate a series of solid internal and regional connections. These clusters imply that the concepts of geographic region and focus areas have a fairly high impact on collaboration. For instance, European and North American universities depict excellent interconnectedness that depict research areas and funding. Likewise, the backward and forward linkages within the African universities, such as Addis Ababa University and Bahir Dar University, stress the significance of regional solutions to local problems.

Isolated Institutions

The examples in this category include Tribhuvan University from Nepal and Covenant University from Nigeria; these results lay exposed areas where cooperation is not very common. This could be caused by reasons such as lack of funds, specialized fields of research, and political barriers, among others. However, these institutions still produce good research within the particular areas of specialization. Maybe coordination with more faculties could improve the research outcomes of these isolated nodes and their overall inclusion in the global academic society.

5. CONCLUSION

This systematized bibliography paper contains an evaluation of the advancement of women's empowerment within the framework of sustainable development between 2000 and 2023. This article provides an understanding of publication activity patterns, major contributing researchers, connectedness, and thematic areas, which present them as indicators of progress and trends in this inter- and multi-disciplinary field. The findings of the study demonstrate that there has been a growing concern with the links between women's rights and women's empowerment as well as sustainable development in contemporary scholarly work, mainly due to the MDGs and SDGs frameworks. The preponderance of collaboration, for instance, major nodes such as "collaboration (2018)" show the need for interdisciplinary and cross-institutional synergy in stewardship of this discipline.

Based on the analysis, the important thematic areas that can be derived are a clear indication of the large spectrum of research interests that cut across the promotion of economic development, policy initiatives, environmental conservation, and women's rights. These clusters explain how this index and the Sustainable Development Goals are related, illustrating the complex aspects of women's empowerment. In addition, the network visualization makes it clear to understand that although there is a solid core of highly

cited works and empirical investigations, the newer studies expand the network, addressing the current issues and possibilities of enhancing women's power.

The paper's outcome stresses the significance of sustaining funding for cross-disciplinary and cross-sector research and the sharing of knowledge and information among scholars, practitioners, and policymakers. Further research, therefore, should seek to address some of the limitations that emerged from this research project, including calling for more specifically situated studies and examining the effects of recent global occurrences on women's empowerment and sustainable development.

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Author Contributions Statement

Name of Author	C	M	So	Va	Fo	I	R	D	O	E	Vi	Su	P	Fu
Arunima Agrawal	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dr. Pushpa Suryavanshi							✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓

C : Conceptualization

M : Methodology

So : Software

Va : Validation

Fo : Formal analysis

I : Investigation

R : Resources

D : Data Curation

O : Writing - Original Draft

E : Writing - Review & Editing

Vi : Visualization

Su : Supervision

P : Project administration

Fu : Funding acquisition

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest in publishing this research paper.

Informed Consent

This research is completely based on the secondary data collected from publicly available resources. As such, no primary data involving human participants was collected, and informed consent is not required.

Ethical Approval

Human participation was involved; therefore, no ethical approval was required. The study complies with ethical standards in research, and proper citation of all data sources has been ensured.

Data Availability

The data used in the research were secondary and collected from openly available resources.

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BIOGRAPHIES OF AUTHORS

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