

BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS OF CHINA AND MALAYSIA CONFUCIANISM PATH JOURNEY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

Confucianism has exercised a significant influence on Chinese culture, philosophy, and social values throughout the centuries. The purpose of this study is to analyse the latest developments in Confucianism research within China and Malaysia. This bibliometric analysis study adopted the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) framework, filtering data for keywords related to 'Confucianism' contained in the title, keywords, and abstract areas. The articles published between 2014 and 2023 were selected to capture the latest studies, resulting in a total of 908 pertinent articles. Then, the study utilised VOSviewer software to examine the distribution of bibliometric maps. During this period, the findings showed that the number of articles increased more than one-fold. Using the VOSviewer association strength method, the top five keywords by occurrences consisted of Confucianism, China, human, article, and Taoism. The dataset of 113 items was further categorised into 10 clusters. Confucianism is related to Islam through religious and bioethical elements. Additionally, Confucianism supported sustainable development initiatives, which were closely tied to education, cultural traditions, and corporate social responsibility. It is suggested that future studies integrate Confucianism with bioethics, sustainable development, and entrepreneurship. This study serves as a valuable point of reference and a source for researchers seeking to explore future research areas, particularly in the field of Confucianism within China and Malaysia.

Keywords: bibliometric analysis, bioethics, Confucianism, Islam, sustainable development

INTRODUCTION

Philosophical disciplines, often viewed as a theoretical and abstract field, have practical implications in various domains of the tangible world. It provides a framework for critical analytical thinking, making ethical choices, and problem-solving abilities (Li and Wei 2023; Zhao, Tan and Tsang 2023). The adoption of philosophy allows a community society to develop concepts that guide navigating in complicated ethical, social, and intellectual dilemmas in the actual world (Leach, Tracy and Wong 2024). The applications of philosophy have a broad reach, including policy advancement, the development of societal norms, and the encouragement of ethical frameworks (D'Ambrosio 2023; Li and Wei 2023; Xie 2023).

Throughout the centuries, Confucianism's ethical philosophical framework has significantly influenced governance systems and architectural ideals (Li and Wei 2023; Wei et al. 2023) in East Asian countries, particularly in China and Malaysia. Confucianism has had a profound influence on the development of society, culture, social interactions, and governance for a long time. Despite facing decline suppression periods, certain Confucianism ideology features a steady influence over numerous parts of Chinese society. The proliferation range of Confucianism has exerted an enduring influence on Chinese culture, philosophy, and societal values throughout history (Chen et al. 2020; 2024). Even though it is not classified as a political or economic system, such as capitalism or socialism, its impact is greatly embedded in the East Asian cultures, including China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore. Contemporarily, some of the aspects that are relevant to Confucianism such as cultural influence, education, social harmony and ethical leadership (Chen et al. 2020).

Some of the areas in which other philosophies have been influenced by Confucianism include Neo-Confucianism, Japanese-Confucianism, Korean Confucianism, Vietnamese Confucianism and Zen Buddhism. Remarkably, the development of Confucianism is currently seeing a significant acceleration. Thus, it is interesting and important to understand the development of Confucianism philosophy. However, research inquiries regarding the utilisation of bibliometric analysis in the field of Confucianism research are still limited, particularly in journals that have been published and indexed by the Scopus Scholar database. Hence, the objective of this research was to evaluate a bibliometric study on Confucianism that Scopus Scholar had indexed. The utilisation of the VOSviewer software instrument to conduct mapping analysis to determine the quantity and current state of a specified term (Abdul Ghaffar, Melethil and Yusuf Adhami 2023; Vlasé and Lähdesmäki 2023). This study will assist academics when deciding on Confucianism-related research themes or topics. The primary objective of this study is to examine Confucianism research through the implementation of mapping visualisation tools in the

form of a bibliometric analysis. As a result, it becomes possible to establish connections between the study of Confucianism and various related academic fields. Furthermore, it is essential to understand the current developments in Confucianism research, specifically in the post-pandemic era.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Confucianism is an ethical and philosophical system founded on the teachings of the ancient Chinese philosopher and instructor Confucius (also known as Kong Fuzi or Kongzi). Established around the fifth century BCE in China, the philosophy has significantly impacted Chinese culture and thought. The fundamental doctrine of Confucianism is *ren*, which is frequently rendered as 'benevolence' or 'humaneness' and is considered essential within the framework (Chen Y 2023). A fundamental objective is to promote human interpersonal harmony by encouraging empathy and urge individuals to assess others by placing themselves in their shoes, in which emphasised the importance of fostering tolerance towards faults.

The Analects consists of fifty-eight chapters, in which the term *ren* is referenced 105 times, concerning the interconnection among individuals. Consequently, it can be inferred that one of the objectives of studying *ren* is to examine the relationships between human people. It requires benevolence, compassion and empathy towards others. Then, the *Li* element denotes social rituals, ritual propriety, and appropriate conduct. It emphasises the significance of maintaining proper relationships and functioning in a socially acceptable manner. The *Xiao* element translates to 'filial piety' or reverence and deference to one's parents and ancestors. The Confucian tradition regards filial piety as an essential virtue. The *Yi* element is frequently rendered as righteousness or moral disposition. It requires acting in a morally upright and just manner. The *Zhi* element that signifies knowledge or insight. Confucius emphasised the significance of self-improvement and education in the pursuit of moral rectitude. Finally, the *Xin* element signifies integrity and reliability. This emphasises the significance of upholding integrity and demonstrating trustworthiness in an individual's conduct (Li and Wei 2023).

Confucianism has emerged as a highly effective tool for fostering the growth of developing companies. Traditional ethics primarily concerns itself with establishing principles for individual conduct. Commercial ethics mainly focuses on corporations, with associated research examining the reasons why corporations should adopt social responsibility and incorporate ethical principles into their business operations (Chen C 2023; Li and Wei 2023). However, the application of these moral principles in organisations needs a comprehensive assessment from multiple aspects. This is particularly for

Confucianism where it focuses on self-cultivation, self-reflection, and self-discipline (Chen et al. 2023; Wei et al. 2023). The success of the philosophy is also proven to be embedded in corporate social responsibility (Wang, Lin and Sun 2018), and green innovation enterprises (Dong and Li 2023). Besides, several studies have been conducted during COVID-19 pandemic. While the majority research focus on the medical vaccination, the COVID-19 duration study focuses on the deeper health aspects such as mental issues. During COVID-19, the Confucianism application had been related to loneliness, emotion, and behaviour (Ding, Shang and Yu 2022; Badanta, González-Cano-Caballero and Suárez-Reina 2022).

Besides, Confucianism ideology also influences the architecture of buildings, which is often reflected in the layout design of traditional East Asian buildings. Temples dedicated to Confucianism usually incorporate elements that symbolise respect, balance and harmony. The emphasis on ritual propriety in Confucianism has influenced the architectural layout of spaces, promoting order and symmetry in structures (Rong and Azizi 2023). In addition, Confucianism principles have influenced the design of educational institutions, with an emphasis on creating a conducive environment for learning and moral development (Yao and Alice Sabrina 2023). The Confucianism architecture, known as academies or *shuyuan*, reflects a respect for knowledge and the cultivation of individual morality. Moreover, Confucianism's focus on social harmony has impacted urban planning and community design (Rong, Azizi and Xiao 2023; Yao and Alice Sabrina 2023). The layout of cities and towns often reflects a desire for balanced and harmonious living.

The philosophy of Confucianism encompasses numerous components that align with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The alignment is particularly emphasised through its focus on key elements, such as internal moral characteristics, community responsibility, and natural harmony (Table 1). First, the education of moral and character development. With the high emphasis on cultivating moral virtues, particularly *ren* (humanity), it encourages altruism, respect, and humility. This moral element aligns and directly supports SDG 4, Quality Education, by promoting education, ethics, and sustainable development. Educating and developing individuals to become morally righteous citizens aligns with the overall goal of creating equitable, inclusive, and high-quality education systems.

Second, the filial piety concept, which denotes the essence of family and community relationships, aligns with SDG 16, Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions. Confucianism promotes social harmony and responsibility among individuals, fostering a united community and governance. The focus on connections and relationships undermines the idea that trust and mutual respect build a system of trust and mutual respect. Third, Confucianism

encourages a respectful relationship with nature. The philosophy views the ecological system as a whole and individual humans as part of it. This aligns with SDG 13 Climate Action and SDG 15 Life on Land, which encourage respect for the environment and sustainable practices. In short, this inherent thoughtfulness contributes to a more sustainable pathway to natural reserve management and eco-friendly conservation.

Fourth, Confucianism holds the principle of righteousness, wisdom, benevolence, propriety, and faithfulness. The adoption of these principles is applicable in corporate governance and social responsibility practices, aligning with SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production). By incorporating these principles into organisations’ environmental, social, and governance frameworks, it encourages moral, ethical behaviour and further contributes to economic sustainability growth. Fifth, the SDG 17 Partnership for Goals can be achieved through the principles of harmony and interconnectedness among various stakeholders. Through cultural cooperation, Confucianism inspires mutual collaboration and understanding, which are key elements to address inclusive challenges such as climate change and social disparity and inequity. In conclusion, Confucian principles integrated with the SDG framework promote an ethical foundation that fosters inclusive, sustainable development, moral education, community and environmental responsibility, and global cooperation.

Table 1: Confucianism and SDGs

Elements	SDGs
Education of moral and character development, <i>ren</i> (humanity)	SDG 4 Quality Education
Family and community relationships, filial piety	SDG 16 Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions
Respectful relationship connection with nature	SDG 13 Climate Action SDG 15 Life on Land
Righteousness, wisdom, benevolence, propriety and faithfulness	SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth SDG 12 Responsible Consumption and Production
Harmony and interconnectedness from various stakeholder	SDG 17 Partnership for Goals

VOSViewer refers to a software application specifically developed to generate, construct, and visualise bibliometric maps (Mansour et al. 2023). VOSViewer text-mining features enable the generation and visualisation of relationships between article citations. The implementation of browsing functionality, search

capabilities and mapping systems enables the visual representation of published maps (Zyoud et al. 2023; Bukar et al. 2023). As a result, a more comprehensive description of the articles is possible to be achieved. VOSviewer has the functionalities to visually represent information in the form of bibliometric network maps (Vlase and Lähdesmäki 2023). VOSviewer is a widely employed instrument utilised to assess the originality of research efforts. The analysis and interpretation of research linkages are illustrated in bibliometric maps. The programme supports numerous databases for executing text processing tasks, and is capable of conducting a wide variety of bibliometric analyses. Additionally, VOSviewer can also be used to perform mapping tasks by implementing model and cluster layout strategies. In addition, it enables the mapping and visualisation of data via a variety of density and overlay visualisations (Abdul Ghaffar, Melethil and Yusuf Adhami 2023). VOSviewer facilitates the extraction analysis, a technique used to condense large datasets by examining bibliometric data linked to a specific study (Moral-Muñoz 2020). Bibliometrics provides a thorough analysis of the conceptual framework and emergent patterns within a specific subject area. The application of bibliometric analysis also appears to be a beneficial methodology when analysing large datasets (Vlase and Lähdesmäki 2023).

METHODOLOGY

This study employed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) framework for data collection, which encompasses the identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion phases (Figure 1). The data utilised were acquired from the Scopus Scholar database. The reasons are that Scopus is a significant target for researchers in value publications, as it also provides global credit recognition. Scopus is an Elsevier database and a worldwide level citation index, widely considered the most broadly indexed abstract and citation database for research enquiry. In addition, Scopus journals are audited annually for high quality based on four categories of measurements for each title, which include the h-index, CiteScore, SCImago Journal Rank (SJR) and Source Normalized Impact per Paper (SNIP). The data were obtained through the utilisation of a reference management application. RefWorks is used for conducting an inclusive literature review related to the theme. The various types of documents are obtained for further analysis. All articles indexed by Scopus Scholar that fulfilled the criteria for article type and relevance to the research themes of this study are stored in a file for utilisation in VOSviewer.

In this study, the scholars selectively choose articles exclusively on the 'Confucianism' keyword. The process of data retrieval involves researchers using title, keyword, and abstract criteria to search for information related to the field of Confucianism. A total of 908 document articles were acquired,

comprising 895 documents from China and 13 documents from Malaysia. Subsequently, the documents were evaluated based on the selected thematic criteria. The data was retrieved on 1 August 2024, and data analysis was conducted immediately at that time. The articles utilised in this research consisted of publications spanning the period from 2014 to 2023, for both China and Malaysia. A duration of 10 years is sufficient to understand current patterns in enquiry, and allows for the inclusion of academic disciplines that progress at a slower pace. Moreover, it also reflects the research on COVID-19 pandemic associated with Confucianism. This duration time also exposes the effect of the pandemic and related policy initiatives changes on research output, particularly on how the pandemic has influenced research directions and volume.

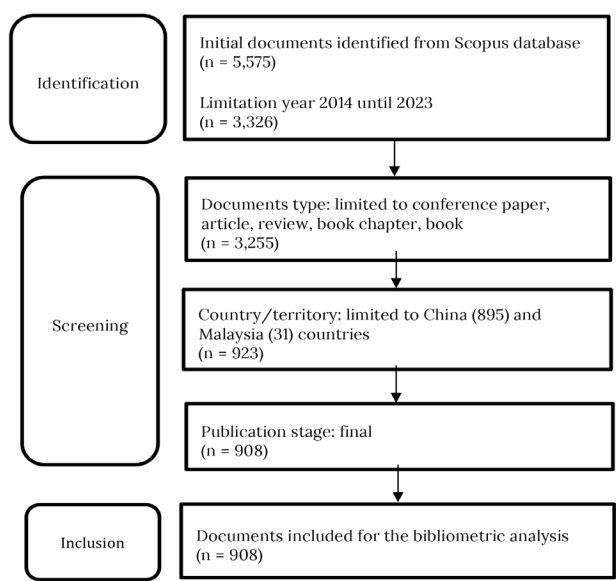


Figure 1: Flowchart of the methodology adopted in this study.

The final query for the dataset was TITLE-ABS-KEY (confucianism) AND PUBYEAR > 2013 AND PUBYEAR < 2024 AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE , “ar”) OR LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE, “ch”) OR LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE, “re”) OR LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE, “bk”) OR LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE, “cp”)) AND (LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY, “China”) OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY, “Malaysia”)) AND (LIMIT-TO (PUBSTAGE, “final”)).

The collected document articles are subsequently stored in the *.csv file format. Afterwards, researchers engaged the VOSviewer software to visually represent and examine patterns in the form of bibliometric maps. The researchers employed data mapping by extracting articles from appropriately curated database sources. Data mapping encompasses three distinct types: network

mapping, density mapping, and visualisation overlay. VOSviewer is a software application designed to create and display bibliometric networks. These networks may involve article journals, researchers, or personal articles, which are often constructed based on citations, bibliographic data, or co-authorship (Moral-Muñoz 2020). VOSviewer is highly suitable for analysing vast amounts of scientific literature research and for visually representing patterns and trends of the data (Vlase and Lähdesmäki 2023). This analysis is primarily carried out through the utilisation of co-citation and keyword-based approaches, whereby they are subsequently visualised on a network that illustrates the relationships between various terms. VOSviewer employs a multi-step process to visualise bibliometric networks, usually including data collection, data import, preparation, network creation, development, and visualisation (Abdul Ghaffar, Melethil and Yusuf Adhami 2023; Vlase and Lähdesmäki 2023). During the creation of the bibliometric map study, the keyword frequency determines a minimum frequency of five occurrences from the prepared database, resulting in 113 keyword items after keyword harmonisation. In addition, researchers engaged a filtering process to determine the terms that will be incorporated into the VOSviewer network mapping visualisation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the data shown in Figure 2, the number of studies on Confucianism exhibits an increasing trend. Between 2014 and 2023, the documents showed a more than one-fold increase. Figure 3 presents the types of Confucianism documents, as shown in Scopus Scholar-indexed journals. More than two-thirds of the documents related to articles (73%), followed by book chapters (13%), books and reviews (5% each), and conference papers (4%). The top five funding sponsor institutions contributed approximately 46.21% of the total funding sponsored (Table 2).

Table 2: Top five documents by funding sponsor

Institutions	Total number of documents, n (%)
National Natural Science Foundation of China	83 (20.96)
National Office for Philosophy and Social Sciences	49 (12.37)
Fundamental Research Funds for the Central Universities	22 (5.56)
Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China	20 (5.05)
Ministry of Science and Technology of the People’s Republic of China	9 (2.27)

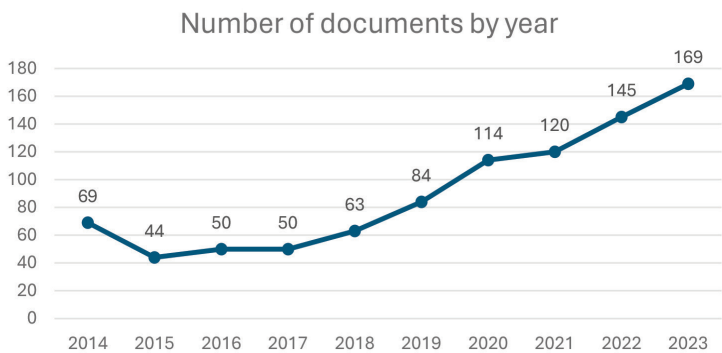


Figure 2: Number of documents by year.

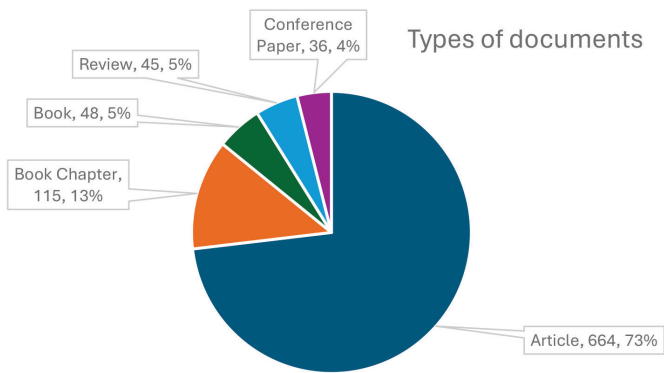


Figure 3: Types of documents.

Visualisation of Confucianism Field Using VOSviewer

Based on the setting, five keywords with the minimum number of occurrences, there are a total of 113 items about the Confucianism field (Figure 4). The top five keywords by occurrences consisted of Confucianism with 391 occurrences (942 total link strength), China with 153 occurrences (675 total link strength), human with 76 occurrences (662 total link strength), articles with 49 occurrences (466 total link strength), and Taoism with 37 occurrences (147 total link strength). The dataset of 113 items has been further categorised into 10 distinct clusters, based on the color for visualisation. Each cluster is characterised by the primary term (Table 3 and Table 4).

**Table 3: Cluster Confucianism terms group**

Cluster term (total occurrences)	Color	Total link strength	Total link
Confucianism (391)	Red	942	109
China (153)	Green	675	96
Human (76)	Dark blue	662	89
Human experiment (20)	Yellow	207	60
Psychology (21)	Purple	234	55
Chinese culture (20)	Light blue	63	32
Personality (7)	Orange	37	20
Filial piety (10)	Brown	46	30
Cultural anthropology (12)	Light purple	111	42
Matteo Ricci (5)	Pink	3	1

Table 4: Cluster group associated terms

Cluster term (total items)	Terms associated within cluster	Terms associated non-within cluster
Confucianism (21 items)	Buddhism, democracy, Islam, ritual, self-cultivation, Taoism, etc.	Bioethics, harmony, Mencius, sustainable development, morality, etc.
China (23 items)	Corporate social responsibility, governance approach, innovation, leadership, Mencius, sustainable development, etc.	Benevolence, bioethics, Buddhism, economic development, harmony, democracy, etc.
Human (22 items)	Aged, comparative study, mental health, qualitative study, social behavior, virtue ethics, etc.	Ethics, culture, education, morality, personality, tissue and organ procurement, etc.
Human experiment (15 items)	Covid-19, education, guanxi, harmony, human rights, social justice, etc.	Bioethics, cognition, culture, education, morality, psychology, etc.
Psychology (15 items)	Benevolence, bioethics, family, motivation, tissue and organ procurement, transplantation, etc.	COVID-19, culture, ethics, human, perception, philosophy, etc.
Chinese culture (7 items)	Cognition, economic development, history, informal institution, philosophical aspects, regression analysis, etc.	Buddhism, culture tradition, human, human experiments, morality, values, etc.
Personality (2 items)	Entrepreneurship	Adult, China, Confucianism, benevolence, cognition, human, etc.
Filial piety (2 items)	Pre-qin Confucianism	Adult, China, Confucianism, ethnology, human, motivation, etc.
Cultural anthropology (2 items)	Legalism	Buddhism, culture, ethnology, family, human, morals, etc.
Matteo Ricci (1 item)	–	Confucianism



Religion keywords integrate Confucianism and Islam philosophy along with

Religion keywords integrate Confucianism and Islam philosophy along with Buddhism, Taoism and Christianity (Figure 6). China is the domain with the Chinese population and Confucianism is adopted, while Malaysia is the domain with Muslim population and Islam is adopted. Both ideologies prioritise human

development as the central aspect of achieving sustainable development. Positive human growth can lead to improvements in both the social and natural environments (AlJabri 2024; Li and Eilks 2024). In Islam, human beings are given the function of *khalifa* (trustee) (Firdaus Khairi et al. 2023). Meanwhile, Confucianism dedicated its existence to cultivating individuals' moral character to establish a thriving community. Besides, Confucianism also prioritised societal sustainable development and human growth (Li and Eilks 2024). However, they believed that humans should only gather resources from nature in a suitable manner and at the right time. Although prohibiting individuals completely from acquiring resources from nature is unreasonable, the issue lies in how to regulate individual desire. On the other hand, Islam emphasises kindness towards nature (Firdaus Khairi et al. 2023; Nadvi and Khalid 2023). For example, Islam prohibits the activities of murdering young animals and cutting down small plants. In summary, both Confucianism and Islam recognise the importance of morality in relation to nature, which is closely tied to humanity. Hence, by understanding the essence of humanity, individuals can recognise that the definition of sustainable development does not stem solely from the viewpoint of society or nature. To achieve sustainable development, it requires a combination of progress in human, social, and environmental development. Even their relationships exhibit interdependence but equilibrium; however, it promotes a harmonious coexistence between humans, society and nature.

Besides, it is crucial to emphasise morality in education and social ethics instead of prioritising technological knowledge. The process of achieving harmony through self-reflection in Confucianism exhibits similarity to Islamic approach. Islam recognises that everything originates from *niyyah* (sincere wish). The term 'niyye' indicates the activities of possessing an accurate understanding at the beginning of any tasks (Cherepanov 2020; Masitah et al. 2019). Confucianism encourages individuals to engage in self-reflection to attain moral enlightenment (Rozi, 2020; Duan et al., 2022); meanwhile, Islam appears to be particularly determined in obtaining this degree. The primary objective is to facilitate the acquisition of moral values by individuals. Therefore, self-examination serves as the primary means of maintaining a harmonious relationship within individuals, and it also serves as the fundamental balancing of the relationship between individuals, society and nature.

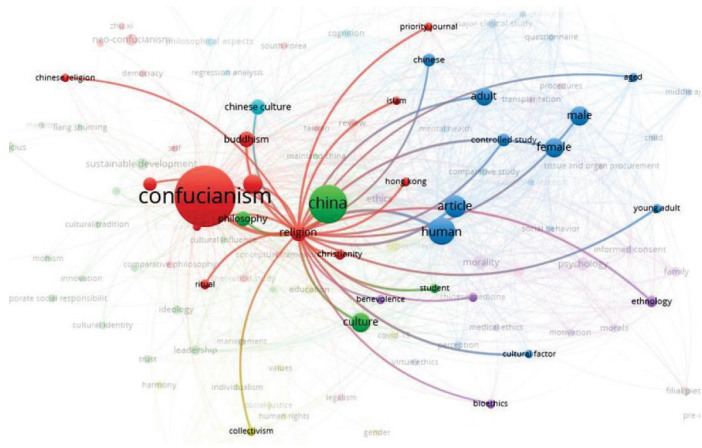


Figure 7: Religion keywords.

Additionally, the study reveals that both philosophies are incorporated into the bioethics keyword (Figure 7). Bioethics is an academic discipline that examines the ethical dilemmas arising from advancements in the fields of biology and medicine. The field encompasses the analysis of the ethical, moral, societal, and legal consequences of advancements in biology and medicine, and the fundamental principles values that inform decision-making related to healthcare and the life sciences (Pratt et al. 2014; Abutari et al. 2019; Fan 2016). Some of the related aspects such as medical, reproductive, genetics and genomics, research, end-of-life, organ transplantation, emerging technology, and global health. Bioethics offers a structured approach to making ethical decisions when confronted with intricate and swiftly progressing scientific and medical developments (Tretter et al. 2023).

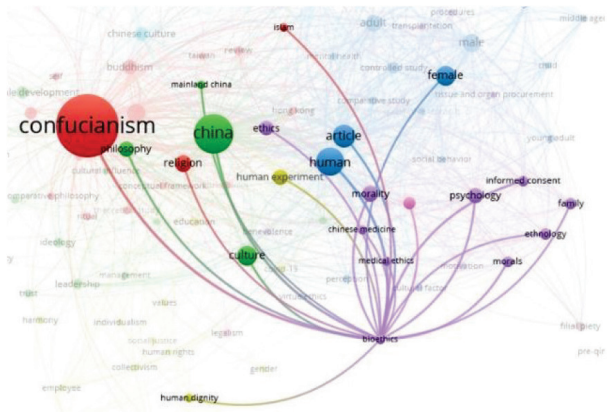


Figure 8: Bioethics keywords.

Bioethics in Confucianism is unique in its emphasis on the interconnections between individuals, the cultivation of superior morality, and the ethical development of individuals within a societal context. Some key aspects of Confucianism bioethics consist of humaneness or benevolence, ritual and propriety, family and filial piety, social harmony and responsibility, education and moral development, hierarchy and authority, and harmony with nature (Lee 2015; Fan 2016; Nie and Jones 2019). Aligned with this, Islamic bioethics concerns the moral principles and directives derived from the Islamic faith that regulate matters of biomedical and healthcare procedures (Javadli 2024). Islamic bioethics guides various aspects of medical and biological development, addressing ethical questions and scenarios within the framework of Islamic principles (Dabbagh, Mirdamadi and Ajani 2023). The Islamic bioethics principles consist of sanctity of life (Hifz al-Nafs), informed consent (Ijma), respect for human dignity (Karama), prohibition of harm (La Darar wa La Dirar), genetic ethics, equality in access to healthcare (Adl), and family structure and reproductive ethics (Saleem and Jan 2022; Dabbagh, Mirdamadi and Ajani 2023; Mohd Salim, Zulaikha and Suzana 2023).

Confucianism and Islam are distinct cultural and religious traditions that have each contributed to the development of bioethical principles within their respective contexts (Wang 2022; Wroldsen 2023). While their theological foundations differ, common ethical themes emerge when considering the intersection of Confucianism and Islamic perspectives on bioethics. The convergence discusses aspects such as respect for life and humanity, ethical decision-making and informed consent, family and reproductive ethics, the prohibition of harm and justice, as well as integration with modern science and technology. In conclusion, both schools of thought provide valuable contributions to worldwide deliberations on bioethics, emphasising the significance of cultural and religious viewpoints in ethical deliberations.

Confucianism and Sustainable Development

The study finding shows Confucianism supports United Nation SDGs (Figure 8) initiative, particularly associated with governance approach, Mencius, philosophy, adult, and among others. Confucianism, a philosophical and ethical framework, has traditionally had a significant impact on governance systems and ideals in East Asian countries, especially in China (Khan et al. 2022). In governance approaches, Confucianism ideology, such as benevolence, righteousness, and ritual propriety, has influenced traditional governance structures. Leaders were anticipated to exemplify these values, establishing a harmonious and ethically upright community (Li and Wei 2023; Zhang-Zhang 2023). In addition, Confucianism emphasised the importance of filial piety, which extended to the domain of government. This promoted a sense of respect for leaders and fostered a familial relationship between citizens and the government (Fu et al. 2022).

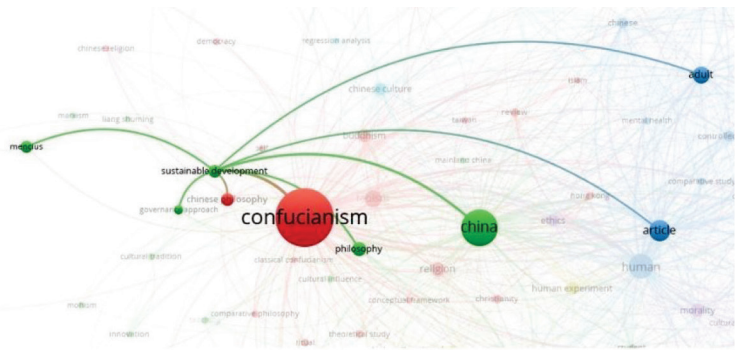


Figure 9: Confucianism and sustainable development.

From the bibliometric analysis, the keywords centre around the Confucianism sustainable development cluster consisting of education teaching, cultural tradition and corporate social responsibility areas. Thus, it is suggested that future studies might concentrate on the integration of these terms. First, the Confucianism-influenced educational systems have a significant impact on the development of individuals. By incorporating Confucianism values into teaching, it enables the cultivation of social obligation awareness, ethical uprightness, and collective welfare effort commitment. This ethical framework serves as the foundation for promoting creative thinking that aligns with societal civilization ideals (Liang and Matthews 2023; Zhu 2023). Besides, educational systems based on Confucianism prioritise the development of adaptable thinking skills and a readiness to investigate innovative concepts. The teaching approach should embed critical thinking and problem-solving skills that align with the essence of innovation. The ideas of Confucianism education can be modified to promote creativity and a receptive mindset for addressing societal concerns from time to time. Confucianism also prioritises the significance of lifelong learning and self-enhancement. By incorporating this element into education fosters a mindset of continuous learning, creating a platform for individuals to embrace new ideas and advancements. The concept aims to cultivate a mentality that appreciates flexibility and the active acquisition of knowledge (Zhu 2023).

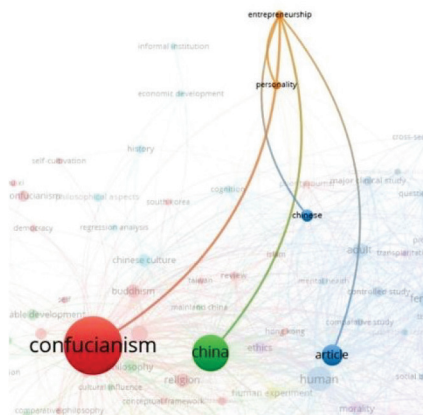
Second, Confucianism culture innovation is driven by virtues, adaptability and continuous development concepts. By integrating Confucianism principles, creative approaches can be developed to tackle current obstacles while preserving cultural customs, instead of displacing them (Chen et al. 2022). This approach promotes a proactive mindset while maintaining fundamental principles (Chin et al. 2021; Koczkás 2023). Furthermore, the merger of Confucianism and innovation is crucial for finding a harmonious equilibrium between embracing advancements and preserving cultural traditions. The objective is to promote a state of harmonious integration between the traditional and the modern. The cultural insight inherent in Confucianism can

provide valuable guidance for the creation of creative remedies that effectively tackle specific local issues (Chin et al. 2021).

Third, the integration of Confucianism with corporate social responsibility (CSR) involves examining how ethical principles can influence and direct the social and moral ethical activities. Confucianism prioritises ethical behaviour and moral conduct. By incorporating these values into CSR entails cultivating an organisation culture that places honesty, integrity, and ethical decision-making at business operations (Dong and Li 2023). Confucianism promotes the adoption of a strategic and long-sighted approach in decision-making, which enables the long-term effects on the environment, society, and economics for future generations (Tian, Tang and Tse 2022; Wu and Wan 2023). Organisations can embrace ecologically conscious policies and socially accountable practices that are in harmony with Confucianism principles. Besides, Confucianism places great importance on the values of filial piety, respect for elders, and the cultivation of harmonious relationships (Tian, Tang and Tse 2022; Dong and Li 2023). These values promote productive and respectful communications among stakeholders, which align with CSR commitment to stakeholder engagement and fostering responsible business relationships.

Confucianism and Entrepreneurship

The study regards Confucianism in the entrepreneurship area as still in its infant stage (Figure 9). The only keyword within the entrepreneurship cluster is personality, thus suggesting future discussion in this aspect. Within the scope of entrepreneurship, Confucianism ideology has a significant impact on organisational practices by fostering ethical conduct, upholding integrity, and developing accountability towards employees and society (Wei et al. 2023). The prioritisation of interpersonal relationships in Confucianism can facilitate the establishment of strong networks and alliances in the economic field, which is crucial for achieving entrepreneurial success (Chen et al. 2020; Chin et al. 2021). Entrepreneurs adopted Confucianism values that place a high importance on personal growth and the development of their character. Besides financial profitability, they perceive success in terms of making a constructive impact on society. Additionally, Confucianism has the capacity to integrate traditional principles with contemporary business practices, yielding a distinctive approach to management and leadership (Chen et al. 2020; Wei et al. 2023).



CONCLUSION

The objective of this study is to conduct a bibliometric analysis of the Confucianism research articles included in the Scopus-indexed journals. This analysis utilised the VOSviewer tool to examine the distribution of bibliometric maps. The data collection obtained by filtering on the keyword Confucianism concerns the topic areas, titles, keywords, and abstracts. The study received 908 relevant documents, published between 2014 and 2023, within the China and Malaysia regions. The findings indicate that research in the field of Confucianism has exhibited an upward pattern throughout the preceding 10-year period studied. By adopting the VOSviewer association strength method, the five terms with the highest occurrence frequency consist of Confucianism, China, human, articles, and Taoism. The dataset of 113 items has been further categorised into 10 distinct clusters, which are characterised by the primary term. Besides, the overlay visualisation showed that the most terms occurred between 2017 until 2021, consisting of mental health, major clinical study, cognition, human rights, Zhongyang thinking, Mohism, and others. In addition, the mapping analysis illustrated that the latest terms, including Confucianism, China, human, and female, have the highest density during the study period.

The study findings show that the keywords 'religion' and 'bioethics' are integrated in both Confucianism and Islam. Although Confucianism and Islam are distinct cultural and religious traditions, both have contributed to the development of bioethics within their respective contexts. The convergence discussion aspects centre around the context of respect for life and human, and ethical decision-making. Besides, Confucianism found support for sustainable development, which centres discussion in the areas of education, teaching,

cultural tradition, and corporate social responsibility. Hence, it is recommended for future study in these areas. In addition, more analysis can be done on the integration with entrepreneurship keywords.

This study can make a significant contribution to theory, practice, and policy. For theory, it provides researchers with a means to recognise gaps in knowledge and to map the evolution in the field of Confucianism. A study using bibliometrics helps identify areas within the Confucianism discipline in China and Malaysia that have not been extensively investigated, indicating potential opportunities for further theoretical development. Moreover, analysing the growth and decline of keywords throughout the time period offers insight into systematic knowledge progress, thereby contributing to the evolution of Confucianism hypotheses, such as those related to bioethics and sustainable development. For practical purposes, this study provides effective fund resources distribution to the developing significant research fields. For policy, the finding contributes to curricula system development that integrate current and significant research. This data-centric approach enables future strategic development and allocation of resources in academia and beyond.

This study serves as a significant resource subject for reflection for researchers interested in investigating the Confucianism field within China and Malaysia countries. However, the scope of this bibliometric analysis is limited to scholarly articles published in the Scopus database. In order to enhance future study, it is advisable to conduct an inclusive assessment of research data pertaining to Confucianism, without limiting the attention solely to the Scopus database, for example using the Web of Science (WoS), Lens, and Dimensions database. In addition, other bibliometric analysis tools such as Biblioshiny, CiteSpace, and HistCite can be adopted to provide better contemporary examining in the Confucianism field.

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