



# A Bibliographic Analysis of United Nations Integrated Missions

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**Abstract**— This paper gives insights into the bibliographic analysis of the integrated mission of the United Nations (UN) over the last two decades. The data were analysed using a visualization tool, VOSviewer, for bibliometric analysis to provide insights into the present research areas, and emerging trends related to the study and also to understand the gap in research and the trend of work and the future direction of work. The data were retrieved and fine-tuned from the Web of Science database during the period 2005-2024 for the present analysis. The methodology includes searching and screening for related articles in a Web of Science database, software selection and extraction of datasets, and lastly, analyzing the obtained results and patterns followed. This study also illustrates that the quantum of UN-related articles has increased in the last two decades by 11.29%. The significant contribution of Organizations among the UN agencies, including the World Health Organization (WHO) and among the Universities is the University of London. The visual overlay map of the co-occurrence of author keywords shows that keywords “United Nations”, “Co-ordination”, “management”, and “governance” are frequently occurring in the relevant published work. The results of the research area show that environmental sciences and ecology, veterinary sciences, public health and occupational health are the topics more focused for publication. The keyword occurrence map reveals that many topics are still not explored enough like terrorism, peace keeping and religiosity.



**Keywords**— United Nations, Bibliographic Analysis, mission, agency

## I. INTRODUCTION

The United Nations (UN) was formed in 1945 as a victor's club, with a charter written by the leading Allied nations. The main goal of the UN set was to ‘maintain international peace and security’. Later, it became a forum for the world's sovereign states to debate issues and determine collective courses of action. They are mostly involved in a wide range of important work, including refugee relief efforts, food delivery and security, election monitoring and democracy building, disease contaminants and immunizations, setting international safety standards for airline and maritime, etc. It is a complex, self-sustaining network of over a hundred subsidiary bodies, each with its own distinct objectives and areas of focus. As reflected in the UN directory, this intricate system is characterized by a web of power relationships, overlapping responsibilities, conflicting

goals, and political arenas. Despite the challenges in defining the specific mission of each body, they are all united by a shared commitment to the human rights framework, which strives to promote equality and dignity for all individuals (Fradejas-García and Mülli, 2019). At its core, this acts as a political body. However, the United Nations (UN) decision-making bodies have been overburdened with administrative work. Based on the meetings, economic analysis, and verbatim records and reports, there is a lot of duplication among different UN agencies. All the members agreed that the Secretariat should be restructured to function smoothly and economically in each section. The UN Secretary-Generals have established several high-level panels to encourage innovative ideas and accelerate reform efforts by national governments. Approaches by different agencies from different nations to

the UN reform vary widely. While some US policymakers, military strategists, and business leaders might see less necessity for the United Nations in a world they aim to control unilaterally, leaders from other countries hold different perspectives. They view a revitalized UN as a safeguard against the pressures of major powers and a way to address global issues through collective action. Reformers suggest that by focusing incrementally and simultaneously on key areas, it might be possible to balance the interests of both large and small nations through compromise. This could help avert the anarchy and relative powerlessness of the present system, which ultimately hinders the interests of both major and minor powers (Benedetti, 2009). As mentioned by Mackenzie (2015) in his report after 70 years of UN reforms, it is evident that the UN is not as good at adaptation and reformation. However, it can be said that the UN has always reflected the interests of the member states and governments and tried to adapt to the changing world. Although many reformations are widely incorporated in the UN agencies, the outreach to global research and academic circles seems very limited (David Mackenzie, 2015).

The majority of studies related to the UN focused on the sustainable development goals (SDGs) of the UN especially sustainable tourism (Niewiadomski and Brouder, 2024), sustainable life cycle management of chemicals (Zhang et al., 2024), emphasis on environmental sustainability (Zhenmin et al., 2019), clean energy (Singh and Ru, 2022), responsible consumption and production (Gunawan et al., 2020), protection of life on land and water (Zhang et al., 2021; Gulseven, 2020), importance of education and empowering of individuals (Agbedahin, 2019), peace keeping, terrorism, partnerships, human rights, health, space science initiative and many more. Based on the literature studies (Chopra et al., 2022), it has been noticed that the progress towards achieving SDGs is too far behind, and the research community globally may not achieve this target by the year 2030. It is also suggested by the research communities that for the given agenda of 2030, it is more suitable to have an evaluation halfway to check the efficiency of the progress of SDGs and evaluate the potential revisions needed for the same (Yumnam, 2024). Though the SDGs were set with equal significance, the research progress has shown a non-uniform distribution of focus for various objectives (Biermann et al., 2022). There is always a general tendency to blame the limited success rate of UN activities. This may be due to the lack of resources, and it may also happen due to a lack of coherent application of the resources already available. A few research articles are there based on lack of funding, lack of resources, etc. As more organizations are engaged in similar activities either independently or in parallel with UN

agencies, it is still greatly challenging for the member states to improve the tools required for several operations. Hence, the UN secretary-general urged the UN agencies to go for an integrated mission for achieving SDGs. Integrated missions are aimed to bring close the UN resources and activities together with state governments' needs and also ensure that it should be aligned with political, military, developmental and humanitarian sectors.

Despite the growing public awareness of the work of UN agencies and the urge for integrated missions for achieving SDGs, their recent research status, hot spots, and development of integrated approaches and their success are still not well examined. Hence, conducting a review particularly comprehending the UN's integrated missions, its current research status, the methodologies adopted for clustering, etc, is necessary. Taking these points into account, the study aims to do a bibliometric analysis focused on the progress and the research path in Integrated missions of the UN agencies from 2005 to 2024.

## II. DATA AND METHODOLOGY ADOPTED

The data for the present bibliographic analysis were obtained from the Web of Science database over the last 20 years (2005-2024), which focuses mainly on the visualization of bibliometric maps from the VOSviewer software. The systematic analysis of the Web of Science database provides a bibliometric profile of UN-related research all around the globe in terms of research areas, institutions contributed, countries involved, publication records, collaborations, source of funding, etc. For the present bibliometric analysis, the authors have considered web of science research articles that were published in English language, which is maintained by Clarivate Analytics in London, UK. A manageable corpus of papers was retrieved by applying search string combinations, adhering to the procedures of systematic reviews in related domains. The study includes articles published up to 2024, as the database was accessed in July 2024. With the search criteria 'United Nations', 33,368 documents were found. The major keywords applied for downloading papers in Web of Science are — "Coordination" OR "Coherence" AND "United Nations" OR "System". By searching with these search strings, the authors obtained 1068 documents, and after examining and fine-tuning the downloaded papers, 62 articles were selected. The relevant 62 papers from the Web of Science database can be exported in different formats and for the present analysis it has been exported and saved as text file (.txt format), which included variables such as authors, year of publication, name of journals, institutions and their country situated, languages, research area, keywords used, and others. The saved data were then

imported into VOSviewer (1.6.15) software and Excel for further database analysis (Anjali and Remesan, 2023).

### III. ANALYSIS AND VISUALIZATION OF DATA USED

The VOSviewer (Visualization of Similarities (VOS) viewer) software is used for the bibliographic analysis in the present study, which is user-friendly and compatible with any operating system platform, as described by Van Eck and Waltman (2017). In the VOSviewer window, the results can be visualized as networks, overlay maps, and density maps. The strength of the VOSviewer includes efficient analysis of research outputs and clustering. In this study, VOSviewer is used to identify the structure and evolution of a theme of research by conducting analysis of the database at various publication levels and science mapping. The database analysis encompasses the examination of scientific outputs, years of publication, type of documents, and organizations contributed for the research focused on the integrated mission of the UN and other related agencies. The study utilizes VOSviewer to create visual representations of

maps, which illustrate the intellectual structure of a research field through science mapping. These maps provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationships between bibliographic objects, includes Link strength, Keyword co-occurrence, Co-citation with sources and authors (Andersen and Swami, 2021).

### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To start with the analysis, a global survey has been conducted based on papers published in different countries and is shown in Fig. 1. The results show that the majority of the analyses were carried out by Switzerland, the USA, and England, followed by France, Italy etc. The colors in yellow indicate that those countries have recently published articles related to integrated missions. Scientific publications over the years show a growth in the number of publications ranging from 1 publication to 62 publications from 2005 to 2024 (Fig. 2). The regression analysis also indicates an exponential increase during the last two decades. An increase of 1.61% articles to 11.29% have been noticed during this time interval.

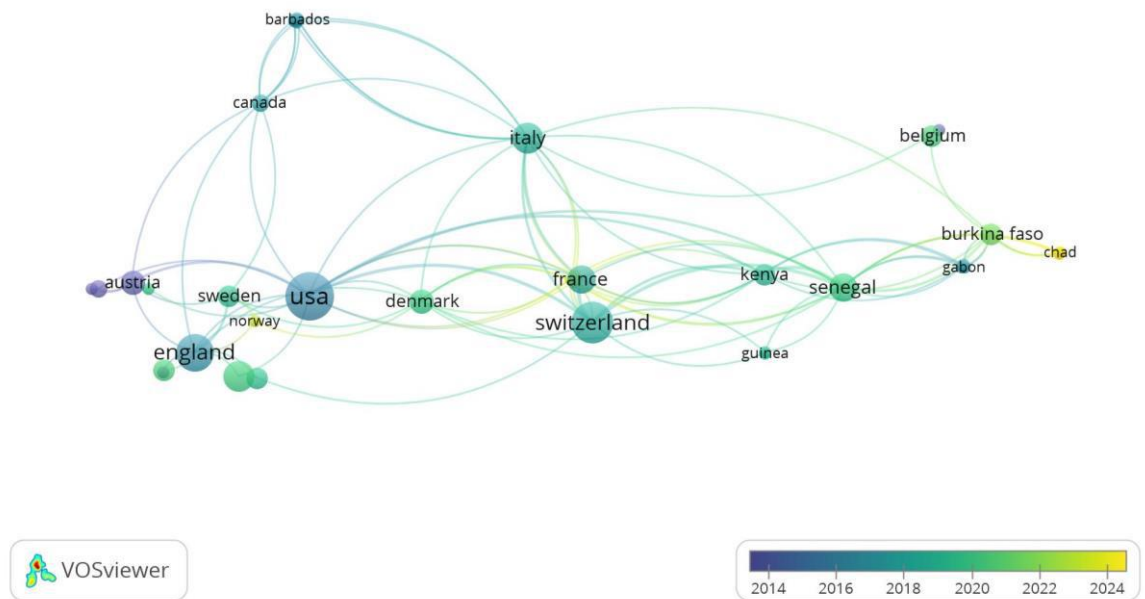


Fig. 1. Network visualization of countries during the period 2005 to 2024.

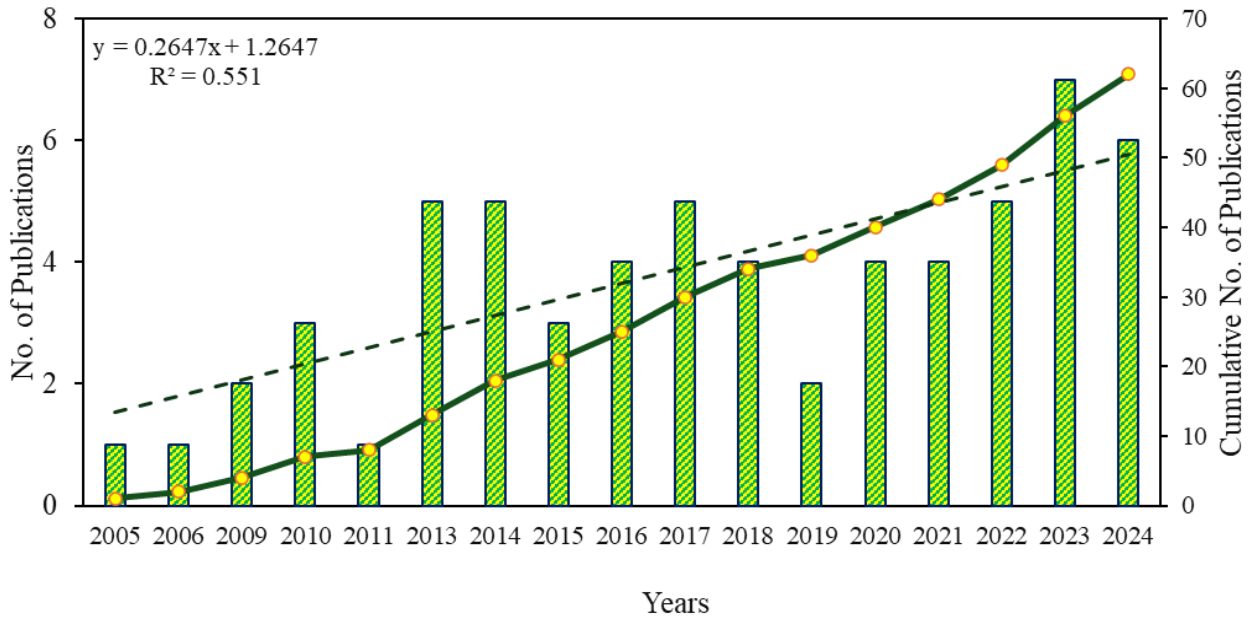


Fig. 2. Plot of number of publications published annually.

Fig. 3 discusses the top twelve disciplines that contributed to integrated mission-related studies of the UN. As per the search criteria, the publications related to the research area majorly include Environmental Sciences and Ecology, with 10% of documents followed by Veterinary Sciences (8%)

and Public, Environmental and Occupational Health (6%). The major limitations of bibliographic analysis are that it is possible only for published articles and cannot include other communications, reports, PhD thesis, etc.

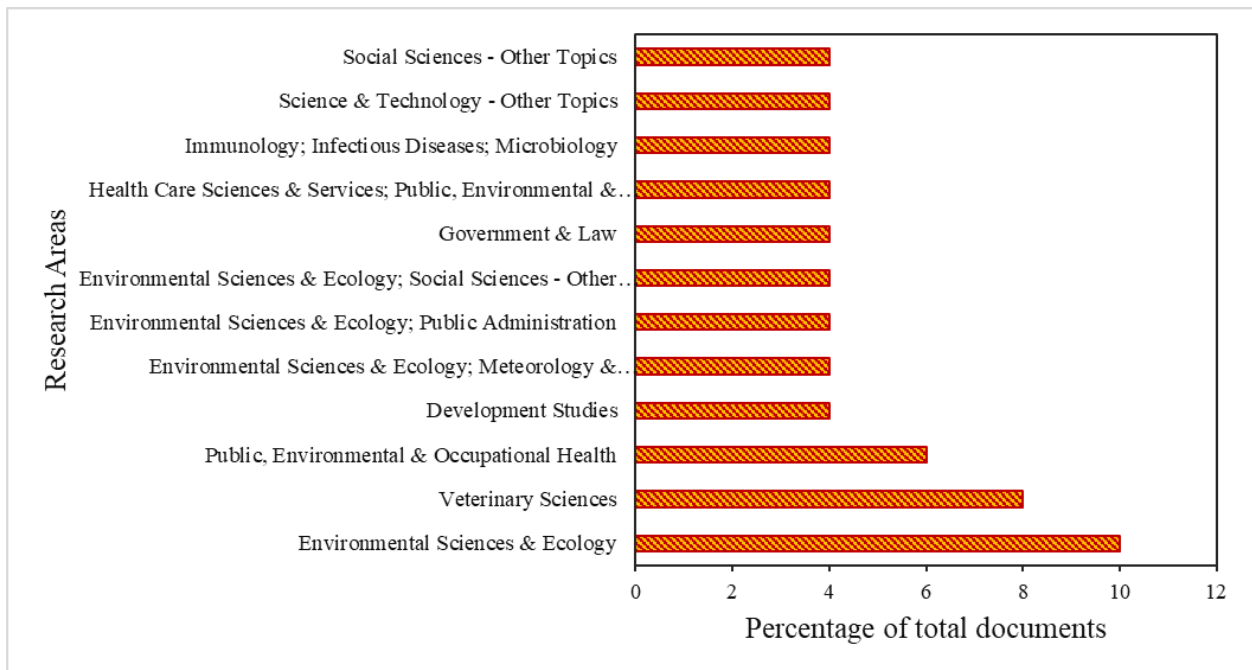


Fig. 3. Percentage of documents published in different research areas.

4.1 Analysis of Contributions by Institutions and Journals  
 Around the world, 32% of the published papers are contributed by the UN agencies itself and the detailed

analysis is shown in Fig. 4. This includes the World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), Food Agricultural Organization (FAO), OCHA



Emergency Service Branch and OFF United Nations Special Coordinator Middle EAS. In that WHO and UNICEF contributed the majority of the integrated mission articles compared to the other UN agencies. Compared to

the non-UN agencies, the University of London published more publications, followed by the University of California, the London School of Economics and so on (Fig. 5).

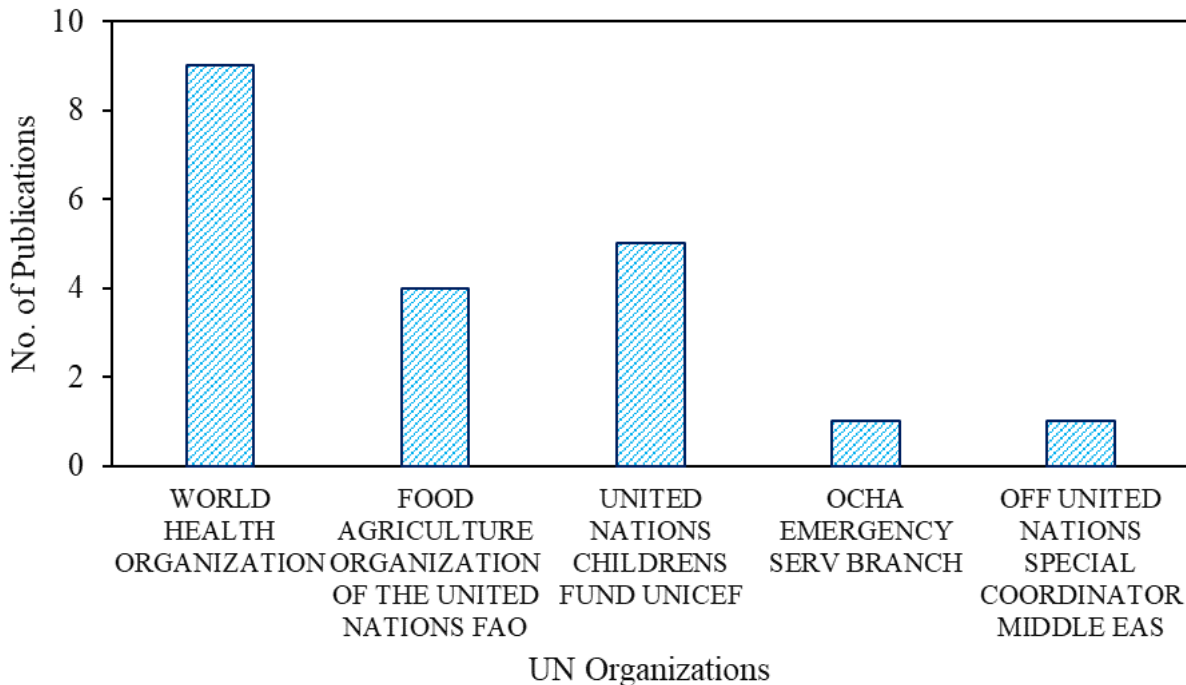


Fig. 4. No. of publications contributed by the UN organizations.

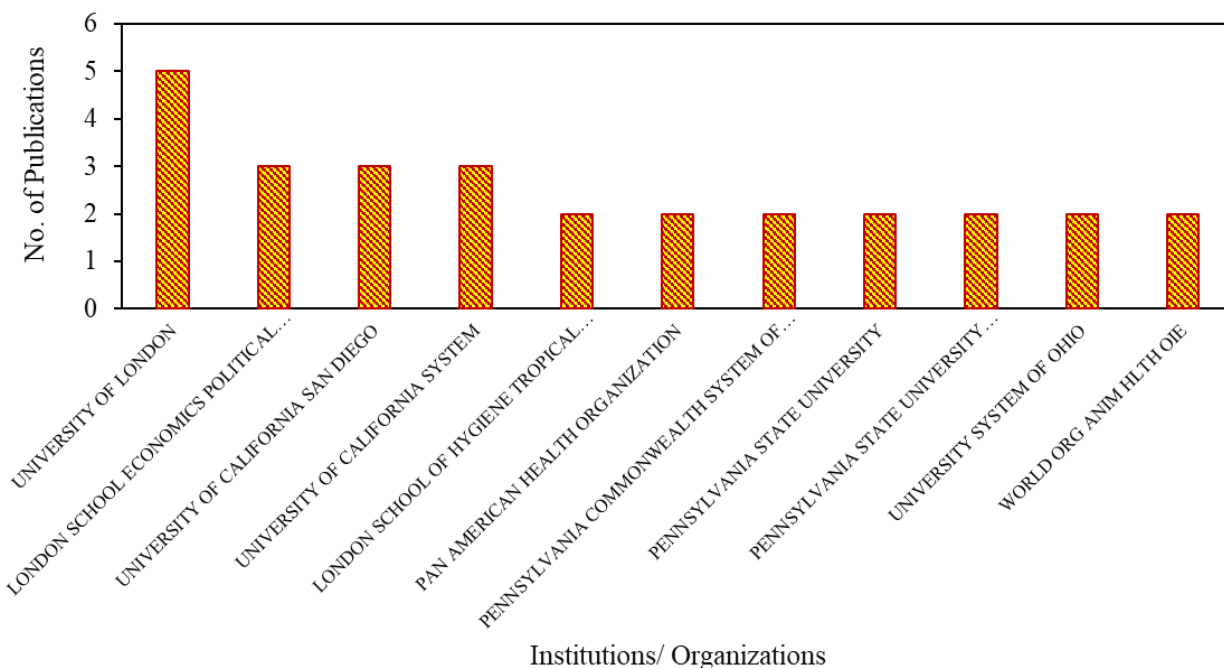


Fig. 5. No. of publications contributed by the Institutions worldwide.

Also, it is found from Fig. 6 that Revue Scientifique ET Technique-Office International DES Epizooties published

nearly 6.45% of articles, then BMJ Global Health, Clinical Policy, Disasters, International Journal of Health Planning

and Management, Journal of Infectious Diseases, Third World Quarterly journals with 3.22% of articles each. All other journals have 1.6% of the articles published. The authors have also plotted the citation reports of the selected articles, which are shown in Fig. 7. The citations from the

database of the Web of Science library refer to the articles' citation history. For the present analysis, the total number of citations of all the articles is found to be 1107, with an average citation per document of 17.85.

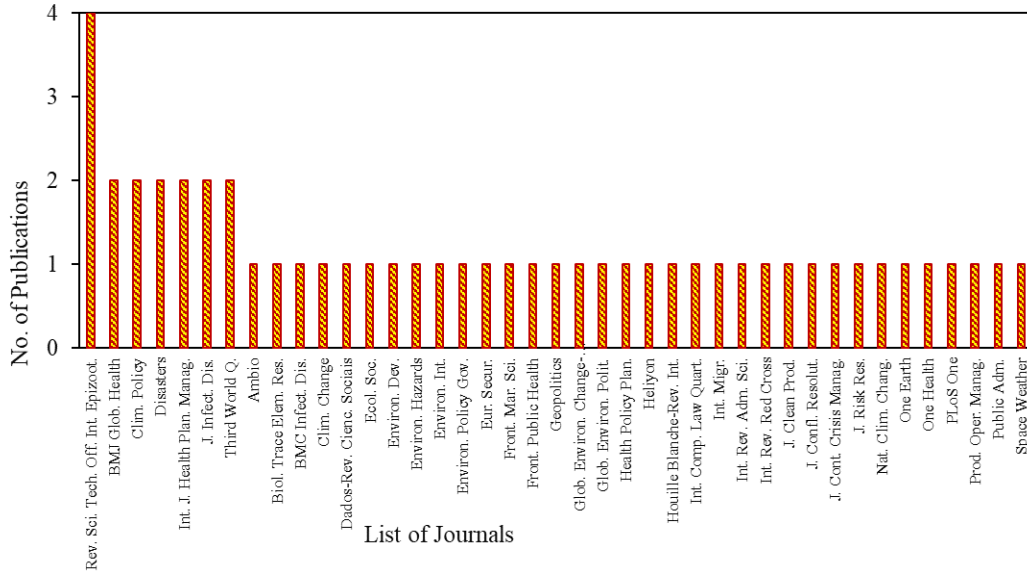


Fig. 6. No. of articles published in related journals during the period 2005-2024.

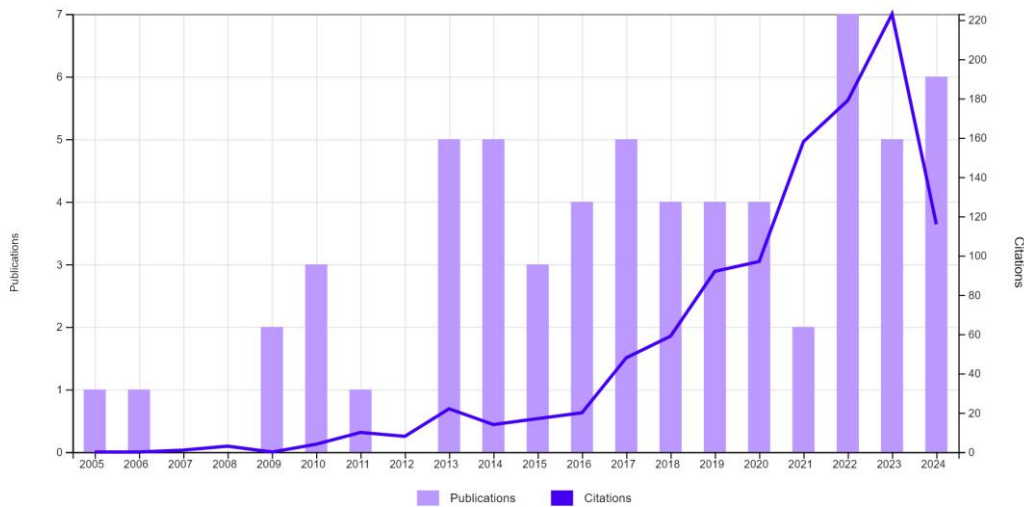


Fig. 7. Citation report of the articles published during the selected time period.

4.2 Co-occurrence network of all keywords

The co-occurrence network map of keywords displays the common keywords used in this field of study, with the nodes representing the frequently occurring keywords. In our analysis of the Web of Science dataset using VOSviewer, it is found that a total of 348 keywords co-

occurring is illustrated in Figure 8. The total links of 1888 are found with a link strength of 1913. According to the figures, the most recurring keywords are governance, United Nations, coordination, management and so on. The yellow and red color nodes indicate that these are the keywords used in the latest articles. This would give an insight of the latest research areas related to UN.

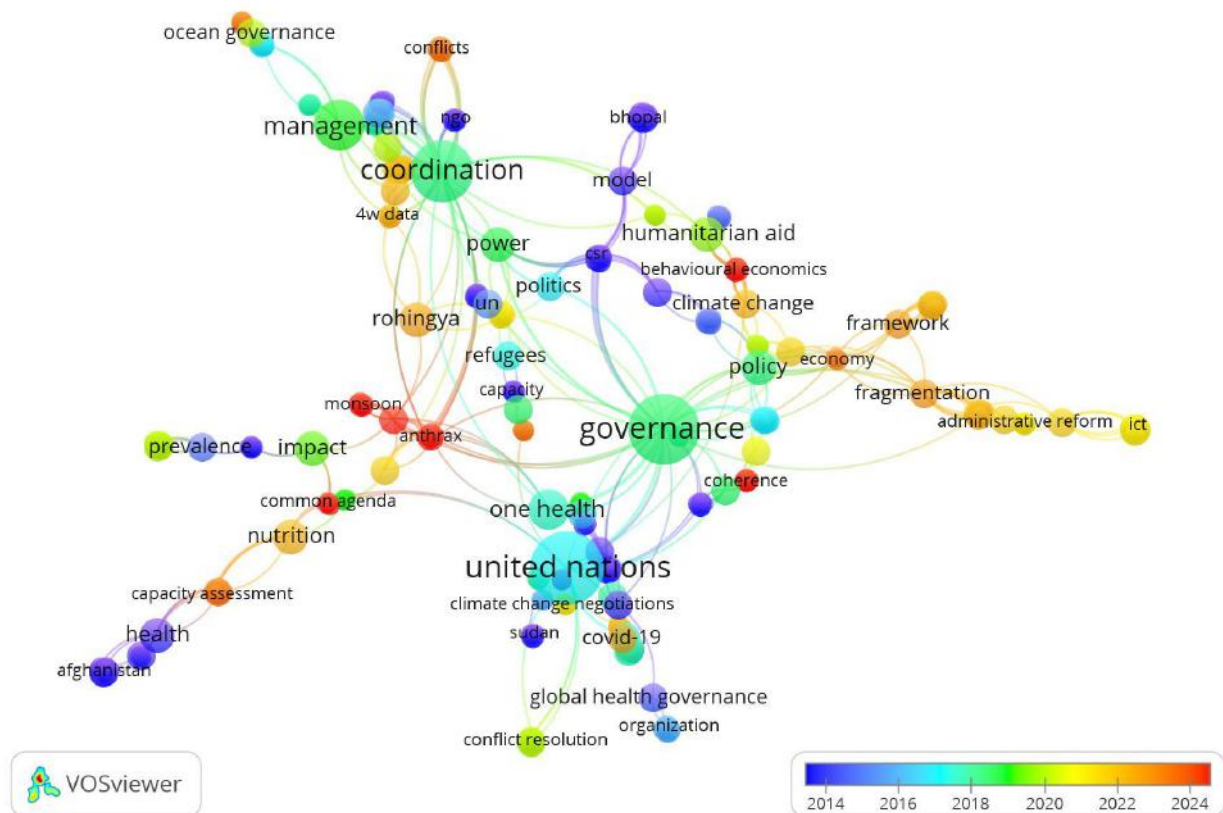


Fig. 8. Overlay visualization of the keywords co-occurrence used during the period 2005-2024.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

The present bibliometric analysis provides insight into the progress and research pathway in integrated missions of the UN agencies from 2005 to 2024. The analysis have been carried out in the Web of Science database during this period using VOSviewer software. The analysis of the available database and linking were utilized to examine the data records related to the study of the UN-integrated mission for the last 2 decades. Post-analysis of this particular research result presents an outlook that includes the contributions of institutions, keywords, emerging research areas, and journals. Primarily, the results of data analysis showed an increase in the publication of 11.29% of papers in the time period 1995-2024. The WHO is the central UN agency, which contributes more number of related study to this field. The main research categories in this study include environmental sciences and ecology, veterinary sciences, public health and occupational health. The mapping of the results highlighted a co-occurrence of keywords and a co-citation of sources and organizations. The clustering of keywords demonstrated our understanding of the themes of work that have been widely explored by the research community. The most commonly

found keywords among the 384 author keywords includes United Nations, coordination, governance, and management. Presently, the bibliographic analysis can be done with an accepted database of Web of Science or Scopus, which may exclude contributions of non-peer-reviewed articles and unpublished reports. This limitation can be collated in our future work. Lastly, this study provide insights to an updated review of quantitative analysis happening to topics related to different missions of the UN to attain SDGs.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author does not have any financial or non-financial interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript.

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