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REVIEW

Psychology in Latin America. Historical study through its indexed paper production in Scopus (1951-2000)

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Abstract | **Introduction:** This study examines the production of certified knowledge in psychology in Latin America (LatAm) from 1951 to 2000, adopting a critical historiographical perspective. The goal is to identify the social, conceptual, and intellectual dimensions of these publications in psychology. **Method:** This study analyses the bibliographic records of the Scopus database for the five most productive LatAm countries in the field of psychology (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, and Mexico) using a sociobibliometric strategy to explore productivity, collaboration, and the influence of practices, an applied approach, as well as the prevalence of certain theories. **Result:** The results reveal a gradual increase in the production of scientific literature in the field of psychology in LatAm until the mid-1990s, followed by an exponential surge. It is noteworthy that universities are situated in major urban centres, particularly in Brazil and Mexico. The analysis of social networks highlights a strong collaborative relationship between LatAm countries and the United States. The conceptual and thematic structure is characterised by the presence of four main groups: clinical and epidemiological studies, animal experiments, psychological and physiological features, and psychotherapies. With regard to intellectual references, there is evidence of a mixture of classical psychological authors and LatAm authors. **Discussion:** The findings indicate a variety of patterns of production and collaboration, shaped by the traditions of different branches of psychology. The collaboration with the United States and the presence of classical occidental authors show characteristics of LatAm production, indicating a certain coloniality and dependency.

Keywords: Latin America, history of psychology, bibliometrics, indexed publications

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La psicología en América Latina. Estudio histórico a través de su producción de artículos indexados en Scopus (1951-2000)

Resumen | **Introducción:** Este artículo examina la producción de conocimiento certificado en psicología en América Latina entre 1951 y 2000, adoptando una perspectiva historiográfica crítica. El objetivo es identificar las dimensiones sociales, conceptuales e intelectuales de estas publicaciones en psicología. **Método:** Este estudio analiza los registros bibliográficos de la base de datos Scopus para los cinco países latinoamericanos más productivos en el campo de la psicología (Argentina,

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Brasil, Chile, Colombia y México) utilizando una estrategia sociobibliométrica para explorar la productividad, la colaboración y la influencia de las prácticas, el enfoque aplicado y la prevalencia de ciertas teorías. **Resultados:** Los resultados revelan un aumento gradual de la producción de literatura científica en el campo de la psicología en América Latina hasta mediados de la década de 1990, seguido de un aumento exponencial. Destaca la localización de las universidades en los grandes centros urbanos, particularmente en Brasil y México. El análisis de las redes sociales pone de manifiesto una fuerte relación de colaboración entre los países latinoamericanos y Estados Unidos. La estructura conceptual y temática se caracteriza por la presencia de cuatro grandes grupos: estudios clínicos y epidemiológicos, experimentos con animales, aspectos psicológicos y fisiológicos y psicoterapias. En cuanto a las referencias intelectuales, se evidencia una mezcla de autores psicológicos clásicos y autores latinoamericanos. **Discusión:** Los hallazgos indican una variedad de patrones de producción y colaboración, conformados por las tradiciones de las diferentes ramas de la psicología. La colaboración con los Estados Unidos y la presencia de autores clásicos occidentales reflejan características de la producción latinoamericana, indicando cierta colonialidad y dependencia.

Palabras clave: América Latina, historia de la psicología, bibliometría, publicaciones indexadas

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This study constitutes an initial overview within a broader project that aims to analyse various written sources of Latin American (LatAm) academic psychology from multiple critical perspectives and through diverse methodological strategies. In this particular study, we examined the production of certified knowledge in psychology in LatAm between 1951 and 2000. We have analysed bibliographical records from the Scopus database for the five most productive LatAm countries in the field of psychology according to its own criteria (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, and Mexico). To this end, we employed a socio-bibliometric strategy to explore patterns of productivity, collaboration, prevalence, and the circulation of disciplinary knowledge.

Danziger (2006) critically observed that conventional historiographies of modern psychology have often been constructed from a narrow epistemological vantage point, privileging knowledge produced within the United States (USA) and select European nations. This approach systematically marginalises contributions originating beyond these hegemonic centres of intellectual production. Meanwhile, paradoxically it asserts itself as a comprehensive account of the discipline's development. Such narratives operate under the implicit assumption that scholarship emerging outside these regions holds negligible significance to psychology's 'universal' trajectory, thereby reinforcing colonial hierarchies of epistemic authority. This perspective may stem from the fact that much of the history of psychology, including regions such as LatAm, has predominantly been analysed or reconstructed in comparison to these centres, emphasising similarities while disparaging differences. Furthermore, by characterising Western psychology as psychology *per se*, contributions that understand psychological phenomena through alternative worldviews or diverse epistemic perspectives have often been ignored or dismissed.

Beyond these historical narratives, critical scholars have also pointed out the issues associated with scientific development in LatAm, particularly within the social sciences, due to efforts to emulate models originating from central countries. However, this task is inherently impossible, as the material, symbolic, cultural, and other demands create what decolonial theorists call an "abyssal line," effectively preventing scholars from peripheral regions from concretising any contributions that might be recognised as significant. At best, what occurs is a process of absorption or assimilation, whereby peripheral contributions are appropriated and presented as originating from the centre (Martín-Baró, 2006; Sánchez-Antonio, 2022).

Consequently, scholars from regions such as LatAm experience what is termed *coloniality*, manifesting in the inability to carry forward proposals deeply rooted in their own contexts due to the absence of suitable epistemologies, resulting in reliance upon knowledge produced by central countries. Ultimately, these disconnected developments fail to resolve the core issues of their contexts, representing a significant ethical shortcoming in addressing and remedying the needs of our peoples (Baquero et al., 2015; Martín-Baró, 2006).

In line with the aforementioned points, a review of the historiography of modern LatAm psychology reveals that many narratives emphasise the processes involved in the reception of psychological ideas. Particularly throughout the latter half of the twentieth century, historical reconstructions have frequently focused on the reception of various psychological theories, including behaviourism, cognitivism, psychoanalysis, humanism, phenomenology, sociohistorical theory, and genetic epistemology. Additionally, psychotherapeutic and evaluative techniques and technologies originating from central countries significantly influenced professional profiles, shaping practice in both public and private sectors, and guiding efforts towards social, community, educational, occupational, and mental health well-being (Ardila, 2003; Arias Gallegos et al., 2021; Gallegos & Ferrari, 2020).

Although less frequent, there has been growing recognition of alternative developments, notably the emergence of liberation psychology and community-oriented social psychology grounded in action-research methodologies (e.g., Klappenbach, 2021). These sociopolitically engaged frameworks stand in contrast to the predominant historiographical focus on the re-

ception of psychological theories and practices based on Western contexts.

This period also saw numerous reconstructions of the processes through which psychology became institutionalised. These accounts range from the establishment of undergraduate programmes and the social organisation of professional societies and associations to the development of legal frameworks regulating professional practice. It is evident that some of these reconstructions address the impact of LatAm's unstable and often tumultuous sociopolitical context on the development of the discipline. They also document the transformations, concealment, displacement, and disappearance of individuals and projects that occurred in the region—particularly following the breakdown of constitutional order brought about by military coups (Beria et al., 2025; Consoli et al., 2021; Piñeda & Jacó-Vilela, 2014; Polanco et al., 2021).

There is a considerable variety of sources from which one can study the history of psychology in each region. However, certified knowledge, defined as that which is assessed by the scientific community in terms of quality and relevance and subsequently published in journals and books (Callón et al., 1995), constitutes an invaluable source for accessing developments in the field. As highlighted by Cobo-Martín (2011) in his three-dimensional sociohistorical model, the analysis of scientific articles allows us to examine: (a) the social dimension, enabling the description of research team composition; (b) the conceptual dimension, which allows us to observe the diversity of themes, as well as theoretical, technical, and practical approaches that have emerged; and (c) the intellectual dimension, through which we can identify the primary references cited in these works.

In particular, as precedents to this study on certified knowledge in LatAm psychology employing quantitative approaches (Gallegos et al., 2020), we identified research using a variety of methods, including bibliometric analysis, social network analysis, and textual analysis (Polanco et al., 2022). In some cases, the focus and context were specific journals such as the *Revista Latinoamericana de Psicología* (Salas et al., 2019), in the other studies on psychological theories such as behaviourism (Polanco et al., 2020).

The literature review also revealed the existence of research on psychology publications in various countries (Polanco-Carrasco et al., 2017), such as Colombia (Barrios et al., 2011), Brazil (Fradkin, 2017), among others. Some of these studies were based on bibliographic records from multidisciplinary databases such as Web of Science and Scopus (e.g., Vera-Villarroel et al., 2011).

Scopus, the indexing database selected for the retrieval of bibliographic records in this study, is globally recognised within the academic community as one of the most authoritative sources for certifying international publication standards. It is widely used by universities and by funding and accreditation agencies across many regions for purposes of academic evaluation and research support (Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2016). Although LatAm has maintained only a peripheral presence in Scopus (e.g., 3% in the year 2000), many institutions and universities within the region have nonetheless adopted its metrics as a reference for evaluating researchers and academic output (SCImago Journal & Country Rank, 2000).

Multiple factors have been identified as contributing to this limited presence. On the one hand, structural challenges specific to the countries in this region —such as political instability and insufficient funding for scientific research— have been frequently cited. On the other hand, attention has been drawn to the biases embedded in the rules established by the leading publishing countries represented in these databases, including the imposition of English as the *lingua franca* of science, the thematic prioritisation of the Natural and Biomedical Sciences over the Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences (which includes psychology), and the standardisation of publishing norms—what and how one is expected to publish—according to central-country models. These factors have negatively affected both the production and recognition of academic work written in languages such as Spanish and Portuguese, leading to the marginal presence of such contributions in international indexes (Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2016; Vela Orbegozo & Rivas-Ramírez, 2024; Vizioli, 2024). Specifically, in the field of Psychology in the year 2000, all LatAm accounted for only 1% of the indexed output in Scopus —ranking just above Africa— while the US and Western Europe together accounted for 87% of the production (SCImago Journal & Country Rank, 2000).

For all the previously outlined reasons, the analysis of these records constitutes an investigation into the margins of psychological knowledge production—margins defined in relation to the mainstream shaped by the global design promoted by dominant centres of production at the time. The historical reconstruction that will emerge from this analysis will enable us to address a series of research questions, including: Who were the authors from this region who succeeded in publishing in indexed journals adhering to the standards of the global centre, and what were their defining characteristics? What geopolitical features characterised the institutions from which these authors originated? What forms of collaboration were present in these scientific investigations—with other countries in the region and beyond? What were the geopolitical and thematic characteristics of the indexed journals in which LatAm authors appeared? What topics did they address, and what intellectual traditions informed their writings?

The aim of addressing these questions is to determine whether this body of work reflects the construction of original theoretical and practical frameworks, or whether it instead exhibits mimetic developments shaped by the structures of central countries. In the latter case, we seek to describe the degrees of coloniality, and dependency reflected in the intellectual foundations, epistemic and conceptual principles, the selection of research topics, and the dynamics of collaboration between researchers and institutions. This, in turn, will allow us to formulate interpretations regarding their regional and global orientations.

Method

The present research is an *ex post facto* inquiry, a variant of historiographic studies that employ sociobibliomet-

ric strategies. These studies test relationships between variables in a past situation, which are analysed in the context of the main hermeneutic tools of the history of critical psychology (Klappenbach & Arrigoni, 2011).

Justification of the period to be investigated

The 1950s were selected as the starting point, as most psychology undergraduate programmes in the region were established between the late 1940s and early 1950s (Ardila, 2003). The period concludes in the year 2000, marking a point after which a significant increase in indexed LatAm literature becomes evident (Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2016). We therefore propose 1951 to 2000 as the optimal temporal scope for this study, providing a comprehensive historical range while leaving the early 21st century for future investigations.

Sample

The bibliographic records of the indexed paper production of the five most productive LatAm countries in the subject area of psychology —Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, and Mexico, as determined by SCImago Country Rank— were the focus of this study. Of the 18 countries typically included in the LatAm region, these five were selected due to space constraints, which make it unfeasible to analyse and compare all countries simultaneously. For the same reason, this initial study includes only bibliographic records retrieved from the Scopus database. This dataset comprises 2,373 records related to the subject area of psychology—encompassing articles, book chapters, conference papers, reviews, and short surveys—for the selected countries and the period under study (see Figure 1).

Procedures

[1] A survey of the bibliographic records in the database under study was conducted. [2] The information was loaded into the EndNote bibliographic manager, including data on authors, institutions, titles, countries where the research was carried out, abstracts, language, and references for the total number of records found. Duplicate records and records with country error were removed. Names of author, institutions, countries, and sources (e.g., journal names) were standardised. Other relevant errors were corrected to ensure accurate analysis. [3] The quantitative analysis (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017) employed a variety of techniques, metrics, units of analysis, statistical and graphical techniques (see Table 1).

Ethical principles

It should be noted that the present research did not involve any human or animal studies. However, as it was based on publicly available data, the principles established by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) and the ethical recommendations for historiographic studies in psychology (Beria et al., 2023) were followed. These principles were respected in all aspects of the research.

Results

Scientific productivity

As illustrated in Figure 2, the scientific output of LatAm authors in psychology showed modest and gradual growth from the 1950s through the 1980s. From the early 1990s —particularly the mid-1990s— publication volume

Figure 1. Data collection flow diagram

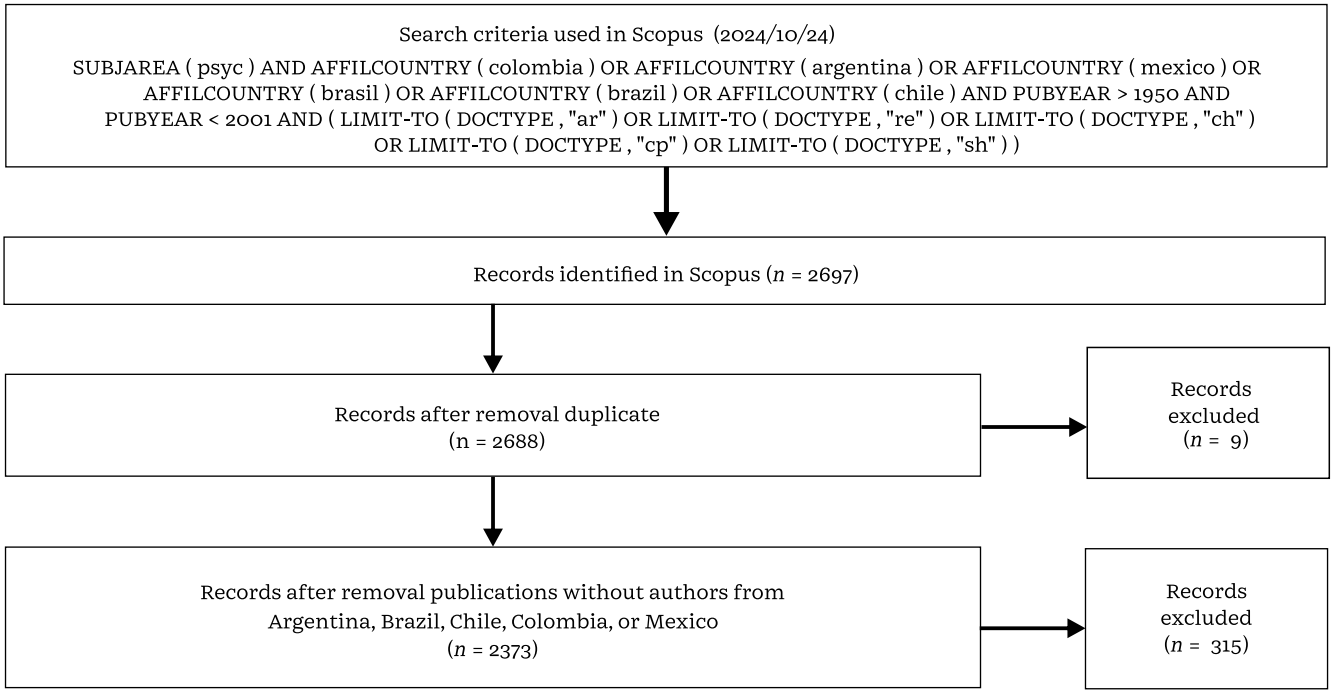


Table 1. Specifications of the analysis

Level of Analysis	Metrics	Unit of Analysis	Statistical Technique	Graphical Technique	Structure
Scientific Productivity	Annual scientific production. Productivity index of authors, institutions, source, and geographical map of production by country	Documents, Authors, Institutions, Sources, Countries	Productivity Index Analysis	Bar Chart for Frequency Distribution; Geographical Mapping	Productivity
Collaboration	Fractional author contribution and social networks of collaboration between countries	Authors, Countries	Co-authorship and Collaboration Analysis	Bar Chart for Fractional Frequency Distribution; Social Network Analysis	Social
Conceptual & Thematic Structure	Textual analysis of concepts using word association indexes within keywords	Keywords	Multiple Correspondence Factor Analysis	Thematic Mapping	Conceptual
Circulation of Ideas in Production	Studies of most frequently referenced authors in articles	References, Authors	Citation Analysis	Dispersion map of referenced authors	Intellectual

Note. The software utilised for the normalisation process was *Google Sheets*. *Bibliometrix* and *Tableau* were employed for the analysis, while *Excel* and *Corel Draw* were used for charting.

increased markedly, indicating exponential growth towards the end of the century. In terms of authorship, the findings are consistent with Lotka's Law: most authors published only once or twice, while a small group accounted for a large share of publications. Out of 4,594 unique authors, only 25 published more than 12 papers. Among them, three most prolific authors stood out with 29, 34, and 49 publications, respectively. A temporal analysis of these prolific trajectories shows that, although records begin in 1951, the first among them appears only in 1961. Additional high-output authors emerge between 1968 and 1970, marking the beginning of a gradual but sustained growth in scholarly activity. The surge in the 1990s thus reflects the cumulative effect of careers and networks that consolidated over preceding decades. It also could be related to the redemocratisation and intellectual freedom of some of those countries after Dictatorships. However, this hypothesis ought to be tested in another study (see Figure 3).

As illustrated in Figure 4, there is a notable presence of institutions from Brazil ($n = 7$), followed by Argentina

Figure 2. Annual scientific production

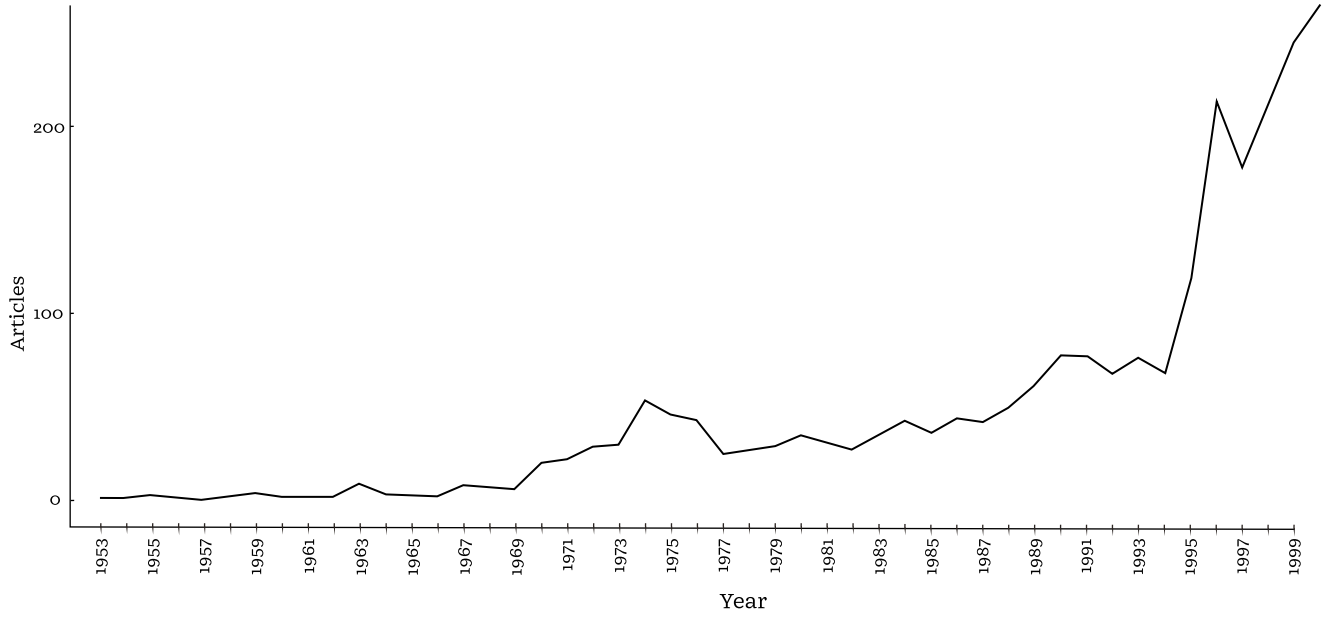


Figure 3. Most productive authors over time

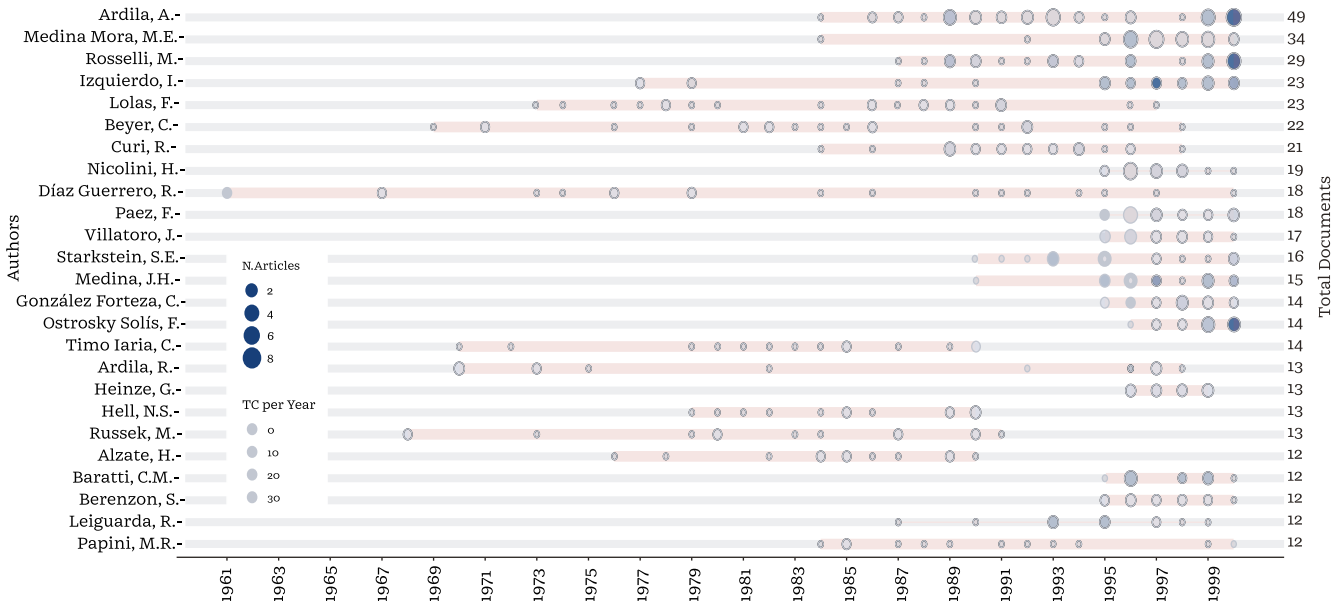
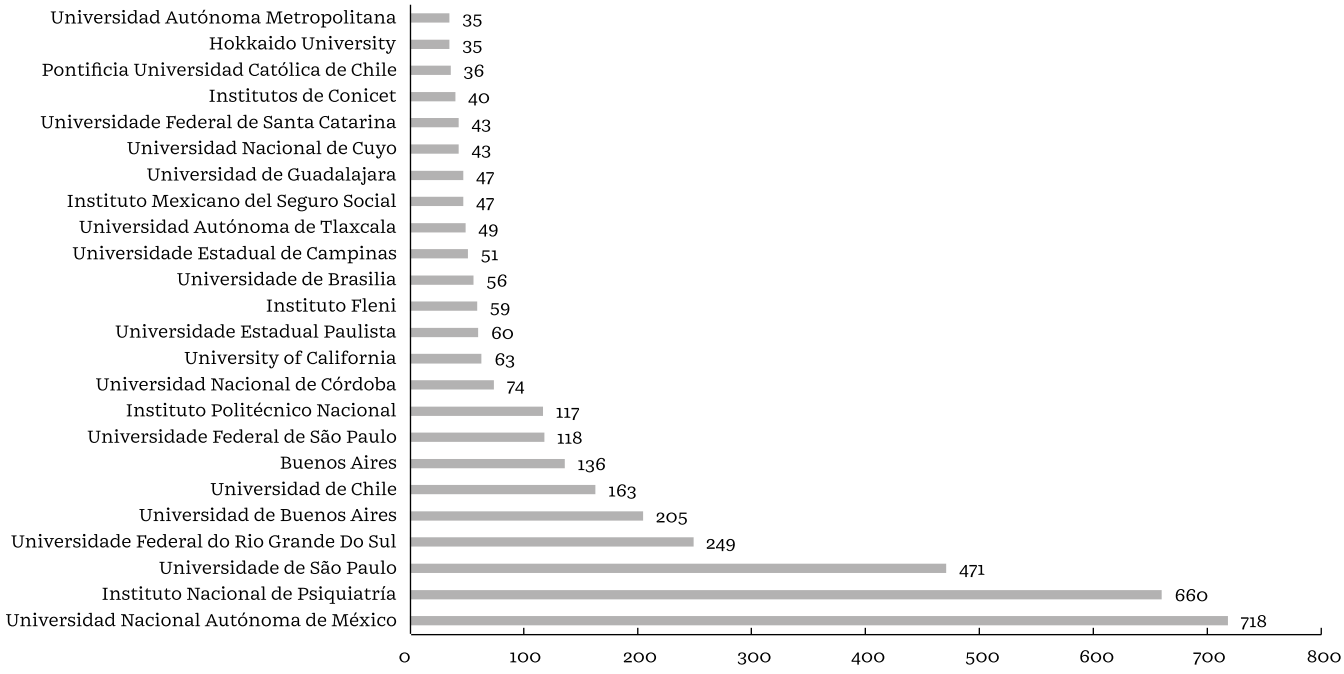


Figure 4. Most productive institutions



& Mexico ($n = 6$) and Chile ($n = 3$). Additionally, there are institutions from USA, and Japan ($n = 1$). It is also noteworthy that some institutions have not provided a declaration of presence, or have only declared a location, as in the case of Buenos Aires. This may be associated with the production of certain fields, such as psychoanalysis, where the studies refer to private practice.

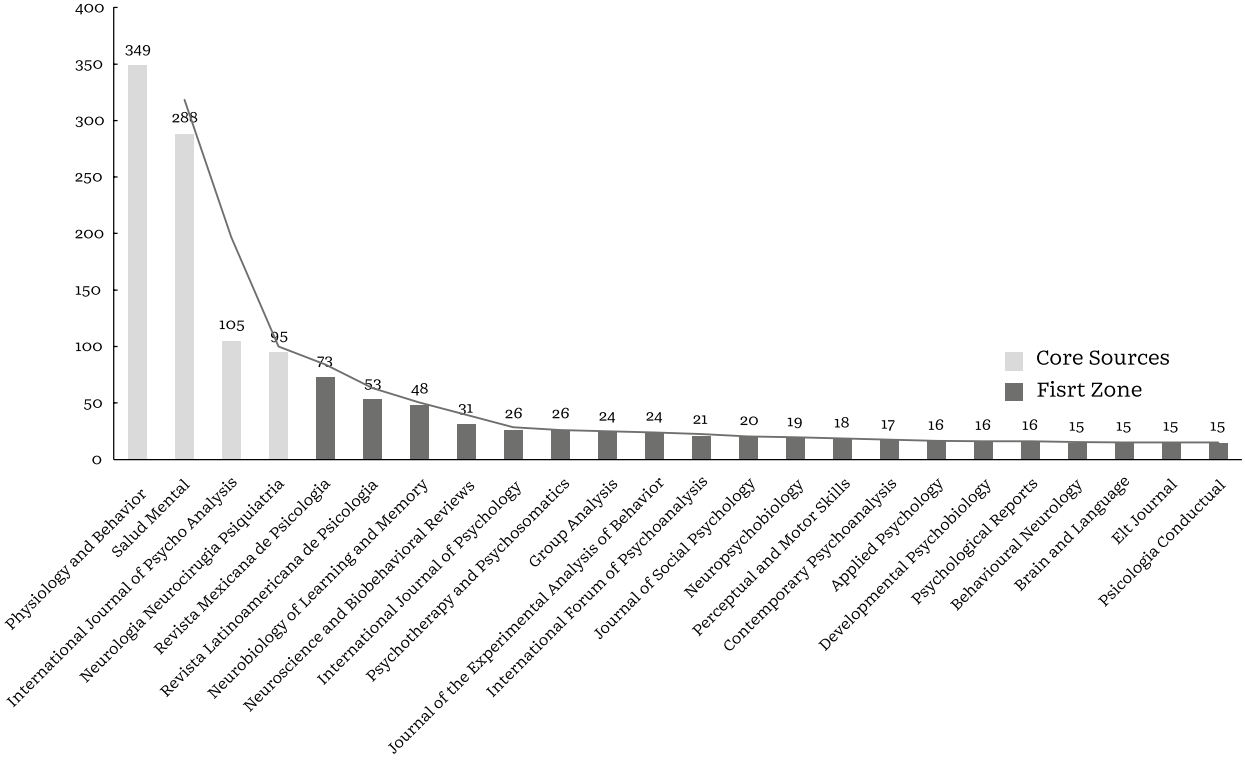
Figure 5 illustrates the preponderance of Mexico ($f = 2363$) and Brazil ($f = 1749$) among the countries selected for this study. Subsequently, Argentina ($f = 757$), USA ($f = 528$), Chile ($f = 322$), and Colombia ($f = 250$) are the countries that follow. With a frequency ranging from $f = 10$ to $f = 92$, we find LatAm-related productions from Central and Insular Europe, including the United Kingdom (UK), France, Germany, Spain, and others; from Asian countries such as India, Japan, and China; from Oceania, including Australia; and from North America, including Canada. Finally, the remaining productions are of minimal frequency and pertain to the five principal countries of LatAm, other countries within the region, Africa, and countries in dispersed parts of the world.

Figure 5. Geographic map of production



The predominant sources of publication for authors from LatAm countries published, the central core encompasses four journals (see Figure 6), as determined by *Bradford's Law*. *Physiology & Behaviour* (USA, English), which is focused on physiological mechanisms of behaviour; *Salud Mental* (Mexico, Spanish), which is oriented to clinical and social aspects of mental health; the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* (UK, English), which is dedicated to theoretical and clinical psychoanalysis; and *Neurología, Neurocirugía y Psiquiatría* (Spain, Spanish), which is focused on medical-psychiatric advances. These publications reflect a duality between international dissemination in English and attention to regional issues in Spanish. In Bradford's first zone, LatAm journals such as *Revista Mexicana de Psicología* (Spanish) and *Revista Latinoamericana de Psicología* (Colombia, Spanish), which deal with psychological

Figure 6. Most relevant journals and core sources according to Bradford's Law



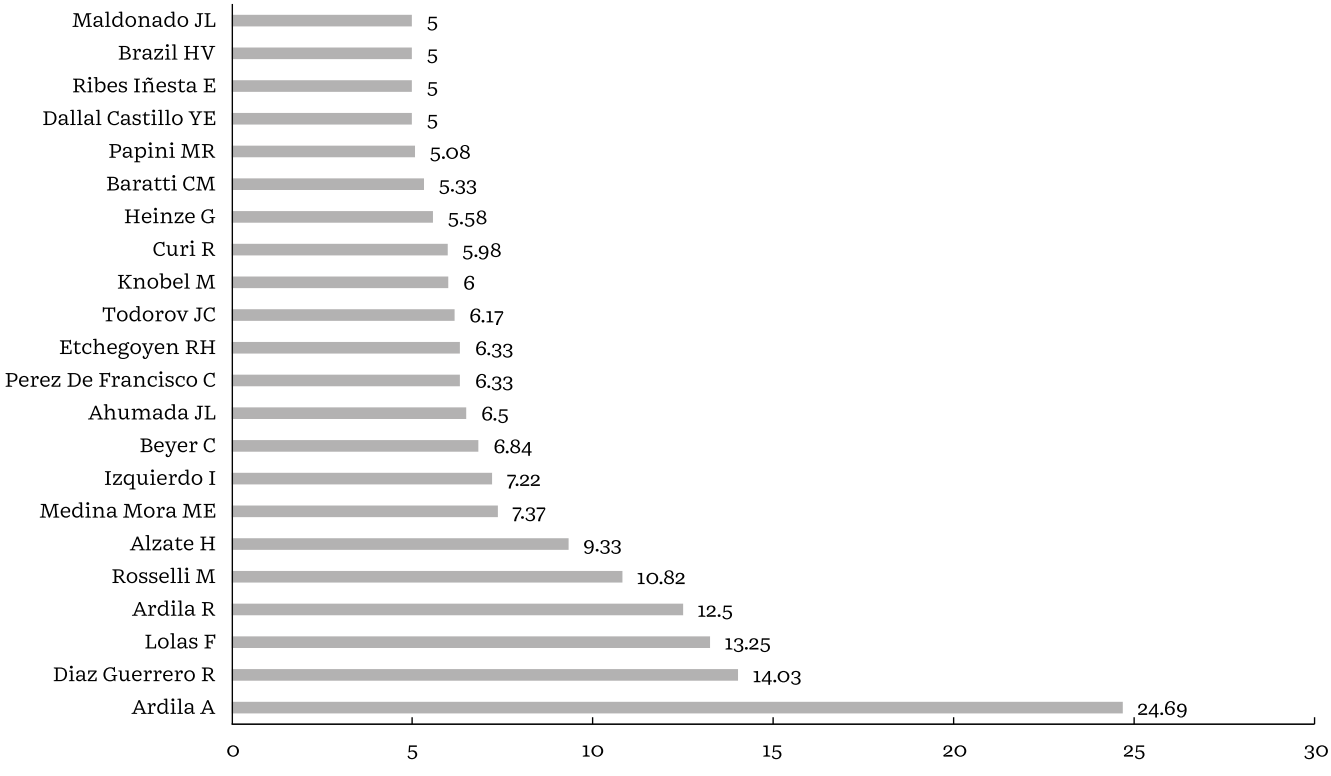
issues of local relevance, stand out, together with others of global scope such as *Neuroscience and Biobehavioural Reviews* (UK, English) and *International Journal of Psychology* (France, English). The predominance of journals focused on neuroscience, psychoanalysis, and the behavioural and social sciences, underscores a pronounced interest in the interplay between biological and behavioural domains. The presence of foreign journals indicates an integration with global academic networks, while local journals highlight specific socio-cultural contexts. This highlights the complex interplay between regional and international influences in the production of psychology in LatAm.

Collaboration

A discrepancy between prolific authors is evident when comparing Figure 3 and Figure 7. The difference arises from counting total signatures per article versus dividing production fractionally among collaborators. Authors who frequently publish alone obtain higher fractional scores, while those who regularly collaborate obtain lower ones. For instance, Ardila, A. participated in 49 articles, but his fractional output drops to 24, showing that most of his publications were co-authored, often halving his share of credit. By contrast, Medina-Mora, M. E., despite signing 33 articles, has a fractional output of only 7, which suggests collaborations with four or five co-authors on average. Interestingly, some authors appear prominently in one ranking but not the other. For example, Ahumada, J. L., Pérez de Francisco, C., and Etchegoyen, R. H. reach fractional scores close to 6 with total signatures of 7 or 8, implying they collaborated in only one paper. As a result, they emerge among the leading figures in fractional production, even though their overall signature count remains modest.

Considering the countries of origin of the authors' institutions, the analysis of communities revealed four distinct groups (see Figure 8). This classification is based on *Modularity Class Analysis*, which identifies the community to which a node (in this case, a country) belongs by grouping those that have more connections with each other than with the rest of the network—thus helping to identify collaboration blocks. *Group 4*, comprising Brazil, Argentina, Colombia, Mexico, Cuba, and Uruguay, is particularly noteworthy as it functions as the core of LatAm, exhibiting high internal cohesion. *Group 3*, which includes Chile, Spain, France, and Germany, demonstrates alliances where Chile serves as a conduit between the region under study and Europe. Conversely, *Groups 1* and *2* represent peripheral communities within the LatAm collaboration network, suggesting sporadic or multidisciplinary collaborations. The first group consists of authors from countries such as Bolivia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, China, and Australia. The second group is predominantly comprised of Asian and African countries, with India as the primary intermediary, along with countries such as Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Nepal.

Figure 7. Fractional signatures of authors



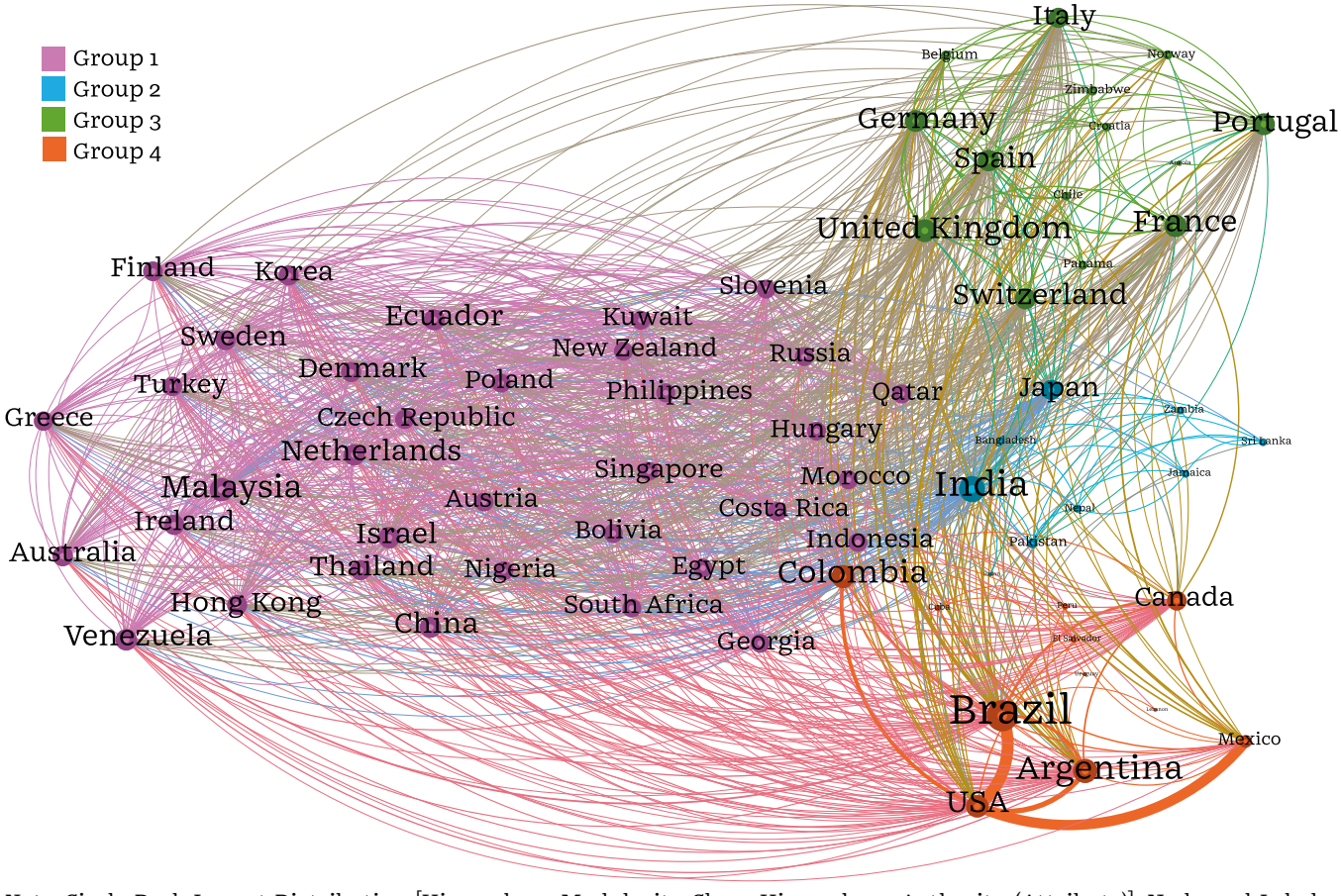
In order to evaluate the structure and dynamics of regional scientific collaboration, three key indicators from network analysis were applied: *PageRank* is a metric used to determine the relative importance of a country within the overall structure of the network. *Weighted degree* is a measure that reflects both the number of collaborative ties and the intensity of those connections. *Betweenness centrality* is a metric that indicates the extent to which a country functions as an intermediary in the shortest paths linking other nodes. The analysis yielded findings that, when assessed against the established metrics, indicated that Brazilian institutions have consolidated their position as the pivotal nexus of regional integration. Brazil demonstrated the highest values in all three indicators —PageRank (0.0273), weighted degree (328), and betweenness centrality (262.6)— thereby emphasising its strategic role in articulating LatAm scientific collaboration. Argentina and Colombia also exhibited considerable regional influence, with PageRank scores of 0.0211 and 0.0201, respectively, and a robust proximity to other countries, including Mexico. In contrast, countries such as Bolivia, Cuba, Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela, and Uruguay occupied peripheral positions, reflecting lower levels of interconnection with the broader regional network.

Examining nations outside of LatAm reveals that the USA boasts the highest number of direct connections, with a weighted degree of 383. However, its *betweenness centrality* score of 25,1 suggests a more decentralised influence, primarily driven by bilateral collaboration networks. In contrast, India holds a strategic position as a bridge between LatAm and countries in Asia and Africa, with a *betweenness centrality* score of 126.5. Finally, with a *weighted degree* ranging between 117 and 152, European countries such as Germany, France, Spain, Portugal, and the UK are identified as having a strong connection with LatAm. Notably, Chile is singled out as a country with which it even forms the same group.

Conceptual and thematic structure

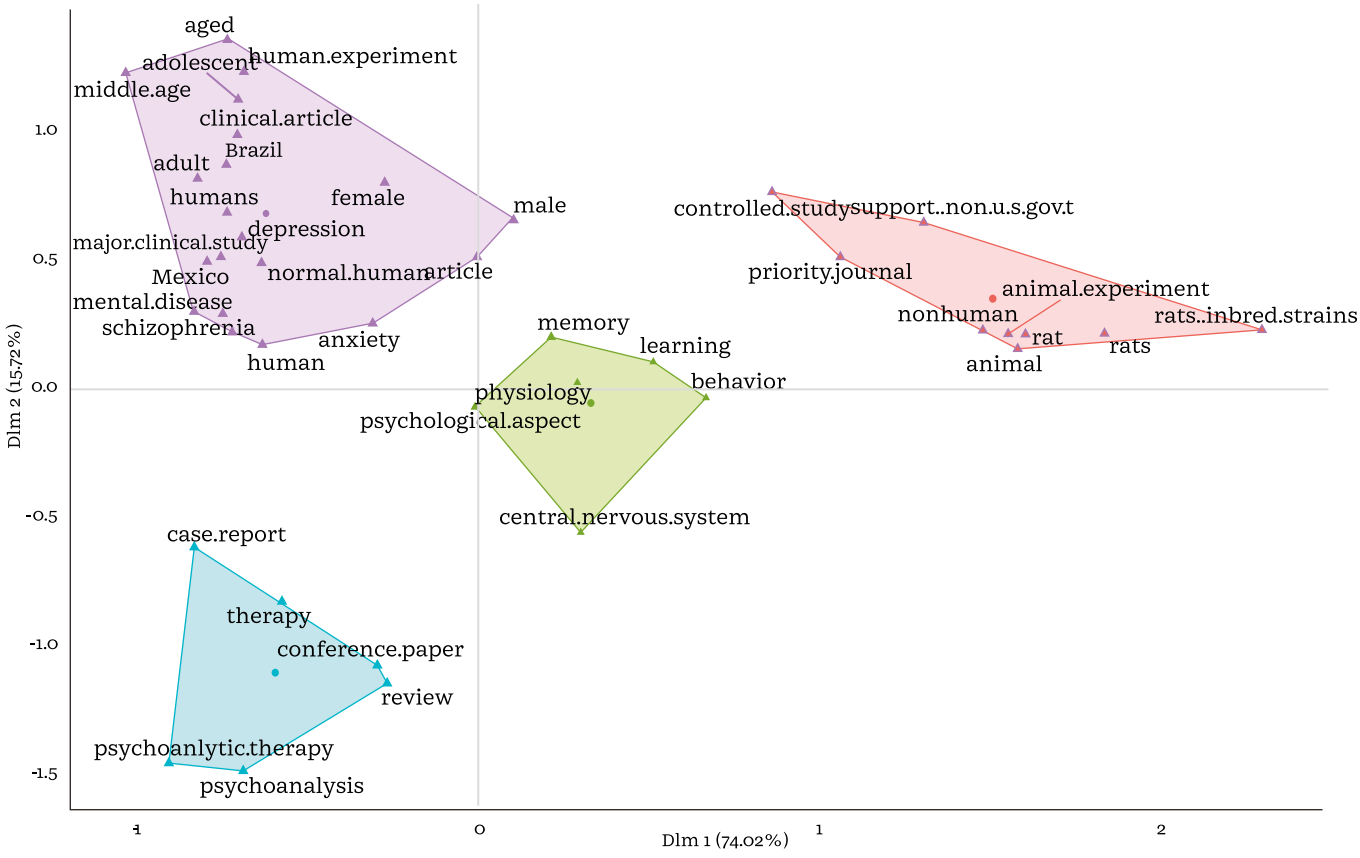
A network of themes is discernible in Figure 9, which presents the main keywords as a conceptual and thematic structure. This structure reveals the conceptual and thematic interconnections between the different written productions. The clusters identified by a distinct colouration represent the various themes or topics that emerge from the bibliographic data. These clusters can be observed to comprise four groups, which exhibit the following characteristics: (1) The purple cluster (top

Figure 8. Collaboration networks according to the origin of the authors' institutions



Note. Circle Pack Layout Distribution [Hierarchy 1: Modularity Class; Hierarchy 2: Authority (Attribute)]. Node and Label Size: Ranking of PageRank. Node Colour: Modularity Class.

Figure 9. Conceptual structure map



Note. Multiple Correspondence Factor Analysis (MCA).

left) encompasses terms such as *adolescent*, *mental disease*, *schizophrenia*, *female*, and *depression*. This cluster appears to pertain to clinical and epidemiological studies on mental illness and human demographic characteristics, with a particular emphasis on sex and age. (2) The red cluster (right): The presence of terms such as *controlled study*, *animal experiment*, *rats*, and *nonhuman* suggests that this cluster is related to animal experiments, particularly those involving rodents. This cluster indicates the presence of controlled studies that are likely to involve preclinical research, frequently conducted on animals for experimental purposes. (3) The green cluster (centre) includes terms such as *memory*, *learning*, *behaviour*, and *physiological* aspects. It appears to pertain to psychological and physiological matters, such as memory and learning processes, and may be connected to studies on behaviour and the central nervous system. (4) The blue group (bottom left) comprises terms like *psychoanalytic therapy*, *psychoanalysis*, *therapy*, and *review,* indicating a concentration on psychological therapies, particularly psychoanalysis and related theoretical discourse, including review articles and case studies.

Circulation of ideas in productions

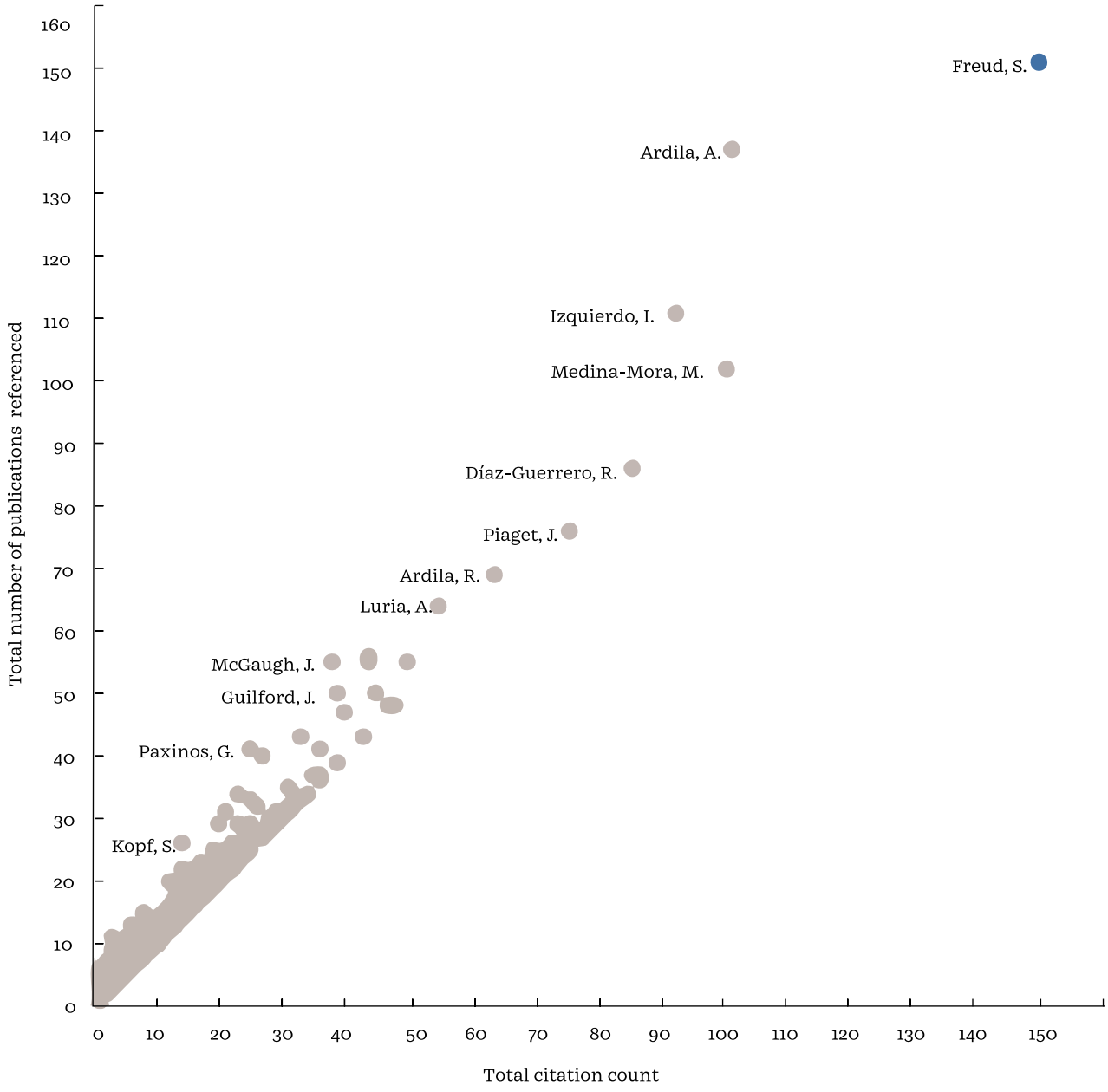
When examining the intellectual bases and main thematic areas evidenced in the reviewed publications, it is worth noting that the referenced authors show a significant divergence in the number of works cited, as illustrated in Figure 10. It should be highlighted that in the initial aspect, the referenced authors demonstrate a notable dispersion of cited works. Among the most frequently referenced academics, there is a combination of historical figures within the discipline and more prolific authors within the examined records. It can thus be hypothesised that there is a recognition of the most prominent authors within the main psychological lines, such as S. Freud, J. Piaget, A. Luria, B. Skinner, and others. Additionally, there is a promotion of other authors from the region through self-citations.

Discussion

The findings of this study allow us to return to the guiding questions posed at the outset and begin to trace, however partially, some answers.

The temporal emergence of prolific authors is the starting point for this discussion. Although the dataset spans from 1951 to 2000, the appearance of a highly productive author is not observed until 1961. Between 1968 and 1970, a small but growing group of prolific contributors begins to emerge. This delay is not insignificant. The process of academic consolidation in Latin America (LatAm) has been gradual and uneven, largely shaped by historical, institutional, and epistemic constraints. These have limited the development of academic infra-

Figure 10. Dispersion map of referenced authors



structure, recognition, and access, and contributed to the unevenness of this trajectory. In the early decades, the distribution of these conditions was found to be markedly inequitable.

Regarding the authors and their institutional affiliations, the data present a complex picture. At the institutional level, the most prolific affiliations were concentrated in major urban centres —particularly in Brazil and Mexico— which benefited from stronger infrastructure, more consistent research funding, and closer ties to international academic networks. These countries demonstrated leadership in terms of institutional volume and visibility. However, a different layer emerges when the focus shifts to individual authors. Some of the most prolific contributors were based in Colombia (e.g., Alfredo Ardila and Mónica Rosselli) and Chile (e.g., Fernando Lolas). Argentina also featured prominently, both through productive institutions and authors with transnational trajectories—most notably Iván Izquierdo, who published extensively from both Argentina and Brazil. This discrepancy between institutional prominence and individual impact reveals the uneven geography of academic opportunity. It also suggests that intellectual leadership often emerges not from the most favourable conditions, but from where perseverance meets possibility.

As for collaboration patterns, a range of practices is observed. Some authors, particularly in clinical, theoretical, or psychoanalytic fields, tended to publish individually, reflecting disciplinary norms that value single

authorship. In contrast, experimental and neuroscientific subfields showed higher levels of collaboration, often within larger research teams. Brazil stood out as the main regional hub, with strong intermediation both within LatAm and globally. The USA was the most common external partner, reinforcing long-standing epistemic asymmetries. Meanwhile, limited ties with Asia and Africa reveal continued deficits in South–South scientific exchange. These asymmetries are not new, but their persistence invites reflection on which academic connections are being cultivated—and which remain to be imagined.

Regarding the journals in which LatAm authors published, the data show a dual tendency: a strong presence in regional journals —mostly in Spanish and Portuguese— alongside efforts to publish in international, English-language outlets. Thematically, these publications focused on neuroscience, psychoanalysis, mental health, and behavioural sciences. This duality reflects the tension between addressing local realities and aligning with global standards of recognition. The dominance of journals based in the Global North further underscores persistent inequalities in how scientific knowledge is validated and disseminated.

An analysis of the intellectual foundations of these publications reveals a marked reliance on classical Western figures —Freud, Piaget, Luria, Skinner— across decades and subfields. This pattern points to a deep alignment with the canon of psychology as defined by global centres, lending further weight to the hypothesis of epistemic mimicry and dependency. While regional citation —particularly self-citation— was present, it remained marginal. Most strikingly, liberation psychology, despite its ethical and political significance in the region, was virtually absent from the indexed record. Its exclusion raises questions about what kinds of knowledge are considered "certifiable" within dominant academic circuits. This aspect should be further investigated in further studies.

Taken together, the findings reveal a model of academic production shaped by coloniality: a reliance on external frameworks, the marginalisation of context-rooted approaches, and a limited circulation of epistemologies grounded in Latin American realities. These dynamics reflect concerns long raised by Martín-Baró (2006) and other decolonial thinkers, who have argued that the absence of an autonomous epistemological foundation in the region sustains intellectual subordination and limits psychology's capacity to engage with local needs.

However, the presence of these colonial features does not negate the value of the knowledge produced. It is important to recognise that many of the scholars who appear in this dataset operated with deeply unequal conditions, often facing the impossibility of fully meeting the standards imposed by global academic designs. Also, their work frequently aimed —directly or indirectly— at improving social well-being. Even if much of this production did not circulate widely or break with dominant paradigms, it contributed in meaningful ways to local knowledge ecosystems. It helped build professions, shape practices, and in some cases, offer some answers to social problems. In that struggle for recognition, we can also read a deeper desire to belong, to participate, and to transform.

Lastly, the gender imbalance in authorship must be acknowledged. Among the most prolific contributors, women were notably few. While figures such as Mónica Rosselli and María Elena Medina-Mora stand out, the dominance of male authors reveals enduring disparities in institutional power and visibility—patterns that warrant closer scrutiny.

Altogether, these findings underscore the need to continue this line of inquiry. Future research should expand its scope, drawing on regional databases such as SciELO, Redalyc, and PePSIC, and incorporating qualitative approaches to better understand the complex entanglements of knowledge, power, and identity in Latin American psychology. Equally important is the inclusion of grey literature —such as these, institutional reports, conference proceedings, and policy documents— which often contain valuable insights into local practices and knowledge production that remain outside mainstream academic circuits. Analysing this sort of materials can provide a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the field, capturing voices and perspectives that are frequently underrepresented in indexed publications. Only through such efforts can we begin to construct a more plural, situated, and ethically grounded history of psychological science—one that not only includes Latin America, but is also shaped by it.

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Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Declaration of AI use

In the preparation of this manuscript, we utilized artificial intelligence (AI) tools to enhance various aspects of our work. Specifically, we employed ChatGPT and DeepSeek for data and chart analysis. Additionally, we used DeepL to assist in the translation and refinement of the text. We confirm that these AI tools were used to support and enhance our research and writing processes. The authors take full responsibility for the content of this manuscript, including any sections where AI tools were applied.

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