

# Bibliometric Profile on Antisocial Behaviors and Physical Aggression in School-Going Adolescents

Perfil bibliométrico sobre las conductas antisociales y agresión física en adolescentes escolarizados


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## Summary

Exploring disruptive behaviors in adolescents in basic education and their implications on their development is necessary to have updated information and support coherent measures. Therefore, the objective of this study was to evaluate the scientific literature on antisocial behaviors and physical aggression in adolescents enrolled in the Scopus database between 2010 and 2024. Scoping review was used as a method for bibliometric or retrospective studies. The terms used were disruptive behavior, antisocial behavior, deviant behavior, physical aggression, aggression, corporal aggression, adolescent together with Boolean operators AND, OR. The results of the study included 989 manuscripts, of which 81.2% were original empirical articles. The United States is the main country with the highest scientific production (41.7%) and the one with the greatest collaboration with European countries (United Kingdom, Germany, and France) as well as countries such as Australia. The journals with the highest number of publications were the Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychopharmacology, Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (USA) and the terms widely used were adolescent and aggression. The main authors were Buitelaar, J.K., Banaschewski, T., and Franke, B. In summary, research on antisocial behaviors and physical aggression in adolescents has had a high representativeness and increase in recent years and these topics have been promoted by countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada. In addition to the fact that most journals come from these countries, there is a tendency to understand aggressive and antisocial behavior in men with respect to educational contexts.

**Keywords:** Aggression; Adolescents; Antisocial behaviors; Bibliometrics; Violence.

## Resumen

Explorar las conductas disruptivas en adolescentes de educación básica y sus implicancias sobre su desarrollo, resulta necesario para disponer de información actualizada y apodar medidas coherentes. Por ello se planteó como objetivo evaluar la literatura científica sobre conductas antisociales y agresión física en adolescentes escolarizados en la base de datos de Scopus entre los años 2010 y 2024. Se empleó como método la Scoping review para estudios bibliométricos, los términos empleados fueron: disruptive behavior, antisocial behaviour, deviant behavior, physical aggression, aggression, corporal aggression, adolescent junto con operadores booleanos AND, OR. Los resultados del estudio incluyeron 989 manuscritos, de los cuales 81.2% fueron artículos empíricos originales. Estados Unidos es el principal país con mayor producción científica (41.7%) y la que tiene mayor colaboración con países europeos (Reino Unido, Alemania y Francia) al igual que países como Australia. Las revistas con mayor número de publicaciones fueron la Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychopharmacology, Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (EEUU) y los términos ampliamente utilizados fueron adolescente y agresión. Los principales autores fueron Buitelaar, J.K., Banaschewski, T., y Franke, B. En síntesis la investigación sobre las conductas antisociales y agresión física en adolescente ha tenido una alta representatividad y aumento en los últimos años, principalmente, estos temas han sido impulsados por países como Estados Unidos, Reino Unido y Canadá. Además que de la mayoría de las revistas provienen de estos países existe una tendencia por comprender el comportamiento agresivo y antisocial en varones respecto a los contextos educativos.

**Palabras claves:** Agresión; Adolescentes; Conductas antisociales; Bibliometría; Violencia.

## INTRODUCTION

Adolescent aggression and antisocial behaviors represent a critical field of study within psychology and psychiatry due to their significant impact on both the affected individuals and society at large (Kaggwa et al., 2024; Ubaradka & Khanganba, 2024). These behaviors, which can range from acts of bullying to severe physical violence, have the potential not only to disrupt the school environment, but also to influence the course of youth development into adulthood (Jansen, 2022; Oei et al., 2023).

Based on what has been reviewed in the scientific literature, adolescents who exhibit aggressive and antisocial behaviors often face emotional problems, such as depression and anxiety, as well as low self-esteem (Ogundele, 2018; Otto et al., 2021). These emotional states may be exacerbated by feelings of guilt and shame following episodes of aggression, particularly if these incidents result in tangible negative consequences (Kim et al., 2023; Kupferberg & Hasler, 2023). Moreover, aggression and antisocial behaviors can significantly interfere with academic performance (Ouyang et al., 2022). Adolescents with these behaviors often show declining grades, which can limit their future educational and employment opportunities, perpetuating a cycle of economic and social disadvantage (Limone & Toto, 2022). From a public health perspective, the increase in these behaviors may translate into a greater demand for psychological and psychiatric services, as well as the strengthening of prevention and intervention policies in school and family contexts. Thus, the absence of adequate social skills is one of the significant causes, as these skills are essential for personal and professional success in adulthood (Jacob et al., 2022; Sørli et al., 2021). Adolescents who engage in aggressive behaviors often fail to develop negotiation and collaboration skills, which limits their ability to maintain healthy and productive relationships (Hielscher et al., 2021; Ramirez-Corone et al., 2020).

Despite the existence of abundant evidence regarding the impact of antisocial behaviors and physical aggression on adolescents and society in general, questions arise to address such as: What has been the evolution of the papers published on the subject in recent years; which countries, journals and authors have generated the largest proportion of this knowledge; which are the countries with the greatest collaboration; and which areas or topics have been most explored?

In this regard, this detailed bibliometric study identifies not only the most researched topics, but also the connections between different areas of research and changes in focus over time. In addition, by exploring collaborations between different countries and disciplines, a perspective on the global nature of research in aggression and antisocial behavior was sought, highlighting both regional concentrations of study and transnational collaborative efforts. In this regard, it is particularly important as it provides empirical evidence that can guide the formulation of psychological and social intervention strategies, facilitating the design of prevention programs tailored to the needs of at-risk adolescents.

The study in question is of vital importance to policy makers, educators and mental health professionals, providing a solid foundation for better understanding the underlying dynamics of problem behaviors in school settings and for developing more effective and targeted interventions. With a focus on identifying emerging patterns and synthesizing broad ranges of research

approaches, this study serves as a crucial resource for advancing the understanding and management of aggression and antisocial behavior among adolescents, pointing toward future directions in research and clinical practice.

Faced with this reality, the study set as its objective the scientific literature on antisocial behaviors and physical aggression in school adolescents between 2010 and 2024, using the Scopus database (Baas et al., 2020). Trends in publication, co-authorship, international collaborations, and the main thematic approaches were analyzed to obtain a comprehensive view of how this phenomenon has been approached in academia.

## METHOD

### Design

For the development of the study, a retrospective study has been considered, and it is based on the collection and analysis of data from previously published documents, allowing the examination of trends and patterns in research on antisocial behaviors and physical aggression in adolescents (Corona & Fonseca, 2021). In addition, the use of a scoping review approach, a methodology that maps and synthesizes the existing literature in an area of study were considered, identifying knowledge gaps and research trends (Peters et al., 2021). Thus, both approaches complemented the bibliometric analysis, providing a comprehensive and structured view of the current state of knowledge on this subject.

### Unit of Analysis and Search Process

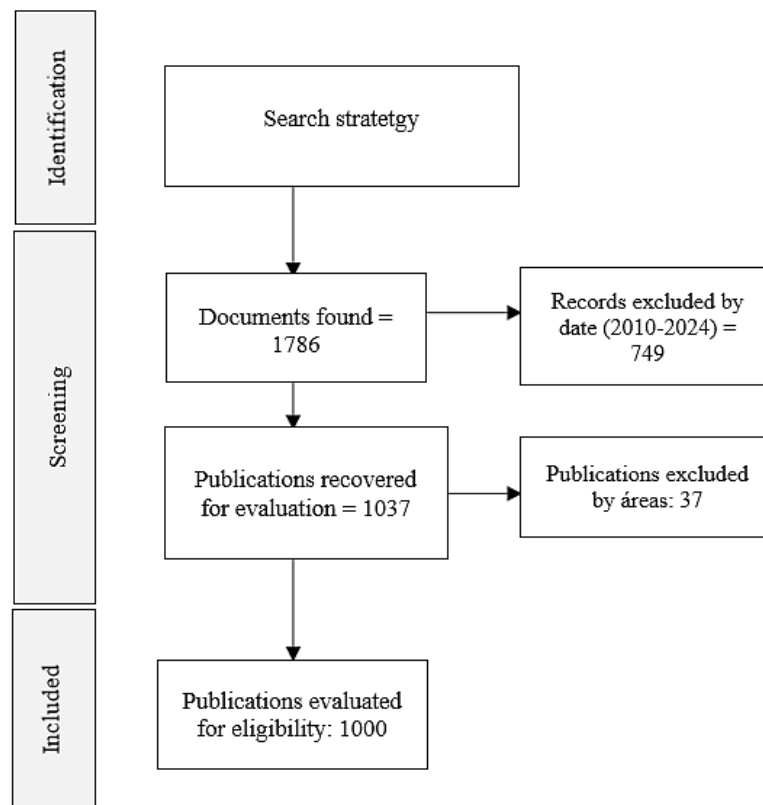
The unit of analysis of the study was comprised of the publications on the subject in the various journals indexed in Scopus, between January 2010 and March 2024. The search process was carried out in April 2024, facilitating the processing of a large volume of data. The following keywords were considered “disruptive behavior, antisocial behavior, deviant behavior, physical aggression, aggression, corporal aggression, adolescent”. These were entered into the Scopus search box along with Boolean operators AND, OR, obtaining the following search equation TITLE-ABS-KEY (“disruptive behavior” OR “antisocial behavior” OR “deviant behavior” AND “physical aggression” OR aggression OR “corporal aggression” AND adolescent\*).

The initial search revealed 1787 documents (Figure 1), after the selection of areas and language for interpretation or analysis: 1000 documents. Having as final search equation TITLE-ABS-KEY (“disruptive behavior” OR “antisocial behavior” OR “deviant behavior” AND “physical aggression” OR aggression OR “corporal aggression” AND adolescent\*) AND PUBYEAR > 2009 AND PUBYEAR < 2025 AND ( LIMIT-TO ( SUBJAREA , “MEDI” ) OR LIMIT-TO ( SUBJAREA , “PSYC” ) OR LIMIT-TO ( SUBJAREA , “NEUR” ) OR LIMIT-TO ( SUBJAREA , “SOCI” ) OR LIMIT-TO ( SUBJAREA , “MULT” ) OR LIMIT-TO ( SUBJAREA , “NURS” ) OR LIMIT-TO ( SUBJAREA , “HEAL” ) OR LIMIT-TO ( SUBJAREA , “COMP” ) ) AND ( LIMIT-TO ( LANGUAGE , “English” ) OR LIMIT-TO ( LANGUAGE , “Spanish” ) OR LIMIT-TO (

LANGUAGE , "French" ) OR LIMIT-TO ( LANGUAGE , "Italian" ) OR LIMIT-TO ( LANGUAGE , "Portuguese" ) ).

### Figure 1.

*Search, retrieval and selection of documents on antisocial behaviors and physical aggression in school students, 2010-2024.*



### Data Extraction

For the evaluation of the quality of the articles considered, an assessment was made of characteristics such as citation indexes, the DOI being active and the articles having been submitted to peer review; likewise, in order to avoid duplicating any of the data and to obtain better results in the data processing process, 11 duplicate documents were purified using the RStudio package, obtaining a total of 989 documents for bibliometric evaluation. Data extraction was carried out from Scopus search results, in BibTeX format, considering all citation information, bibliographic information, abstract and keywords. With the information obtained, we proceeded to use Biblioshiny as an R and RStudio® software package.

## RESULTS

Table 1 shows that 81.2% of the documents found that antisocial behaviors and physical aggression correspond to empirical articles, followed by 11.5% of review articles. Furthermore, the substantial

volume of these articles is considered to underscore the maturity and complexity of the study of antisocial behaviors and aggression in adolescents, highlighting the continuing interest and need for multidisciplinary approaches to address these critical social problems.

**Table 1.**

*Scoping review on antisocial behaviors and physical aggression in school students, 2010-2024.*

Type of document	Number of documents	%
Conference article	3	0.3%
Review article	114	11.5%
Empirical articles	803	81.2%
Short survey	1	0.1%
Book chapter	33	3.3%
Letter	11	1.1%
Editorial	15	1.5%
Erratum	1	0.1%
Book	1	0.1%
Note	6	0.6%
Withdrawn	1	0.1%
Total	989	100.0%

According to Table 2, the top 10 countries in production on antisocial behavior and physical aggression are shown, where the United States stands out with 1,378 articles, followed by the Netherlands and Canada. In addition, the higher density of lines indicates robust collaboration between North American countries, especially the United States and Canada, and multiple European countries such as the United Kingdom, Germany, and France. Conversely, Countries such as Australia, India and China are also connected, although less frequently, and show strong links with other Asian countries as well as with the United States and Europe, indicating their active role in global research on the subject (Figure 2).

**Table 2.**

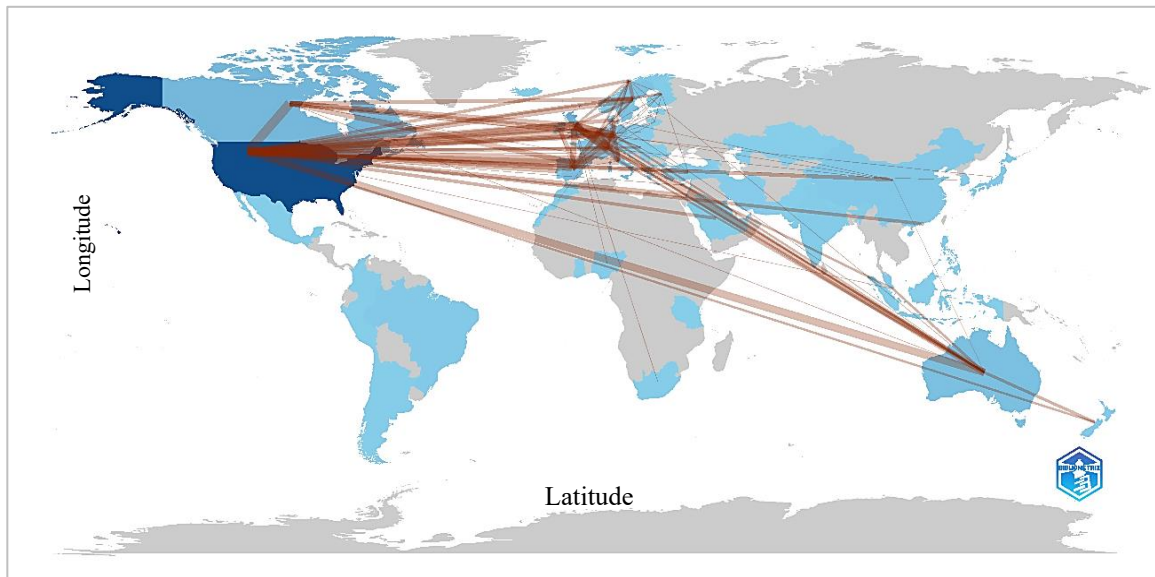
*Countries with the largest scientific production on antisocial behaviors and physical aggression in school students, 2010-2024.*

Country	Documents	
	n	%
United States	1378	41.7
Canada	259	7.8
Canada	237	7.2
United Kingdom	221	6.7
Germany	137	4.1
Spain	129	3.9
Italy	113	3.4
Australia	108	3.3
Sweden	87	2.6
France	61	1.8

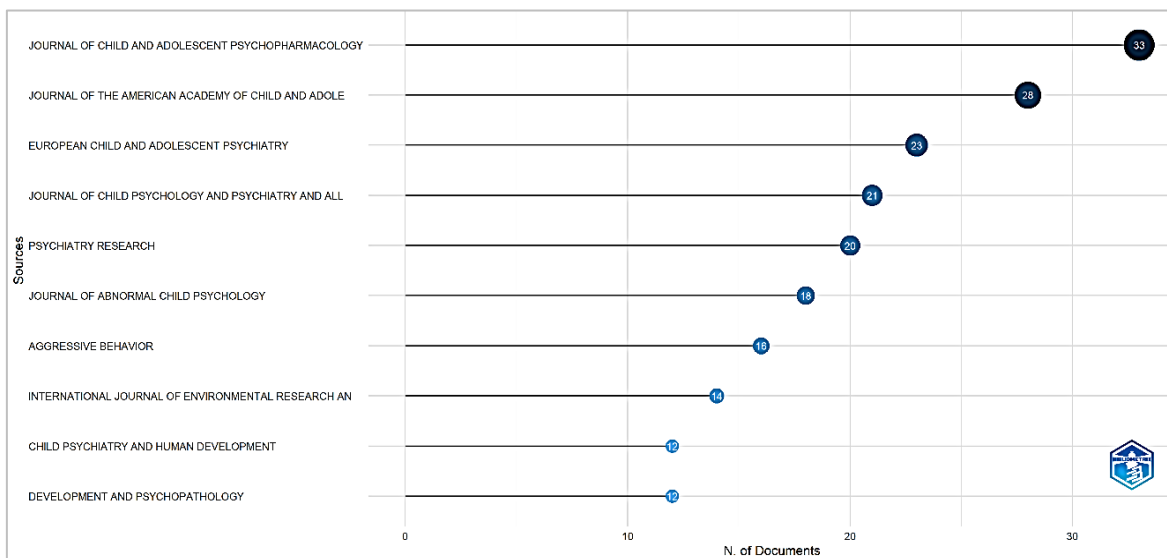
According to Figure 3, it has been shown that the Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychopharmacology leads the chart of the top ten journals with 33 papers followed by Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry which presented 28 published papers. The results also reveal that the top 10 journals (100%) are ranked in Q1, 50% of these are from the

United States followed by the United Kingdom. The categories in which the journals stood out were medicine and psychology with an impact factor according to significant SJR in their field (Table 3).

**Figure 2.**  
*Cross-country collaboration on antisocial behaviors and physical aggression in school students, 2010-2024.*



**Figure 3.**  
*Most relevant sources on the production of antisocial behaviors and physical aggression in school students, 2010-2024.*



**Table 3.**

*Journals with the largest production on antisocial behaviors and physical aggression in school students, 2010-2024.*

Sources	Country	Quartile	SJR*	Category
Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychopharmacology	United States	Q1	0.774	Medicine
Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry	United States	Q1	3.663	Medicine Psychology
European Child and Adolescent Psychiatry	Germany	Q1	1.799	Medicine Psychology
Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry and Allied Disciplines	United Kingdom	Q1	3.025	Medicine Psychology
Psychiatry Research	Ireland	Q1	2.139	Medicine; Neurosciences
Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology-Research on Child and Adolescent Psychopathology	United States	Q1	1.468	Medicine Psychology
Aggressive Behavior	United States	Q1	1.103	Arts and Humanities; Psychology
International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health	Switzerland	Q1	0.828	Medicine; Environmental Sciences
Child Psychiatry and Human Development	United States	Q1	1.140	Medicine Psychology
Development and Psychopathology	United Kingdom	Q1	1.315	Medicine Psychology

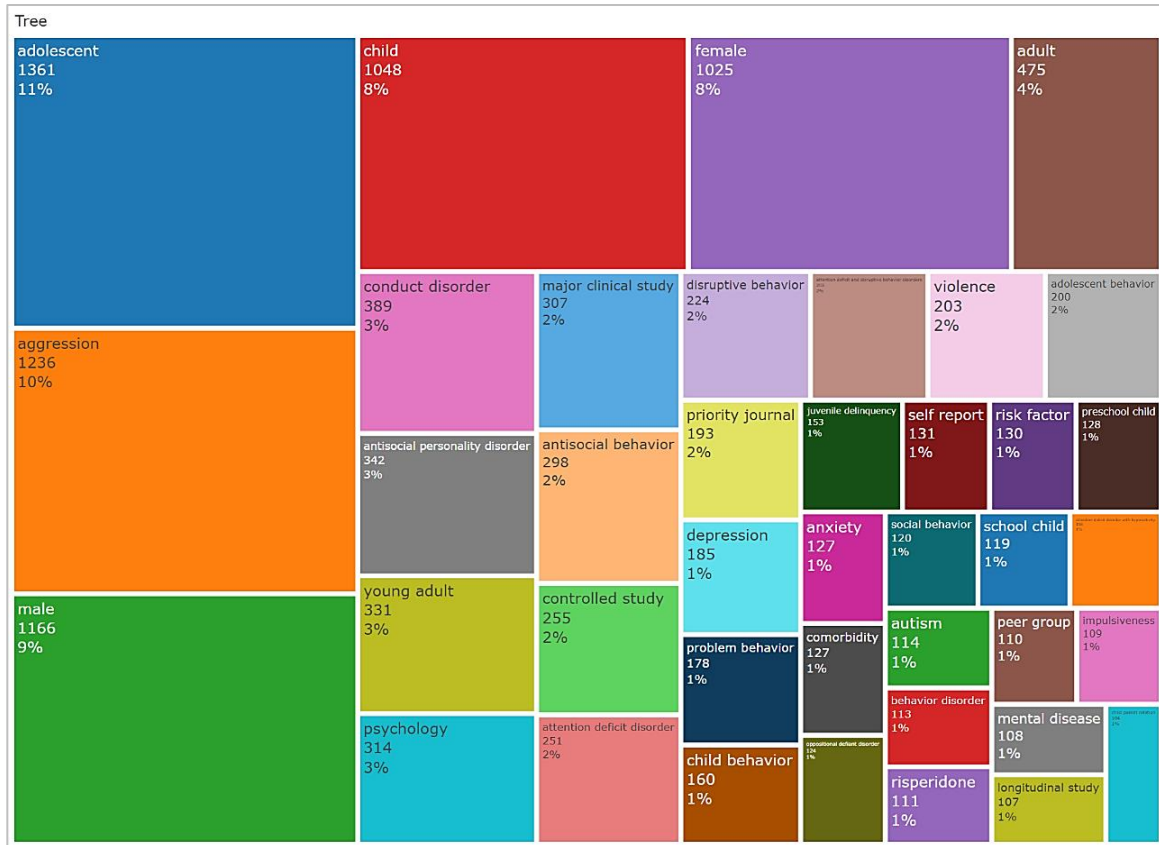
\*Source. Scimago Journal Rank 2023.

In Figure 4, the terms “Adolescent” and “Child” stand out with 11% and 8%, indicating a significant approach to these stages of human development. “Aggression” accounts for 10% of the research approach, while “Antisocial Behaviors” comprise approximately 5%, including studies on specific disorders such as conduct disorder and antisocial personality disorder. The analysis shows a notable concentration of studies on aggressive and antisocial behavior in males (9%), in addition, the use of various methodologies, such as controlled studies representing 2%, is observed, which underlines the application of rigorous methodological approaches to study these behaviors. The data also links antisocial behaviors with other psychological and situational factors, such as depression, anxiety, and school behavior, highlighting the complexity and multifaceted nature of antisocial behaviors in educational contexts.



**Figure 4.**

*Distribution of themes or categories on the production of antisocial behaviors and physical aggression in school students, 2010-2024.*



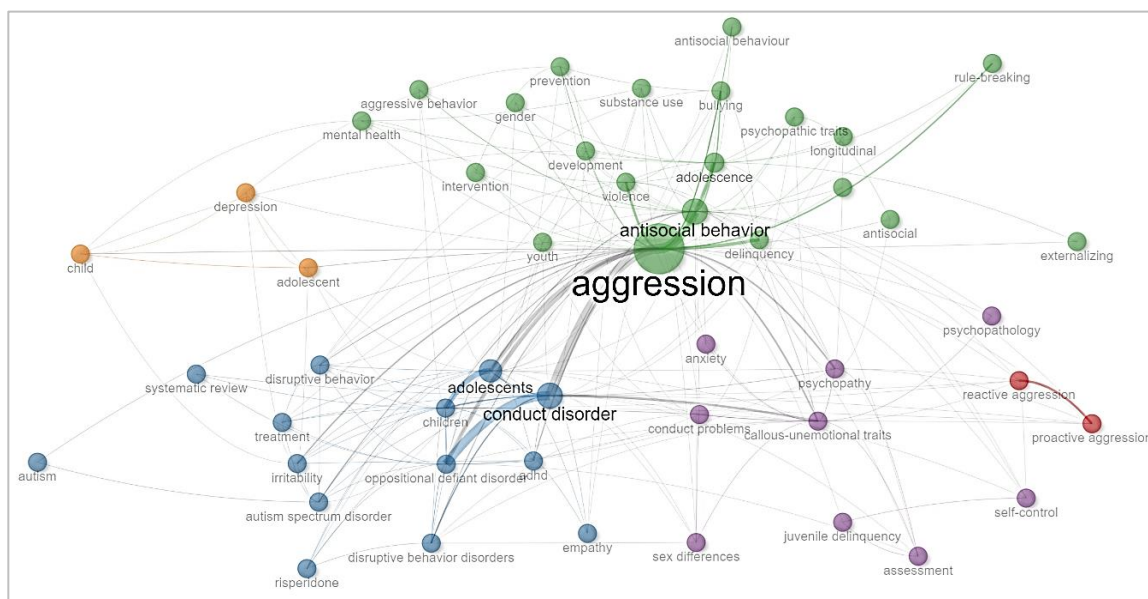
According to Figure 5, the keyword co-occurrence analysis proposed by the author was performed using biblioshiny. The analysis mainly groups the first cluster in terms of aggression and antisocial behavior. This central cluster is the densest and is located in the center of the network, highlighting aggression as the main node. Furthermore, it is closely related to terms such as 'antisocial behavior', 'violence', 'bullying', and 'delinquency', which highlights the multidimensional nature of aggression in school contexts and its overlap with other disruptive behaviors. The second cluster groups terms in behavioral disorders and psychopathologies such as oppositional defiant disorder and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), thus the cluster refers to the strong link between aggression and various psychiatric conditions, emphasizing the importance of psychological and psychiatric evaluation in the adolescent population.

The third cluster groups terms such as 'intervention', 'prevention', and 'treatment', indicating the presence of a significant amount of research focused on how to mitigate and manage aggressive and antisocial behaviors; likewise, the inclusion of 'systematic review' in this cluster also points to an interest in consolidating and evaluating the efficacy of different strategies and programs. As for the fourth cluster, emotional and developmental aspects have been grouped together as terms 'empathy', 'mental health', and 'anxiety', along with 'development'. This reflects the approach to

understanding the emotional and developmental bases of aggressive behavior and how these may influence the developmental trajectories of adolescents.

**Figure 5.**

*Cooccurrence analysis of keywords on antisocial behaviors and physical aggression in school students, 2010-2024.*



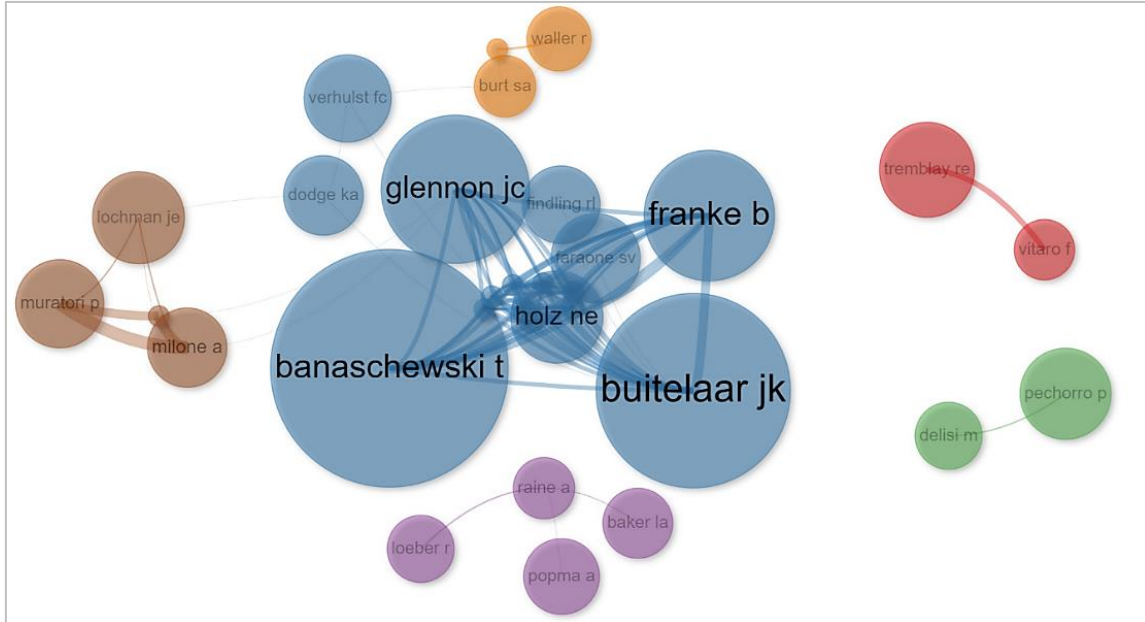
The collaborative networks of the lead authors are dominated by Buitelaar JK, Banaschewski T, and Franke B, this cluster is the largest one and they are authors who are most influential, given the size of the nodes and the dense interconnections between them. It is evident that these clusters are focused on neuropsychological or genetic studies related to antisocial behavior and aggression, given the prevalence of these authors in those fields. Similarly, it is noted that the interaction between Muratori P, Milone A and Lochman JE suggests an interest in interventions and treatments to mitigate these behaviors. The analysis of this co-occurrence network illustrates the collaboration between researchers from different disciplines to address the complex problem of antisocial behavior and aggression in adolescents (Figure 6).

## DISCUSSION

The findings of this research report 989 publications from journals indexed in the Scopus database, highlighting the predominance of empirical research, which reflects a trend similar to that observed in other areas of psychology and social sciences where the collection of original data is fundamental for the advancement of knowledge (García-Carión et al., 2019). The large number of publications analyzed provides a comprehensive and updated view of the state of the art on aggression and antisocial behaviors, making it possible to identify key patterns in the evolution of scientific knowledge in this area. The significant representation of review articles is also consistent with the need for periodic synthesis and critical evaluation of the growing volume of research on antisocial behaviors and aggression, as has been documented in other mental health-related fields (Kalvin et al., 2024; Lindert et al., 2020).

**Figure 6.**

*Relationship between the main authors on antisocial behaviors and physical aggression in school students, 2010-2024.*



The analysis of scientific production by country indicates that the United States leads notably, suggesting a concentration of research resources and a high level of institutional interest in issues of aggression and antisocial behavior. This pattern of geographic distribution is in line with previous studies showing that nations with more developed higher education systems and research funding tend to produce a larger volume of scientific literature (Farley et al., 2022; van der Laan et al., 2023). This finding provides evidence of the influence of investment in science and technology on academic production, highlighting the need to promote financing policies in countries with lower participation in research.

This scenario of collaborations underscores the importance of international cooperation to address complex challenges such as antisocial behaviors and aggression among adolescents (Fauzi et al., 2023; Moro et al., 2022). Patterns of collaboration show that while some countries and regions lead in scientific production and collaboration, there is considerable potential for greater inclusion of countries with more limited resources (Cerdeira et al., 2023). This could not only democratize access to knowledge but also enrich research with diverse perspectives that embrace different cultural and social contexts. Under this reality, the identification of these gaps in scientific collaboration highlights a key opportunity to strengthen global research networks and promote a more equitable perspective in the development of knowledge on this phenomenon. Analysis of these collaborations offers valuable insight for policymakers and research administrators, highlighting the need to foster more inclusive and diversified partnerships that can contribute more equitably to global science and understanding of complex phenomena such as adolescent aggression (Craig et al., 2020). However, South American countries, despite their prominence with respect to violence and its constant evaluation (Nasaescu et al., 2020; Ordóñez & Shugulí, 2024), collaborate minimally with other countries.

The main journals identified in this study, such as the *Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychopharmacology* y la *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, not only reflect the quality and impact of the published papers, but also indicate a trend towards multidisciplinary, covering areas from psychopharmacology to clinical psychiatry. This point highlights the diversity of approaches from which adolescent aggression is studied, reinforcing the importance of an integrative perspective in mental health research. These journals, all ranked Q1 and mostly from the United States and United Kingdom, highlight the relevance and rigor in research on antisocial behaviors and aggression, a finding that is consistent with the global trend toward specialization and high quality in scientific publication (Beckwith et al., 2022; Ward & Ashley, 2013). In terms of the most prominent terms in the publications they reflect the concentration of effort in understanding these stages of human development and related pathologies, and this thematic distribution is consistent with the existing literature that underscores the importance of addressing these issues from a developmental perspective to better understand and mitigate potential impacts in adulthood (Maneiro et al., 2019).

The keyword co-occurrence analysis reveals a clear structuring around aggression and antisocial behaviors, in agreement with recent calls in the literature for a more integrative and multifaceted approach to research on problem behaviors in childhood and adolescence (Siddiqui et al., 2023). Furthermore, the results of the study also underscore the continued need for multidisciplinary and collaborative approaches to effectively address these complex social problems (Sánchez-Castro et al., 2024). International collaboration and the integration of various disciplines are key elements for advancing the understanding and management of antisocial behavior in broader educational and social contexts.

The study as such has not been free of limitations, firstly, it was only considered between 2010 and 2024, so there are many documents that have not been recorded; in addition, 2024 has not yet ended and it is not possible to collect all of them. Only one database has been used for the exploration, and although it is the one with the highest rate of indexed journals, it is recommended that we consider other databases, such as Web of Science (WoS), PubMed among others to better generalize research results. Despite these limitations, the methodological soundness of the study, based on advanced bibliometric techniques and the use of one of the most prestigious databases in the world, guarantees the reliability and validity of findings. In addition, it is necessary to delve deeper into the data by using not only bibliometric methods, but also systematic reviews.

In summary, most of the studies on antisocial behavior and physical aggression in adolescents are empirical articles (81.2%), reflecting mature research and the need for multidisciplinary approaches in this area. The United States is the leader in scientific production, followed by the Netherlands and Canada, with outstanding collaboration between North America and Europe. The main journals in this field, such as the *Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychopharmacology* y la *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, are highly classified and focus on medicine and psychology. The co-occurrence analysis reveals thematic clusters covering aggression and disruptive behaviors, conduct disorders and psychopathologies, intervention and prevention strategies, and emotional and developmental aspects, showing a holistic approach and the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration to address these problems in adolescents.

Finally, the study presents theoretical implications, which reinforce the need to continue developing complex theoretical frameworks that integrate various disciplines, such as psychology, medicine and education, to better understand the roots and manifestations of these behaviors. From an applied point of view, the findings of the study can serve as input for the formulation of prevention and intervention strategies in educational contexts, allowing the design of evidence-based public policies. From a practical approach, the evidence of a strong connection between antisocial behaviors and psychological problems such as depression and anxiety underscores the urgency of implementing and evaluating intervention and prevention programs that are multidimensional and tailored specifically to the needs of this population.

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